

Faculty of Science Course Syllabus
Department of Economics
Economics 3315: Online Version
Labour Economics
Fall 2020

Instructor: Shelley Phipps

Email: shelley.phipps@dal.ca

Office Hours: These will be held via Brightspace 'Collaborate' (look under 'Content') on Mondays from 10 until 11:30am Atlantic and on Tuesdays from 2:30 until 4 Atlantic.
(These times may be changed after I know the time zones of all students in the class.)

"Lectures": I will post materials that can be viewed asynchronously each Monday morning.

Course Description

This course provides an overview of basic ideas in labour economics. We will consider theory, evidence and policy, all from a Canadian perspective. We will explore alternative approaches to economics (neo-classical, institutional, behavioural). Examples of topics to be covered this term include: Why are there good jobs and bad jobs? How would a minimum income policy affect the Canadian labour market? Why has senior labour market participation risen so much in the past 20 years? How do childcare costs affect desired hours of paid work by parents? Do minimum wages reduce employment? What is economic discrimination and does it exist in Canada today? How well do immigrants fare in the Canadian labour market?

Course Prerequisites

Economics 2200 and Economics 2201 (with minimum grade of C)

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

- Understanding of basic theories of the labour market
- Preliminary understanding of empirical analysis in labour economics
- Knowledge of Canadian labour market policy
- Ability to present and write about economic data

Course Materials

Text

Labour Market Economics: Theory, Evidence and Policy in Canada (Eighth Edition) by D. Benjamin, M. Gunderson, T. Lemieux and W. C. Riddell. Either an electronic or hard copy will be fine.

Note that given the online nature of the class this year, access to a copy of the textbook is essential.

Additional materials will include powerpoint presentations with audio commentary posted on Brightspace, journal articles that can be accessed electronically via the Dalhousie library and occasional podcasts.

Course Assessment (Fall 2020 online class version)

Component	Weight (% of final grade)	Date
Asynchronous participation through posts on Brightspace discussion board (weekly questions posted Mondays)	10 (1 point each; must post 10/12)	Sundays, 4pm Atlantic
Essay Questions All weeks except when paper or assignments due	30 (5 points each; best 6/7)	Wednesdays 4pm Atlantic
Assignments (4)	40 (10 each)	Wednesdays 4pm Atlantic (Sept 30; Oct 14; Oct 28; Nov 18)
Paper	20	Wednesday Dec 9 4pm Atlantic

Conversion of numerical grades to Final Letter Grades follows the Dalhousie Common Grade Scale

A+ (90-100)	B+ (77-79)	C+ (65-69)	D (50-54)
A (85-89)	B (73-76)	C (60-64)	F (<50)
A- (80-84)	B- (70-72)	C- (55-59)	

Dalhousie Definition/Explanation of above letter grades (17.1 undergraduate calendar)

	Definition	Explanation
A+, A or A-	Excellent	Considerable evidence of original thinking; demonstrated outstanding capacity to analyse and synthesize; outstanding grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base.
B+, B or B-	Good	Evidence of grasp of subject matter, some evidence of critical capacity and analytical ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with the literature.
C+, C or C-	Satisfactory	Evidence of some understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems; benefitting from his/her university experience.
D	Marginal Pass	Evidence of minimally acceptable familiarity with subject matter, critical and analytical skills
F	Inadequate	Insufficient evidence of understanding of the subject matter, weakness in critical and analytical skills; limited or irrelevant use of the literature.

Course Policies

ALL course work is to be completed independently; students are not allowed to work together on essay questions, assignments or their term papers.

All work will be submitted through a dropbox on Brightspace and checked for plagiarism using 'Urkund.'

Academic integrity must be respected in every aspect of the course. You may not copy words written by someone else; nor may you take the words written by someone else and 'change them a little.' When you are using ideas/information/data you have taken from another source, you must acknowledge this with a parenthetical author/date reference in your text as well as an entry in your bibliography. Please ask me if you have any doubts; consult university policy in the link provided below.
Information: https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html

Students who cannot complete a course component on time because they are temporarily ill or have a family emergency, etc must complete and submit the 'Student Declaration of Absence' form via the dropbox on Brightspace. Following university policy, at most 2 such forms can be submitted in a one-semester class. If you have longer-term health issues, contact Patricia Laws, Assistant Dean (Student Affairs).

[https://cdn.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/dept/university_secretariat/policy-repository/Student%20Absence%20Regulation%20\(May%202018\)%20\(3\).pdf](https://cdn.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/dept/university_secretariat/policy-repository/Student%20Absence%20Regulation%20(May%202018)%20(3).pdf)

We will count the best 6/7 essay questions. If you miss one due to an illness/emergency, we will simply count that as the one to be dropped.

