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**University of Alberta – Department of Economics – Winter 2018**  
**ECON 531 – Labor Economics I – Marchand**

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**COURSE OUTLINE**

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Website

<https://sites.ualberta.ca/~jmarchan/teaching.htm>

Class Hours

Monday and Wednesday  
Tory B 100: 12:30 - 1:50 PM

Instructor

Joseph Marchand  
jmarchan@ualberta.ca

Description

Labor Economics I (ECON 531) at the University of Alberta serves as masters-level graduate exposure to the market for labor, in order to establish a comprehensive understanding of the field. This course will explore several topics of labor economics, specifically through the lens of local labor markets from a North American perspective and with an analytical link to the evaluation techniques of an event or a policy change.

This course is restricted to graduate students only, at both the MA and PhD level. Students enrolled in this course should have a strong interest in labor economics and in the production of research. A beneficial background for this course would include exposure to an undergraduate course in labor economics, the writing of previous research papers, and some form of training in one or more statistical software packages (i.e. Stata).

Resources

Given that this is a graduate course, there is no primary textbook to follow. Instead, many research papers and some handbook chapters will serve as the primary material for the course, as well as several different textbooks to use as a reference. A reading list of these materials will be updated on the course website throughout the semester. It will be necessary for you to digest this research ahead of class time and repeatedly over time.

Evaluation

Students enrolled in this course must participate in class, present their own research, and submit a research paper. The purpose of these evaluative tools is for you to fully demonstrate your level of understanding of research in the field of labor economics.

Your numerical grade for the course is calculated with the following relative weights:

30.0%	Class Participation	(from January 8 <sup>th</sup> to April 11 <sup>th</sup> )
40.0%	Research Presentation(s)	(from February 26 <sup>th</sup> –28 <sup>th</sup> and April 4 <sup>th</sup> –11 <sup>th</sup> )
30.0%	Research Paper	(due Wednesday, April 11 <sup>th</sup> )

Your letter grade is then determined based on your absolute and relative performance to the rest of the class, with a historical grade point average of ~ 3.4 out of 4.0 (~ A–/B+).

Class participation will primarily be based on the attendance of class hours and the contributions made during those class hours. Think of class time like a language course; we will only use our time to talk about labor markets. In addition, students are expected to attend the relevant department seminars on the subject matter, which are typically from 3:30 to 5:00 pm on Fridays, but could possibly take place any day during the week.

The research presentation(s) is (are) your formal opportunity to defend your research to the instructor and your peers. This is a chance to walk us through all of your reasoning and explain how all of your materials come together to answer your research question. This talk should emulate a department seminar, as you will have to answer questions from your audience. Its evaluation will be based on your preparedness and potential.

The research paper is the only form of your research that you will actually hand in. By the time it is due, it should be a well-written synopsis and more detailed description of all of the elements from your research presentation, as well as a reflection of all of the changes and incorporation of feedback that you have made since your presentation. Its layout and writing style can follow from your favorite labor economics journal article. Given that the paper is due soon after the presentation, you should be writing, and rewriting, all semester long. Its evaluation will be similar to that of the presentation.

### Policy

“Policy about course outlines can be found in the Evaluation Procedures and Grading System section of the University Calendar.” (If there is a problem, let me know ASAP.)

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behavior (online at [www.governance.ualberta.ca](http://www.governance.ualberta.ca)) and avoid any behavior which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.” (Dean’s office makes decisions.)

“Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars, or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).” (Includes picture taking too.)

Schedule

<b>January</b>	8 <sup>th</sup>	Mon	(1)	Overview: Introductions, Outline, Journals, Resources
	10 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	(2)	Overview: Reading List, Your Research, ITGS
	15 <sup>th</sup>	Mon	(3)	Overview: Kinds of Data, Your Research, Librarian
	17 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	(4)	Local Labor Markets: ITGS, BK
	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Mon	(5)	Local Labor Markets: BK, HS
	24 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	(6)	Local Labor Markets: M
	29 <sup>th</sup>	Mon	(7)	Place-Based Policies: Your Research, (M), BGK
	31 <sup>st</sup>	Wed	(8)	Place-Based Policies: BGK, Diff-in-Diff
<b>February</b>	5 <sup>th</sup>	Mon	(9)	Place-Based Policies: Your Research, NS, GG
	7 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	(10)	Definitions & Techniques: (GG), (KM), BF
	12 <sup>th</sup>	Mon	(11)	Definitions & Techniques: Your Research
	14 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	(12)	Definitions & Techniques: BF
	19 <sup>th</sup>	Mon	*	No Class (Reading Week)
	21 <sup>st</sup>	Wed	*	No Class (Reading Week)
	26 <sup>th</sup>	Mon	(13)	Your Presentations (1 x 20 min.): Dan
	28 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	(14)	Your Presentations (1 x 20 min.): Liz
<b>March</b>	5 <sup>th</sup>	Mon	(15)	Your Presentations (1 x 20 min.): Kyle
	7 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	(16)	Definitions & Techniques: BF, CKW
	12 <sup>th</sup>	Mon	(17)	Definitions & Techniques: MP, FKV
	14 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	(18)	Natural Resources: Your Research, BMS
	19 <sup>th</sup>	Mon	(19)	Natural Resources: Stata Code, M1
	21 <sup>st</sup>	Wed	(20)	Natural Resources: M1, Stata Code, M2
	26 <sup>th</sup>	Mon	(21)	Natural Resources: MW1, MW2
	28 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	(22)	Natural Disasters: BP1, BP2, Your Research
<b>April</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Mon	*	No Class – (Easter Monday)
	4 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	(23)	Your Presentations (3 x 15 min.): Dan, Liz, Kyle
	9 <sup>th</sup>	Mon	(24)	Natural Disasters: S, GP
	11 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	(25)	Natural Disasters: DKL, Your Research
	15 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	*	Your Papers (final deadline by midnight)