

LER 590: Workforce Policies and Partnerships

Should an HR Director make a partnership with a local community college to train workers? Do job training programs work? Does the minimum wage reduce employment? This class focuses on the evaluation and analysis of key labor market policies, programs, and interventions. The class has two primary goals. The first is to introduce students to key debates and challenges in the U.S. labor market. The second is a practical goal: to inform students about the various institutions and dynamics that they will face when seeking to hire and train workers in their future HR positions. The class will take a multi-disciplinary approach to the topics it addresses; most of the readings will be drawn from the economics, sociology, and public policy literatures.

Each week there will be a short quiz on that week's readings. Students will also write a short paper analyzing a policy topic during the semester. At the end of the course, students will work in groups to present an assessment of a labor market program, partnership, or practice. Classroom participation is essential. A note on readings: although I often require only selected pages from a given text, this class involves a commitment to keep up with a significant volume of reading assignments.

Texts are available on Compass.

Grading

Weekly quizzes	30%
Written paper/memo	25%
Class participation	20%
Final project/presentation	25%
Total	100%

Week 1: Introduction / How to Interpret Academic Papers / Primer on Labor Economics

Lecture / presentation in class.

Week 2: Labor Market Policy Context

Freeman, Richard. (2007). The U.S. Market-Driven Labor System, Chapter 1. In *America Works: The Exceptional U.S. Labor Market*. New York: Russell Sage.

Moretti, Enrico. 2012. The Great Divergence, Chapter 3. In *The New Geography of Jobs*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Thelen, Kathleen. 2004. "How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of Skills in Germany, Britain, the United States, and Japan." Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 8-23 (begin with "Skills and Skill Formation").

Week 3: Education, Skills, and Tasks

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Baum et al. 2013. *Education Pays*. The Conference Board. Use as reference. Just look at tables on pp. 11-17, 39-43, and 44-45.

Osterman, P. (2011). "The Promise, Performance, and Policies of Community Colleges." In *Reinventing Education: The Promise of Innovation*, B. Wildavsky, A. Kelly, & K. Carey, Eds. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Holzer, Harry. 2015. "Job Market Polarization and U.S. Worker Skills: A Tale of Two Middles." Brookings Institution.

Autor and Price. 2013. "The Changing Task Composition of the U.S. Labor Market: An Update of Autor, Levy, and Murnane (2003)." Working paper, pp. 1-6.

Modestino, Alicia, Daniel Shoag, Joshua Ballance. (2015). "Downskilling: Changes in Employer Skill Requirements over the Business Cycle," working paper, August 31, 2015, pp. 1-6, 8-10, 14-20.

Belfield, Clive and Vivien Yuen Ting Liu. 2015. "The Labor Market Returns to Math in a Community College," CAPSEE working paper, pp. 1-5, 11-14 (start with "College Math and Earnings").

Week 4: Labor Market Intermediaries and Search / Matching

Benner Chris, Laura Leete, and Manuel Pastor. 2007. *Staircases or Treadmills?* New York: Russell Sage Foundation, pp. 1-19.

Houseman, Susan H. and Carolyn Heinrich. 2015. "Temporary Help Employment in Recession and Recovery." W.E. Upjohn Institute working paper, pp. 1-7, 20-24.

Faberman, R. Jason and Marianna Kudlyak. 2016. "What Does Online Job Search Tell Us about the Labor Market?" *Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago Economic Perspectives*, pp. 1-4.

Cappelli, Peter. 2012. *Why Good People Can't Get Good Jobs*. Philadelphia: Wharton Digital Press, Ch. 4.

Week 5: Changing Job Structure and The Gig Economy

Cappelli, Peter. 1999. "Career Jobs Are Dead." *California Management Review*, 42(1).

Jacoby, Sanford M. 1999. "Reply: Premature Reports of Demise." *California Management Review*, 42(1).

Botsman, Rachel and Andrew Keen. "Can the Sharing Economy Provide Good Jobs?" *Wall Street Journal*, May 10, 2015.

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David Weil, *The Fissured Workplace*. Ithaca: Cornell University ILR Press, 2014 [PDF selection].

Kessler, Sara. "Pixel and Dime." *Fast Company*, March 2014, <http://www.fastcompany.com/3027355/pixel-and-dime-on-not-getting-by-in-the-gig-economy>, pp. 1-37 (these are not full pages; they are printed website pages).

Annette Bernhardt. (2014). "Labor Standards and the Reorganization of Work: Gaps in Data and Research". IRLE Working Paper No. 100-14, pp. 1-14.