You are only required to post responses on the bulletin board in 10/12 weeks; again, missing one due to ill health can thus be one of your 'free' weeks.

All assignments must be completed to pass the course. Please contact me through email to make arrangements if you will be late with an assignment due to an illness/emergency.

All students must complete and achieve a grade of at least 50 percent on the term paper in order to pass the course.

List of Topics

1. Introduction
 - Subject matter of labour economics
 - Labour market outcomes
 - Neo-classical, institutional and behavioural economics approaches
 - Regression analysis and research design

2. Basic concepts and measures
 - Labour force participation, employment and unemployment rate
 - Unemployment incidence and duration

3. Labour Supply
 - Basic income-leisure choice model
 - Empirical evidence about labour supply
 - Constraints on Choices

 - Labour supply and public policy
 - Canadian tax/transfer policies
 - International comparisons of tax/transfer policies
 - Empirical evidence

 - Life-cycle versus cohort changes in labour supply
 - Household production
 - Childcare
 - Retirement

4. Labour Demand
 - Basic model of labour demand in short and long run
 - Elasticity of demand for labour
 - Labour as a 'quasi-fixed' factor and non-wage benefit

5. Bringing Together Supply and Demand
 - Wages and employment under perfect competition
 - Incidence of payroll tax
 - Wages and employment with imperfect competition
 - Minimum wage policy

6. Relative Wage Determination
 - Compensating wages
 - Returns to education
 - Discrimination

7. Economics of Immigration

University Policies and Statements

This course is governed by the academic rules and regulations set forth in the University Calendar and by Senate

Missed or Late Academic Requirements due to Student Absence

As per Senate decision instructors may not require medical notes of students who must miss an academic requirement, **including the final exam**, for courses offered during fall or winter 2020-21 (until April 30, 2021). Information on regular policy, including the use of the Student Declaration of Absence can be found here: https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/missed-or-late-academic-requirements-due-to-student-absence.html.

Academic Integrity

At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all of our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect (The Center for Academic Integrity, Duke University, 1999). As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all of the work you do. The University provides policies and procedures that every member of the university community is required to follow to ensure academic integrity. **Information:** https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html

Accessibility

The Advising and Access Services Centre is Dalhousie's centre of expertise for student accessibility and accommodation. The advising team works with students who request accommodation as a result of a disability, religious obligation, or any barrier related to any other characteristic protected under Human Rights legislation (Canada and Nova Scotia).

Information: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility.html

Student Code of Conduct

Everyone at Dalhousie is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. The Code of Student Conduct allows Dalhousie to take disciplinary action if students don't follow this community expectation. When appropriate, violations of the code can be resolved in a reasonable and informal manner—perhaps through a restorative justice process. If an informal resolution can't be reached, or would be inappropriate, procedures exist for formal dispute resolution.

Code: https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/student-life/code-of-student-conduct.html

Diversity and Inclusion – Culture of Respect

Every person at Dalhousie has a right to be respected and safe. We believe inclusiveness is fundamental to education. We stand for equality. Dalhousie is strengthened in our diversity. We are a respectful and inclusive community. We are committed to being a place where everyone feels welcome and supported, which is why our Strategic Direction prioritizes fostering a culture of diversity and inclusiveness

Statement: <http://www.dal.ca/cultureofrespect.html>

Recognition of Mi'kmaq Territory

Dalhousie University would like to acknowledge that the University is on Traditional Mi'kmaq Territory. The Elders in Residence program provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel and support. Visit or e-mail the Indigenous Student Centre (1321 Edward St) (elders@dal.ca).

Information: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html

Important Dates in the Academic Year (including add/drop dates)

https://www.dal.ca/academics/important_dates.html

University Grading Practices

https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/grading-practices-policy.html

Student Resources and Support

Advising

General Advising https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/advising.html

Science Program Advisors: <https://www.dal.ca/faculty/science/current-students/academic-advising.html>

Indigenous Student Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html

Black Students Advising Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/black-student-advising.html

International Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/international-centre/current-students.html

Academic supports

Library: <https://libraries.dal.ca/>

Writing Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/writing-and-study-skills.html

Studying for Success: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/study-skills-and-tutoring.html

Copyright Office: <https://libraries.dal.ca/services/copyright-office.html>

Fair Dealing Guidelines <https://libraries.dal.ca/services/copyright-office/fair-dealing.html>

Other supports and services

Student Health & Wellness Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/health-and-wellness/services-support/student-health-and-wellness.html

Student Advocacy: <https://dsu.ca/dsas>

Ombudsperson: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/where-to-get-help/ombudsperson.html

Safety

Biosafety: <https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/biosafety.html>

Chemical Safety: <https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/chemical-safety.html>

Radiation Safety: <https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/radiation-safety.html>

Scent-Free Program: <https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/occupational-safety/scent-free.html>