Economics 981: Seminar on the Economics of the Labor Market

Course Description

This is the third course in a three-quarter sequence of graduate courses on labor economics. This course covers labor supply, family economics, and other topics based on student interest. The methodological approach is microeconomic, and integrates theory and empirical analysis. Applications to a number of policy issues are covered. Students are encouraged to participate actively in class discussion.

Assignments

Students will work on a project involving empirical analysis of data from the Current Population Survey (CPS). Students will be expected to:

1. Become familiar with Stata;
2. Become familiar with the CPS data by studying questionnaires and codebooks;
3. Extract data from a CPS file and organize it into a useable form;
4. Perform simple descriptive analyses of employment, hours of work, and earnings;
5. Choose a specific topic that can be studied with the CPS data, and estimate simple econometric models to provide evidence relevant for the topic;
6. Write several short progress reports describing the results of the empirical analyses, and discuss them in class;
7. Write a paper summarizing the project and incorporating revisions suggested by the instructor in response to the short reports; and
8. Give a 20-30 minute presentation to the class.

Sample Stata programs will be provided by the instructor. Students who are already working on a research project may use an alternative data set, but the programs provided by the instructor will not be useful in this case.

Students will also be responsible for leading the class discussion on one article.

Grading

There will be one exam, accounting for 50 percent of the course grade. The empirical analysis project and class participation counts for the other 50% of the course grade. There will be one ungraded problem set on labor supply.

Course meetings: MW 1:30-3:18, Scott Lab (201 W. 19th Ave.), room 0241
Contact: Office hours Monday and Tuesday 9:00-11:00 am, Wednesday 3:00-5:00 pm and by appointment. 445 Arps, 2-2009, blau.12@osu.edu.

Course web site: Carmen

Final Exam: Tuesday, June 7, 1:30-3:18.

Readings

There is no textbook for the course, but a number of chapters in the Handbook of Labor Economics, Volumes 1, 2, 3A, 3B, and 3C (North Holland, 1986, 1999) will be assigned. This five-volume reference work is an essential part of the library of professional labor economists. It will be on reserve in the Library. Students are not expected to read every article on the reading list. The required readings for each section will be assigned in class in advance of the date on which they will be discussed in class. Students are expected to have read the assigned articles and be prepared to discuss them in class. Students are encouraged to read additional items of particular interest to them. Journal articles can be obtained in hard copy from the Library, or in electronic form from the library web site: http://library.osu.edu/ (Click on E-Journals).

Abbreviations Used in the Reading List

AER: American Economic Review
ECON: Econometrica
EJ: Economic Journal
HLE: Handbook of Labor Economics
IER: International Economic Review
ILRR: Industrial and Labor Relations Review
JE: Journal of Econometrics
JEL: Journal of Economic Literature
JHC: Journal of Human Capital
JHR: Journal of Human Resources
JLE: Labour Economics
JPE: Journal of Political Economy
JOLE: Journal of Labor Economics
JPUBEC: Journal of Public Economics
QJE: Quarterly Journal of Econ
RESTAT: Rev. of Econ. & Statistics
RESTUD: Review of Econ. Studies

Note: readings in bold are required. The required readings for Retirement and Family economics will be determined later in the quarter.
Reading List

1. LABOR SUPPLY

A. Basic Models


B. Extensions


C. Empirical Applications: Static Models


D. Empirical Applications: Dynamic Models


E. Retirement


Lazear, Edward, "Retirement from the Labor Force," HLE, Chap. 5.


2. Economics of the Family

A. Overview


B. Allocation of Resources Within the Household


C. Union Formation and Dissolution


D. Fertility


E. Child Development: Early Human Capital Formation