Katz, Lawrence F. and Alan B. Krueger. "The Rise and Nature of Alternative Work Arrangements in the United States, 1995-2015." Working paper, pp. 2-3, 6-8, 13-15 (plus associated tables at the end of the paper).

Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Contingent and Alternative Work Arrangements--May 2017," June 7, 2018, pp. 1-8 (plus associated tables at the end of the memo).

Week 6: Will the Robots Steal Our Jobs?

Ford, Martin. 2015. *Rise of the Robots: Technology and the Threat of a Jobless Future*. New York: Basic Books. Selection from Ch. 1.

Frey, Carl Benedict and Michael A. Osborne. 2014. "The Future of Employment: How Susceptible Are Jobs to Computerization?" Working paper, pp. 13-27.

Arntz, M., T. Gregory and U. Zierahn (2016), "The Risk of Automation for Jobs in OECD Countries: A Comparative Analysis", OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers, No. 189, pp. 7-12.

Autor, David A. 2014. "Polanyi's Paradox and the Shape of Employment Growth." NBER Working Paper, No. 20485, pp. 1-11.

Levy, Frank and Richard Murnane. 2013. "Dancing with Robots: Human Skills for Computerized Work." Third Way/Next report, pp. 5-19.

Week 7: Job Training Programs

Carneiro, Pedro, Lorraine Dearden, and Anna Vignoles. 2010. "The Economics of Vocational Education and Training," *International Encyclopedia of Education*. pp. 1-8.

King, Christopher T. and Carolyn Heinrich. 2011. "How Effective Are Workforce Development Programs? Implications for U.S. Workforce Policies." pp. 1-16.

Porter, Eduardo. 2016. "Job Training Works. So Why Not Do More?" *The New York Times*, July 5, 2016.

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Greenstone, Michael and Adam Looney. 2011. "Building America's Job Skills with Effective Workforce Programs: A Training Strategy to Raise Wages and Increase Work Opportunities." Strategy Paper, The Hamilton Project. pp. 14-17.

Lerman, Robert I. 2010. "Employer-Led Training: Extensive and Intensive Approaches." In Finegold et al. (Eds.), *Transforming the U.S. Workforce Development System*. Champaign, IL: LERA, pp. 153-163.

Week 8: Minimum Wages / Living Wages / Wage & Hour Enforcement

John Schmidt, "Why Does the Minimum Wage Have No Discernible Effect on Employment?" Center for Economic and Policy Research, February 2013.

Neumark, David. "The Effects of Minimum Wages on Employment." *FRBSF Economic Letter*, December 21, 2015.

Rachel Abrams, "States Minimum Wages Rise Helping Millions of Workers," New York Times, December 31, 2014.

Paul Sonn and Stephanie Luce. "New Directions for the Living Wage Movement." *Chapter 11 in The Gloves off Economy*. Bernhardt, A., Boushey, H., Dresser, L., and Tilly, C. (eds). Labor and Employment Relations Association, 2008.

Week 9: Gender and Racial Discrimination (Hiring and Workplace Practices)

Guryan, Jonathan and Kerwin K. Charles. 2013. "Taste-Based or Statistical Discrimination: The Economics of Discrimination Returns to Its Roots." *Economic Journal*, 123. Read pp. F417-F418.

Pager, Devah, Bruce Western, and Bart Bonikowski. 2009. "Discrimination in a Low-Wage Labor Market: A Field Experiment." *American Sociological Review*, 74(5). Read pp. 777-786.

Blau, Francine D. and Lawrence M. Kahn. 2007. "The Gender Pay Gap: Have Women Gone as Far as They Can?" *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 21(1). Read pp. 7-15.

Janssen et al. 2016. "Discriminatory Social Attitudes and Varying Gender Pay Gaps Within Firms." *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 69(1). Read pp. 253-258.

Kuhn, Peter and Kailing Shen. 2013. "Gender Discrimination in Job Ads: Evidence from China." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 128(1). Read I.Introduction, IV.Some Facts, and VIII.Conclusion.

Berik, G., Y. Rodgers, and J.E. Zveglic. 2004. "International Trade and Gender Wage Discrimination: Evidence from East Asia." *Review of Development Economics*, 8(2). Read 1.Introduction and 5.Conclusion.

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Week 10: Family Leave / Sick Leave

Eileen Appelbaum and Ruth Milkman, *Unfinished Business: Paid Family Leave in California and the Future of U.S. Work-Family Policy*. Ithaca: Cornell ILR Press, 2010. Read pp. 16-26.

