

# ILRLE 2400 Economics of Wages & Employment Spring 2021

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**Office Hours:**  
M-F by appointment  
(via Zoom)

## Brief Course Description:

Should you work full time, part time, or not at all? Which job offer should you choose? How do you decide if an investment in higher education is right for you? How do companies decide how many workers to hire and what to pay them? Are human workers *really* going to be replaced by robots?

These questions have one thing in common: they can be answered using the tools of labor economics.

## Learning Outcomes:

**PREDICT** how changes in the economic environment impact labor demand, labor supply and equilibrium;

**COMPARE** theories that explain unemployment, unequal wages for equally productive workers and discrimination;

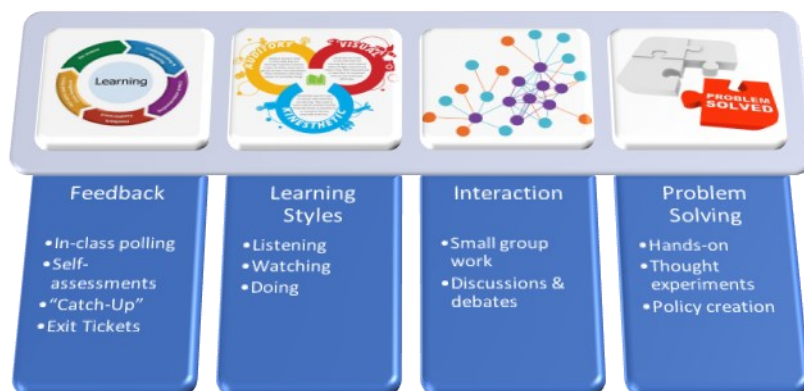
**EVALUATE** policies designed to remediate unemployment and earnings inequality.

## Prerequisites:

ECON 1110 and ECON 1120, or permission of the instructor.

## Achieving the Outcomes:

- Lectures
  - In-class problem solving
  - Experiments
  - Simulations
  - Group work
  - Student polling
  - Exit tickets
- ... and other active learning opportunities!



## Measuring Our Achievement:

- Application cards
- Ungraded self-assessments
- Ungraded peer assessments
- Ungraded small group problem solving exercises
- Ungraded group discussions
- Graded homework
- Preliminary and final exams



**Homework: 25%**  
**Prelim #1: 25%**  
**Prelim #2: 25%**  
**Final Exam: 25%**

## Course Delivery Method(s):

During the Fall 2020 semester, this class will be delivered remotely. The class meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays will be held via Zoom. Our Canvas site contains a link to the recurring Zoom meeting scheduled for our class. If you need technical assistance with Zoom, please visit the [Zoom Help Center](#).



Some students may be working from geographic locations other than Ithaca. To accommodate those students located in time zones that prevent them from attending the classes, all classes will be recorded and class videos will be posted to our Canvas site. Please keep in mind that these recordings are not a replacement for attending live classes and students who are able to attend synchronously are expected to do so.

I recognize that remote delivery poses some unique challenges for all of us. It is important that you maintain the same academic habits for this course as you would for an in-person course: arrive on time, minimize interruptions and distractions during class time, engage with the instructor and your peers as you typically would, ask questions, participate in in-class activities, etc. When scheduling personal activities and travel, please be mindful that this course functions the same as any other course; the remote delivery mechanism does not alter your responsibilities to this course.

## Graded Homeworks:

Throughout the semester, we will be completing five (5) graded homework assignments. These assignments are built to help you develop mastery by practicing the application of the knowledge and skills we will work on in this class. It also helps you develop time management, organization, task completion and responsibility, life skills you will need throughout your college career and beyond.



The schedule of graded homework assignments is given at the end of this syllabus. You are expected to submit your homeworks no later than the stated due date. If your assignment is submitted late, you will lose ten (10) points for each day past the due date, and no assignments will be accepted more than three (3) days past the due date.

## Examinations:

All students are expected to sit for two preliminary examinations and one final examination. **The first prelim will take place on Wednesday, March 17<sup>th</sup> during the scheduled class period. The second prelim will take place on Monday, April 19<sup>th</sup>. The final examination will take place during the Spring 2021 Final Exam Period. Date and time information will be provided as soon as it is released by the University.**

If you have a conflict with one of the exam dates, please see me as soon as possible to discuss alternative arrangements. If you have a health, personal or other issue, please let me know as soon as you learn of this issue. Unexcused absences from any exam will result in a grade of zero (0) for that exam.

## Classroom / Community Responsibilities:

A large part of the academic experience is the challenging of viewpoints and exploring issues from differing perspectives. You are encouraged to express differences of opinion and challenge viewpoints in a mutually respectful manner that opens dialogue and does not threaten any member of the learning community. Our classroom environment will be a safe place for the open exchange of ideas by all participants. Each participant is responsible for ensuring that his or her own behavior promotes this.

