

**University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Department of Economics**

ECON 490 International Labor Market

Spring 2024
Credit: 3 hours

Tue & Thurs: 11am-12:20pm
113 David Kinley Hall

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Contact: Email: syuanyu2@illinois.edu;
Office Hours: Tue & Thurs 2:00-3:00pm; or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an overview of labor markets in a number of countries that represent different stages of economic development, with an emphasis on labor market regulations. We will focus on the impact of various labor market regulations, including minimum wages, employment protections, collective bargaining rights, and social security laws, on various labor market outcomes (earnings, employment, productivity, and a country's overall economic growth). Students are expected to gain an in-depth understanding of the huge variations in labor market regulations around the world, and critically analyze its important impact on various labor market outcomes and a country's overall economic growth.

COURSE MATERIALS

- Most readings will be posted electronically on course Canvas website. There is no textbook for this class.
- This course uses Illinois Canvas as the course website. This website contains lecture notes, readings, and other useful resources. Important announcement will be posted on the course website as well. Please make sure you have access to the course website and check the website regularly.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This course requires your regular attendance. Attendance includes arriving on time and remaining until the end of the session. If you are unable to attend certain class sessions due to university excused reasons, please notify the instructor in advance.

EXAMINATION INFORMATION

Midterm exam: March 6, in class.

Final exam: TBA.

GRADING

| Component | Percentage |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Class Participation | 5% |
| In-class Exercises | 15% |
| Quizzes | 15% |
| Project | 15% |
| Exam 1 | 25% |
| Exam 2 | 25% |
| Total | 100% |

Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

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|----|----------|----|----------|----|----------|----|-------------|
| A+ | 97-100% | B+ | 87-89.9% | C+ | 77-79.9% | D+ | 67-69.9% |
| A | 93-96.9% | B | 83-86.9% | C | 73-76.9% | D | 63-66.9% |
| A- | 90-92.9% | B- | 80-82.9% | C- | 70-72.9% | D- | 60-62.9% |
| | | | | | | F | Below 59.9% |

The grading components are described below:

Class Participation: Active participation in class activities is important to maximize learning goals. Your role as a student is not only to passively receive knowledge, but also to actively share your knowledge, your experience, your perspectives on issues and your meaningful questions that contribute to the learning of the class. Your class participation can be demonstrated by your preparedness for each class, your thorough understanding of the assigned readings, your active involvement in class activities, and your meaningful questions or comments during lectures and discussions. Your class participation is graded as the following:

| | |
|-----|--|
| 0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Absence (more than 5 times without University excused reasons), or – Not participate in any class activities. – Never provide comments or ask questions. |
| 1-2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presence in most classes, and – Occasionally involve in class activities (for example, occasionally contribute to group or class discussions; provide some input) |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presence in almost all the classes, and – Regularly involve in class activities (for example, regularly contribute to group discussions; provide relevant comments or questions). |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presence in all classes. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | – Actively participate in class activities (for example, actively involve in class discussions; provide relevant, and sometimes, meaningful comments or questions). |
| 5 | – Presence in all classes. – Always actively participate in class activities (for example, always actively participate in group discussions; always provide meaningful comments, questions or examples that contribute to lecture and discussion). |

Note that *class participation* is NOT *attendance*. As a student, it is your responsibility to attend all classes and be on time. You do not earn any credits for class participation by merely sitting in class without participation or contribution. In addition, being absent and/or late multiple times will lower your contribution to classroom grades simply because you have fewer opportunities to participate in class activities and contribute to the class.

In-class Exercises: In many lectures we will have in-class exercises which are NOT announced in advance. You are allowed to drop ONE in-class exercise score. You will receive a score of zero for any in-class exercise that you miss without a University excused and documented reason. If your absence is due to a University excused reason, you can be given a chance to make up the exercise within **14** calendar days if you notify me before the class and provide supporting evidence.

Quizzes: Throughout the semester there will be several short quizzes, which is to provide a small incentive for you to adequately prepare for each class and keep up with the course content. You are allowed to drop ONE lowest quiz score. You will receive a score of zero for any quiz that you miss without a university excused and documented reason. If your absence is due to a university excused reason, you can be given a chance to make up the quiz within **14** calendar days if you notify me before the class and provide supporting evidence.

Project: Small groups (~3-4 students in each group) will complete an essay regarding certain labor market issues or policies in one or multiple countries, using the publicly available data sources and existing economic literature. You can find a more detailed Project Guide on the course website. You are welcome to choose a topic or a country that you are interested in. Note that you are expected to conduct some research, such as collecting relevant data, reviewing the recent academic journal articles regarding the labor market issue or policy in the country/countries of chosen, and making your own analysis. Please do not repeat what you have already learned in class. Take the project as a chance to broaden and deepen your knowledge and analytical skills on various aspects of labor markets. Throughout the semester or towards the end of the semester, each group will briefly present their main findings to the class (~10 minutes).

Exams: There are two exams for the class.

- Each exam will include all the contents of the topics to be tested, including lectures, assigned readings, in-class exercises & discussions, videos, etc. More information about the specific content and format of the exams will be provided before each exam. You need to carefully study the lecture notes for all the exams.
- Exams must be taken at the scheduled time. If you miss the midterm exam for a University excused reason, you must notify me BEFORE the exam begins. The final exam will be used

as a make-up of the final score only for those that provide supporting evidence, and an absence letter from Student Assistance Center in the Office of the Dean of Students may be required under certain circumstances. Failure to take an exam at the scheduled time without approval will result in zero grade for this exam.