Charles J. Baum and Christopher J. Ruhn, "The effects of paid family leave on labor market outcomes," National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper 19741, December 20-13. <http://www.nber.org/papers/w19741>. Read I.Introduction (pp.1-7) and III-V (Empirical Specification to Leave-Taking; pp.10-20).

Livingston, Gretchen. 2013. "Among 38 Nations, U.S. is the Outlier When It Comes to Paid Parental Leave." *Huffington Post*, December 12, 2013. (Based on PEW Research Center data.)

Helene Jorgensen and Eileen Appelbaum. "Extending Family and Medical Leave to Small Firms." Center for Economic and Policy Research, April 2014. <http://www.cepr.net/index.php/publications/reports/expanding-family-and-medical-leave-to-small-firms>

Week 11: Safety Net Programs: Unemployment Insurance, Disability Insurance

Autor, David H. and Mark G. Duggan. 2010. "Supporting Work: A Proposal for Modernizing the U.S. Disability Insurance System." Center for American Progress and The Hamilton Project. Read pp. 1-9.

Ruffing, K.A. 2014. How Much of the Growth in Disability Insurance Stems from Demographic Changes? Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

Stone, Chad and William Chen. 2014. "Introduction to Unemployment Insurance." Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

Moffitt, Robert A. 2014. "Unemployment Insurance and Unemployment." *IZA World of Labor*, 2014: 13.

Clement, Douglas. 2016. "The Macro Impact of Unemployment Benefits." Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis.

Week 12: Firm-level Innovations 1: High Performance Work Systems

Osterman and Shulman, "How Firms Think." In *Good Jobs America*, pp. 48-69.

Eileen Appelbaum, Jody Hoffer Gittel, and Carrie Leana, "High Performance Work Practices and Sustainable Economic Growth," March 2011. <http://www.cepr.net/index.php/publications/reports/high-performance-work-practices-and-sustainable-economic-growth>

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John Paul MacDuffie. 1995. "Human resource bundles and manufacturing performance: Organizational logic and flexible production systems in the world auto industry." *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 48. Read pp. 197-213.

Casey Ichniowski, Kathryn Shaw, and G. Prennushi, G. 1997. "The effects of human resource practices on manufacturing performance: A study of steel finishing lines." *American Economic Review*, 87. Read pp. 291-313.

Zeynep Ton. "Model Retailers: Who Knew It Could be this Good?" Chapter 4 in *The Good Jobs Strategy: How the Smartest Companies Invest in Employees to Lower Costs and Boost Profits*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014. Read pp. 55-73.

Week 13: Firm-level Innovations 2: Corporate Partnerships with Local High Schools, Votech Programs; Apprenticeships

Fraser and Donovan. 2014. "Filling the Skills Gap: Massachusetts Vocational Technical Schools and Business Partnerships." Boston: Pioneer Institute. Read pp. 7-17.

Symonds, William C., Robert Schwartz, and Ronald F. Ferguson. 2011. Pathways to prosperity: Meeting the challenge of preparing young Americans for the 21st century. Cambridge, MA: Pathways to Prosperity Project, Harvard University Graduate School of Education. Read pp. 9-13; 19-21; 23-37.

Lerman, Robert I. "Skill Development in Middle-Level Occupations: The Role of Apprenticeship Training." IZA Policy Paper No. 61.

Week 14: Skill Mismatch

Accenture and National Association of Manufacturers. 2014. "Out of Inventory: Skills Shortage Threatens Growth for US Manufacturing." Skim.

Peter Whoriskey. 2012. "U.S. manufacturing sees shortage of skilled factory workers." *Washington Post*.

Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee. 2011 "Why Workers Are Losing the War Against Machines," *The Atlantic*.

Paul Beaudry, David A. Green, and Benjamin M. Sand. 2016. "The Great Reversal in Demand for Skill and Cognitive Tasks." *Journal of Labor Economics*, 34(1). Skim.

Jaison R. Abel, Richard Deitz, and Yaqin Su, "Are Recent College Graduates Finding Good Jobs?" Federal Reserve Bank of New York, 2014. Skim.

Andrew Weaver. 2014. "Does a Skills Gap Exist in U.S. Manufacturing?" *MassBenchmarks*.

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John Buchanan. 2006. "From 'Skill Shortages' to Decent Work." Workplace Research Centre, University of Sydney. Read pp. 10-22.

Week 15: Final Project Presentations

TBD.