

# Econ 541

## Human Resources and Labor Economics

### Module 2, 2015-16

#### Course Information

---

***Instructor: Qing Wang***

Office: PHBS Building, Room 731

Phone: 86-755-2603-3355

Email: [qingwang@phbs.pku.edu.cn](mailto:qingwang@phbs.pku.edu.cn)

Office Hour: Tuesday, 3:30-4:30pm or by appointment

***Classes:***

Lectures: Tuesday & Friday, 1:30-3:20pm

Venue: PHBS Building, Room 229

***Course Website:***

<http://cms.pkusz.edu.cn>

## 1. Course Description

### 1.1 Context

Course overview:

This is an elective course designed for graduate students in Economics and related fields. In this course, we will explore theory, empirical practices, and public policy in the field of labor economics and human resources. Students will learn to apply economic theory to business issues and practices and understand the behavior of workers and firms within the employment relationship. The topics start with fundamental theories of labor demand and supply by analyzing the decision-making procedure of households and firms. It then goes on to topics including search and matching, on-the-job training and investment, incentives and compensation, personnel economics, public policy and other important issues.

Prerequisites:

Students are expected to have completed undergraduate level Microeconomic Theory. This includes the decision making procedure of individuals and firms, market equilibrium and failure, and the basic knowledge of data analysis. Please see me if you are unsure about your background to take this course.

### 1.2 Textbooks and Reading Materials

There is no required textbook for the course. I will use the course website to distribute all announcements, handouts, readings and homework assignments. The following textbooks are a good source of references.

- [1]. Borgas, George J. Labor Economics. McGraw Hill Higher Education.
- [2]. Cahuc, Pierre, and André Zylberberg. Labor Economics. The MIT Press.

- [3]. Deaton, Angus. The Analysis of Household Surveys: A Microeconometric Approach to Development Policy. The World Bank.
- [4]. Khandker, Shahidur R., Gayatri B. Koolwal, and Hussain A. Samad. Handbook on Impact Evaluation: Quantitative Methods and Practices. The World Bank.
- [5]. Lazear, Edward, and Michael Gibbs. Personnel Economics in Practice. Wiley.
- [6]. Noe, Raymond A., John. R. Hollenbeck, Barry Gerhart, and Patrick M. Wright. Human Resources Management. Renmin University of China Press.

## 2. Learning Outcomes

### 2.1 Intended Learning Outcomes

| Learning Goals   | Objectives  | Assessment |
|--|---|------------|
| 1. Our graduates will be effective communicators.                          | 1.1. Our students will produce quality business and research-oriented documents.  | √          |
|  | 1.2. Students are able to professionally present their ideas and also logically explain and defend their argument.  | √          |
| 2. Our graduates will be skilled in team work and leadership.              | 2.1. Students will be able to lead and participate in group for projects, discussion, and presentation.   | √          |
|  | 2.2. Students will be able to apply leadership theories and related skills.   |            |
| 3. Our graduates will be trained in ethics.                                | 3.1. In a case setting, students will use appropriate techniques to analyze business problems and identify the ethical aspects, provide a solution and defend it. |            |
|  | 3.2. Our students will practice ethics in the duration of the program.  |            |
| 4. Our graduates will have a global perspective.                           | 4.1. Students will have an international exposure.  |            |
| 5. Our graduates will be skilled in problem-solving and critical thinking. | 5.1. Our students will have a good understanding of fundamental theories in their fields.   | √          |
|  | 5.2. Our students will be prepared to face problems in various business settings and find solutions.  |            |
|  | 5.3. Our students will demonstrate competency in critical thinking.   | √          |

### 2.2 Course specific objectives

This course aims to equip students to understand and engage in fundamental theories and empirical research in the field of labor economics. Learning will be achieved through reading book chapters, presenting academic papers and articles, and critically analysing the learning materials.

### 2.3 Assessment/Grading Details

Students are expected to attend all lectures, participate in class discussions, read the required class materials and complete homework and projects. The course grade will be determined by:

- [1]. Attendance and class participation (10 points).  
Attendance to all lectures is mandatory.

[2]. Class presentation (20 points).

Each group of students will be responsible for presenting one or two papers or articles from the reading list depending on the class size.

[3]. Homework assignments (40 points).

There will be three individual homework assignments. The assignments will contain computer exercises using statistical packages. Send me a copy by email before class begins (no later than 8am) and submit a hard copy in class. Attached the code with your answer. Late homework will not be accepted.

[4]. Written summary (30 points).

Each student will write five summaries of papers that are listed in the references and presented by other students. Send me a copy by email before class begins and bring me a hard copy in class. Late submission will not be accepted.

## **2.4 Academic Honesty and Plagiarism**

It is important for a student's effort and credit to be recognized through class assessment. Credits earned for a student work due to efforts done by others are clearly unfair. Deliberate dishonesty is considered academic misconducts, which include plagiarism; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; or altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying of data, research procedures, or data analysis.

All assessments are subject to academic misconduct check. Misconduct check may include reproducing the assessment, providing a copy to another member of faculty, and/or communicate a copy of this assignment to the PHBS Discipline Committee. A suspected plagiarized document/assignment submitted to a plagiarism checking service may be kept in its database for future reference purpose.

Where violation is suspected, penalties will be implemented. The penalties for academic misconduct may include: deduction of honour points, a mark of zero on the assessment, a fail grade for the whole course, and reference of the matter to the Peking University Registrar.

For more information of plagiarism, please refer to *PHBS Student Handbook*.

## **3. Topics, Teaching and Assessment Schedule**

Topic 1: Empirical Methods in Studying Labor Economics, Lecture 1-2

Topic 2: Education, Human Capital, and Labor Supply, Lecture 3-4

Topic 3: Firm and Labor Demand, Lecture 5-6

Topic 4: Labor Market Equilibrium and Applications, Lecture 7

Topic 5: Search, Matching and Unemployment, Lecture 8

Topic 6: Agency, Wage Structure and Executive Compensation, Lecture 9-11

Topic 7: Personnel Economics, Lecture 12-14

Topic 8: Technological Change and Globalization, Lecture 15-18

## **4. Miscellaneous**

We will use CMS (<http://cms.pkusz.edu.cn/>) to manage the course. The course website will appear as Econ 541: Human Resources and Labor Economics in your CMS Course List. I will send email announcements through CMS and post all related course materials there. Please check the course website every week.