- Conflict exam can be offered if you qualify for such accommodation (see [Student Code Article 3 Part 2](#)). If you believe you are eligible for a conflict exam, you must notify me as soon as possible but no later than one week before the date of exam.
- You may on occasion have questions about assignment or exam grading. Re-grading request must be submitted in writing within 7 calendar days after you receive your graded assignment or exam; re-grading request submitted after 7 calendar days will not be accepted. In the request for re-grading, you must specify the aspects that need further attention, and the reasons that justify re-grading, which should include the rationale behind your original answer, the differences between your original answer and the correct answer, and why you believe re-grading should be granted. I reserve the right to re-grade the entire assignment or exam (not only the question in which you think there may be a mistake).

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance: Attendance to class is mandatory. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out from the instructor or your classmates what material was covered and what handouts you may have missed. There are **NO make-ups** for quizzes or exams. Exceptions can be made only if your absence is for a University excused and documented reason. If your absence is due to a University excused reason and would like to make up any in-class exercise, you must notify the instructor in advance and provide supporting evidence (e.g., illness with a doctor's note). If you miss one of the exams for a University excused reason, you must notify me before the exam begins. Accommodations will be offered only for those that provide supporting evidence (an absence letter from Student Assistance Center in the Office of the Dean of Students may be required under certain circumstances). Failure to take an exam at the scheduled time without approval will result in zero grade for this exam. Please refer to the [Student Code \(Article 1 Part 5\)](#) regarding the university policy governing class attendance.

Classroom Conduct: You are expected to engage in respectful interactions with the instructor and your fellow students to foster a positive learning environment. Any behaviors that would distract others in classroom are prohibited. Such behaviors include but are not limited to: arriving class late, leaving class earlier, chatting with classmates, talking on the phone, texting, unnecessary computer and internet use such as playing video games, browsing social network websites, checking or composing email, etc. Violation of the appropriate classroom conduct will negatively affect class participation grades, and lead to restrictions on your cellphone/laptop use, or being asked to leave the classroom, depending on the frequency and severity of the violation.

Academic Integrity: Any form of academic dishonesty is regarded as a serious offense and will not be tolerated. Please carefully review the University policy governing academic integrity and plagiarism: http://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1_part4_1-401.html

Violations of academic integrity as given in the Student Code will be taken very seriously. Anyone found cheating in the course (or helping others to cheat) will be penalized according to the Code. These penalties include, among others, a failing grade (F) for the course and suspension and/or expulsion from the University

Use of Class Notes and Materials: Taking notes is a means of recording information but more importantly of personally absorbing and integrating the educational experience; it must not be for the purpose of selling or re-distribution since course materials are protected by the US copyright laws. You must not make audio or visual reproductions of any portion of any class, or upload course materials including the course syllabus on any non-university website, without the explicit permission from the instructor. According to the university policy regarding sale or distribution of lecture notes or course materials ([Student Code Article 1 Part 3](#)):

“No student shall sell, deliver or distribute copyrighted lecture notes or other course materials without the express permission of the copyright holder. An example of an infraction would include posting on a website or selling instructor copyrighted slides, lecture notes or other expressions fixed in a medium. (See also the University General Rules, Art. III, §4 regarding copyright policy.)”

ACCOMMODATIONS

Disability Accommodations: To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the course instructor and the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible. To contact DRES you may visit 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, call (217) 333-1970, or e-mail a message to disability@uiuc.edu.

REMARKS

- Being prepared for each class will help you enhance your learning outcome. Reading the assigned readings before each class will assist you better understanding of the lecture and add to the quality of class discussion. Keep up with the course material is the best strategy for you to do well in exams.
- Any course-related questions and inquiries are very welcome and encouraged. If you have a question, DO ask, because other students may have similar questions. You are welcome to talk to me before or after the class, or stop by during my office hour, or send me an email. If you ask a question by email, please add “[ECON490]” at the beginning of your email titles in order to receive timely response. Depending on your question, I may address it in class or send an email to the whole class to ensure everyone is on the same page.
- You are welcome to keep me informed and provide feedback or comments about the course at any time throughout the semester.

COURSE SCHEDULE (ECON 490, Spring 2024)

* This should serve as a guide for planning your readings, assignments, and exam preparation. Aspects of the course schedule are subject to change, if and when necessary.

| | Tuesday | Thursday |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Week 1 (01/16, 01/18) | Course Introduction | Key Concepts and Measurement |
| Week 2 (01/23, 01/25) | Key Concepts and Measurement | Overview of Labor Market Regulations |
| Week 3 (01/30, 02/01) | Introduction of U.S. Labor Market | Employment Protection in the U.S. |
| Week 4 (02/06, 02/08) | Employment Protection in the U.S. | Collective Bargaining in the U.S. |
| Week 5 (02/13, 02/15) | Collective Bargaining in the U.S. | Social Safety Net in the U.S. |
| Week 6 (02/20, 02/22) | Social Safety Net in the U.S. | Outcomes of Labor Market Regulations |
| Week 7 (02/27, 02/29) | Labor Market in Canada | Labor Market in Canada |
| Week 8 (03/05, 03/07) | Labor Market in Germany | Midterm |
| Week 9 (03/12, 03/14) | <i>No Class (Happy Spring Break!)</i> | |
| Week 10 (03/19, 03/21) | Labor Market in Germany | Labor Market in OECD Countries |
| Week 11 (03/26, 03/28) | Labor Market in OECD Countries | Labor Market in China |
| Week 12 (04/02, 04/04) | Labor Market in China | Labor Market in India |
| Week 13 (04/09, 04/11) | Labor Market in India | Labor Market in Brazil |
| Week 14 (04/16, 04/18) | Labor Market in Brazil | International Labor Organizations |
| Week 15 (04/23, 04/25) | International Labor Organizations | Presentation and Course Summary |
| Week 16 (04/30) | Presentation and Course Summary | |