Labor economics

PROF. CLAUDIO LUCIFORA

Course aims and intended learning outcomes

The aim of this course is to acquaint students with advanced topics in labor economics. The focus of the course is on theory as well as empirical applications. The course is designed to strengthen students' ability to analyze economic problems and develop independent research interests. Finally, it gives students an opportunity to improve their skills through both tutorials in the Lab and presentation of key papers. Prerequisites for this course include: intermediate microeconomics, mathematics, statistics.

Course content

Education and Human Capital
- The theory of human capital: investment in human capital.
- Evaluations of the returns to education.

Competitive equilibrium and compensating wage differentials
- Labor supply and labor demand in competitive settings.
- Technological progress, robots, AI and labor demand.
- Imperfect competition and compensating wage differentials.
- Theories of discrimination.

Labour market institutions
- Unions and collective bargaining.
- Employment protection legislation.

Empirical methods in economics
- Empirical applications in labor economics.
- Differences-in-differences and Regression discontinuity design.

Reading list

P. CAHUC-S. CARCILLO-A. ZYLBERBERG, Labor Economics, Cambridge, Mass. and London: MIT Press, 2014 (second edition).

Also see: http://www.labor-economics.org/.

Teaching method

The course is structured in lectures and tutorials. Lectures concern the presentation of economic problems and empirical applications to labour market issues; tutorials deal with the presentation of both empirical methods, as well as journal articles on selected topics. Laboratory sessions teach students to use econometric techniques (at the computer) using both micro-data and software packages. Presentations by students of selected papers are an integral part of the course.

Assessment method and criteria

Student will be assessed as follows:

A final written exam, with open questions covering both analytical models and empirical methods. The student is expected to show his/her understanding of the subject. This contributes to 70 percent of the final mark.

An empirical project involving replication or extension of published work (reading lists, data sets, and a selection of topics will be circulated). This contributes to 20 percent of the final mark.

Presentation of journal articles. This will contribute to 10 percent of the final mark.

Notes and prerequisites

Additional information will be given in class, all the course's materials are posted and downloadable on the dedicated Blackboard Labor Economics section.