There are five ground rules for my classroom. Each student is expected to understand and abide by these rules:

1. Arrive on time, prepared for class
2. Ask for clarification if you are confused
3. Take responsibility for the quality of the discussion
4. Challenge one another, but do so respectfully
5. Keep an open mind – enter with the expectation of learning something new.



Additionally, it is important that we take care of ourselves and each other. **I have an open-door policy – please see me if you want to talk about the course or anything else.**

## Students with Disabilities:

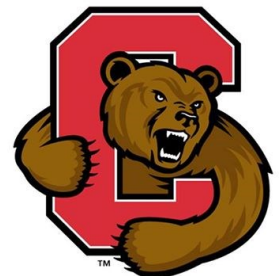
Your access in this course is important. Please provide me with your Student Disability Services (SDS) accommodation letter as early in the semester as possible so that I have adequate time to arrange your approved academic accommodations. If you need immediate accommodation for equal access, please speak with me after class or send an email message to me (with a cc to [sds\\_cu@cornell.edu](mailto:sds_cu@cornell.edu)). If the need arises for additional accommodations during the semester, please contact SDS.

## Religious Accommodation:

If you will be absent from class or have a conflict with a scheduled assignment or exam because of your observance of a holy day, please let me know during the first week of class so that we can make alternative arrangements.

## Student Athletes:

Students represent Cornell in 35 intercollegiate sports. If you are a student athlete, please provide me with your travel schedule as early in the semester as possible. You are responsible for contacting me regarding any conflicts, and we will work together to identify a reasonable resolution.



## Readings, Case Studies and Multimedia Materials

The required textbook for this course is Ronald C. Ehrenberg and Robert S. Smith, *Modern Labor Economics: Theory and Public Policy*. Additional required readings, case studies, and multimedia materials will be assigned periodically, and are indicated in the reading list at the end of this syllabus. Optional readings and materials will be suggested throughout the course and will be made available via Blackboard. If you are unable to find a reading, please let me know right away.

## Academic Integrity:

You are expected to abide by the [Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity](#) and the [Campus Code of Conduct](#). Please read and understand these policies.

Any work submitted by a student in this course will be the student's own. You are permitted – and encouraged – to discuss course materials with your fellow students and work together to develop your understanding of concepts and applications. However, all graded assignments are to be completed by each student independently.

All course materials – including but not limited to readings, lecture slides and handouts, review sheets, problem sets, and examinations – are intellectual property belonging to the author(s). The buying, selling or (re)posting of any course materials or video or audio recordings of lectures is expressly prohibited; engaging in such behavior constitutes academic misconduct with serious consequences. If you have any questions, please let me know.

# FEBRUARY 2021

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SP 2021

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT/SUN
WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6/7
WEEK 1	8 What is Labor Economics?	9	10 Multiple Regression Analysis	11	12	13/14
WEEK 2	15 Labor Market Concepts	16	17 Demand for Labor in the Short Run	18	19	20/21
WEEK 3	22 Demand for Labor in the Long Run HW #1 Due	23	24 Own-Wage Elasticity	25	26	27/28
WEEK						
WEEK						

# MARCH 2021

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SP 2021

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT/SUN
WEEK 4	1 Cross-Wage Elasticity	2	3 Frictions on the Employer Side	4	5	6/7
WEEK 5	8 Frictions on the Employee Side	9	10 WELLNESS DAY – NO CLASSES	11	12	13/14
WEEK 6	15 Prelim #1 Review Class  HW #2 Due	16	17 Prelim #1	18	19	20/21
WEEK 7	22 Supply of Labor: The Decision to	23	24 Supply of Labor: Household	25	26	27/28
WEEK 8	29 Compensating Wage Differentials	30	31 Human Capital Part 1			

# APRIL 2021

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SP 2021

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT/SUN
WEEK 8				1	2	3/4
WEEK 9	5 Human Capital Part 2  HW #3 Due	6	7 Pay and Productivity Part 1	8	9	10/11
WEEK 10	12 Pay and Productivity Part 2	13	14 Prelim #2 Review Class  HW #4 Due	15	16	17/18
WEEK 11	19 Prelim #2	20	21 Protected Characteristics and Labor	22	23	24/25
WEEK 12	26 Theories of Market Discrimination	27	28 Unemployen t: Measurement	29	30	
WEEK						

# MAY2021

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SP 2021

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT/SUN
WEEK 12						1/2
WEEK 13	3 Unemployment: Remediation Through Policy	4	5 Earnings Inequality: Measurement,	6	7	8/9
WEEK 14	10 Earnings Inequality: Remediation	11	12 Final Exam Review Class HW #5 Due	13	14	15/16
WEEK 15	17	18	19	20	21	22/23
WEEK 16	24	25	26	27	28	29/30