

ECON 4232 / 8803: Labor Economics

3 Credits | Summer 2026 | June 29 – July 31
TRF 12:30 PM – 3:15 PM | Klaus-Advanced Computing 1447

Instructor: Haizheng Li

General Course Information

Course Description

This course provides students with a solid understanding of how labor markets function, as well as the related economic issues and policy implications. We examine the incentives and behavior of workers and firms, their interactions in the labor market, and the role of government regulation. Topics include worker supply decisions, firm demand, labor market equilibrium, human capital, discrimination, and unemployment.

Core IMPACTS and Course Learning Outcomes

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area. Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas.

Orienting Question: How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Learning Outcome: Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist, or change.

Career-Ready Competencies developed in this course:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion

Required Course Materials

George J. Borjas, *Labor Economics*, McGraw-Hill Education, 9th edition (**required**).

Prerequisites & Course Expectations

The course requires a working knowledge of calculus and regression analysis. Students are strongly encouraged to complete intermediate microeconomics and econometrics prior to enrolling.

Grading Policy

Undergraduate Students

Homework	20%
Quizzes (drop lowest)	30%
Class Presentation	20%
Exam	30%
Total	100%

Undergraduate students may also write an optional paper on a topic related to course material for up to 5 percentage points of extra credit.

Graduate Students

Homework	15%
Quizzes (drop lowest)	30%
Class Presentation	10%
Exam	30%
Term Paper & Presentation	15%
Total	100%

Final grades are awarded on a scale of A–F with no +/- grades permitted.

Description of Graded Components

Homework (UG: 20% | Grad: 15%)

Homework assignments will be given regularly and must be submitted electronically. Late homework will not be accepted. After each assignment and exam, students are expected to review their work, identify mistakes, and seek assistance during office hours as needed.

Quizzes (30% for both tracks)

There will be six (6) in-class quizzes over the course of the semester. Students may drop their lowest quiz score. No make-up quizzes will be given.

Class Presentations (UG: 20% | Grad: 10%)

Students will choose one topic from a provided list related to current labor market policy debates and prepare an 8–10 minute in-class presentation. Grades are based on both the presentation delivery and the accompanying PowerPoint slides, which must be submitted.

Exam (30% for both tracks)

One in-class exam will be held on July 30 (last day of classes). This is not a final exam and does not follow final exam rules. No make-up exams will be given.

Term Paper — Graduate Students Only (15%)

Graduate students are required to complete a full research paper on a topic related to course material. An empirical paper using real-world data is strongly encouraged.

Undergraduate students may write a paper related to the course material. The paper will be worth 5 percentage points of extra credit (i.e., 5% of the final course grade).

Extra Credit — Attendance (all students)

Attendance will be taken at random. Each recorded attendance earns 5 extra credit points applied to one homework assignment.

Grade Dispute Policy

Requests for grade changes must be submitted within one week of the return of a test or assignment. No changes will be considered after that period.

Course Policies

Attendance and Participation

This is an in-person, residential course with no online option. Regular attendance is expected for every class meeting. Attendance will be taken at random; each recorded attendance earns 5 bonus points on a homework assignment. Review Institute [attendance expectations and excused absence policies](#).

Extensions, Late Assignments, & Missed Exams

Late homework will not be accepted. No make-up quizzes or exams will be given. Students with approved Institute-related absences should contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. Review Georgia Tech's [Honor Code](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#). Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarism on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Collaboration, Group Work, and Use of Generative AI

All submitted work must be your own unless otherwise specified. Use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Copilot) is governed by the Honor Code. If you use such tools for any assignment, you must disclose this use. Undisclosed AI-generated work may be treated as academic dishonesty.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the [Office of Disability Services](#) (404-894-2563) as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. [The Student-Faculty Expectations](#) articulate some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek.