

**Economics 410 – Labor Economics  
Spring 2021**

Professor: Martin Shields

Meeting times: Tuesday and Thursday 2:00-3:15

Office: C-323 Clark

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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 12:30 pm- 1:30 pm and by appointment (Zoom preferred)

**OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES**

The goal in this class is to improve your critical thinking skills as economists. In particular, you will be better able to apply economic theory to understand how labor markets function. In addition, you will have an improved understanding about how economists use data to test theories. Important topics include the determination of wages, how individuals allocate their time to labor and leisure, how businesses decide to hire and fire people, the economics of labor market discrimination, and how people decide how much education to get. Special attention will be paid to analyzing data to better understand important labor market issues.

**PREREQUISITES**

It is assumed that you *know* the material covered in Econ 306. On occasion, we will use some elementary calculus. It would be swell if you know a little about Excel.

**PROBLEM SETS**

There will be eight (8) problem sets. I will announce in class when each assignment is posted to Canvas and when it is due. Answers will be posted online shortly after the assignment is due.

**Important:** Problem sets are due at the beginning of class. If you cannot come to class on the day that an assignment is due it must be turned in to **the drop-off box outside my office** before class begins!! Late assignments will receive a zero.

**EXAMS**

There will be four equally weighted exams. None will be cumulative. Tentative dates are:

- Tuesday February 9—Chapters 1-3 (in-class)
- Tuesday March 9—Chapters 4-6 (in-class)
- Thursday April 8—TBD (in class)
- Tuesday May 11—TBD (9:40 am)

**TEXTBOOK**

Borjas, George. (2020). *Labor Economics*. 8<sup>th</sup> edition. McGraw Hill. (The 7<sup>th</sup> edition is a pretty good substitute).

**GRADES**

Exams (70 percent): Four 100 point exams, each accounting for 17.5 percent of your grade. *Exams are non-cumulative.*

Problem sets (30 percent): As assigned. Each is worth 21.4 points.

Attendance and participation is expected. I will not use the +/- system.

There are 571 possible points. The grading scale is

A	89%+	508	571
B	79%-89%	451	507
C	69%-79%	394	450
D	55%-69%	314	394
F		<314	

*Note the percentages associated with each grade. I do this to avoid hearing or reading “Professor Shields, my score of 89.1 is close to an A, can you please round up my grade?” I don’t want such requests, so I built an avoidance mechanism into the grading system. Please don’t ask me to round up.*

If you expect to miss an exam, I expect you to let me know as soon as possible so we can find an alternative time. In general, with an acceptable reason, such as a university-sanctioned activity, you may be able to arrange to take an exam or submit an assignment early, but never late. If you miss an exam due to a sudden health issue or an emergency, let me know as soon as you are able. In such instances, be prepared to provide an authorized reason for missing the exam.

#### **ACCOMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

If you require special accommodation to complete the requirements of this course, please provide documentation and verification from the office of Resources for Disabled Students (see <http://rds.colostate.edu/>).

#### **ATTENDANCE AND COURSE WORKLOAD**

Attendance is not required, but is expected. If you do show up, your peers and I appreciate that you fully devote your attention the classroom, and that you do not disrupt our learning environment. This includes not distracting others via cell phone or laptop use, except as related to in-class learning.

Overall, students should expect to dedicate 8 hours per week to this class, including classroom time (2.5 hours). Expect to read 2-3 hours per week, with the remaining time spent on the homework.

#### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

This course will adhere to the CSU Academic Integrity Policy as found on the Student' Responsibilities page of the [CSU General Catalog](#) and in the [Student Conduct Code](#). At a minimum, violations will result in a grading penalty in this course and a report to the Office of Student Resolution Center.

Note: I consider use and/or possession of the textbook’s “solutions manual” or nefarious websites such as Chegg as academic dishonesty.

#### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON COVID-19**

All students are required to follow public health guidelines in any university space, and are encouraged to continue these practices when off-campus(es). Students also are required to report any COVID-19 symptoms to the university immediately, as well as if they have potentially been exposed or have tested positive at a non-CSU testing location. If you suspect you have symptoms, please fill out the COVID Reporter (<https://covid.colostate.edu/reporter/>).

If you have COVID symptoms or know or believe you have been exposed, it is important for the health of yourself and others that you complete the online COVID Reporter. Do not ask your instructor to report for you; if you report to your instructor that you will not attend class due to symptoms or a potential exposure, you are required to also submit those concerns through the COVID Reporter. If you do not have access to the internet to fill out the online COVID-19 Reporter, please call (970)491-4600.

If you report symptoms or a positive test, your report is submitted to CSU's Public Health Office. You will receive immediate, initial instructions on what to do and then you will also be contacted by phone by a public health official. Based on your specific circumstances, the public health official may:

- choose to recommend that you be tested and help arrange for a test
- conduct contact tracing
- initiate any necessary public health requirements or recommendations and notify you if you need to take any steps

If you report a potential exposure, the public health official will help you determine if you are at risk of contracting COVID.

For the latest information about the University's COVID resources and information, please visit the **CSU COVID-19 site** (<https://covidrecovery.colostate.edu/>).