

ECN 310: Economics of Education
Syracuse University
Spring 2023

Instructor: Maria Zhu

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Office Hours (via Zoom): T 4:00-6:00pm

- To make appointment: <https://calendly.com/profzhu>
- Office hours link: <https://syracuseuniversity.zoom.us/j/9052831503>

Class: MW 2:15-3:35pm, Huntington Beard Crouse Kittredge Auditorium (HBC 032)

Teaching Assistant (TA): Sam Saltmarsh

Email: ssaltmar@syr.edu

Office Hours: Th 3:00-5:00pm, Eggers Hall 048

Course Description: The economics of education explores the impact of education on both individuals and society. This course examines how and why people make decisions to invest in education, the effects of education on long-term outcomes, the behavior of institutions that produce education, and the best design and implementation of public policies affecting education resources. Throughout the course, students will engage in a thorough examination of empirical tests of economic theory and will measure the effects of policy initiatives on educational outcomes.

Course Objectives: By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Explain the broad impacts of education on both individuals and society as a whole
- Understand the practical challenges of education research and know how to distinguish good research from bad
- Engage critically with the potential effects of various education policies on society

Textbook: *Economics of Education*, by Lovenheim and Turner.

Prerequisites: ECN 101 and 102 or ECN 203

Course website: Course materials will be posted on Blackboard.

Grades will be computed as follows:

- **Homework (15%)**
- **Midterm 1 (25%)**
- **Midterm 2 (25%)**
- **Final (35%)**
- Letter breakdowns: A=93-100, A-=90-92, B+=87-89, B=83-86, B-=80-82, C+=77-79, C=73-76, C-=70-72, D=60-69, F=<60

Homework

- Homework assignments are on Blackboard under the “Assignments” bar. Assignments should be submitted online through Blackboard. Each homework assignment has a submission section when you click on the assignment. Please provide a scan, screenshot, photo, or typed document of each page of your homework in the submission. If you are having trouble getting this to work, please email the TA for help or email the TA your assignment. All assignments are due by 11:59pm ET of the due date.
- Homework is graded based on **completeness**. Feel free to work together with classmates on assignments, but everyone must submit their own homework. I will post solutions online after the problem set is due, and it is your job to go over your own work.
- Grades are assigned on a scale of 0 to 3: 3 points awarded if every part of every problem is complete, 2 points awarded if more than half but less than all the problem set completed, 1 point awarded if less than half of the problem set completed, 0 points if no problem set is turned in. Homework submitted after the deadline will be considered late, and one point will be subtracted for each 24-hour period after the deadline that the homework is submitted, with 0 out of 3 being the minimum possible score.

Attendance/Participation: In typical semesters, attendance is mandatory, and participation is encouraged. However, due to the ongoing and evolving nature of the pandemic, I do not want anyone to feel pressured to come to class if they are not feeling well. As such, while I will take attendance at the beginning of each class for record keeping and reporting purposes to the university, attendance is not a formal part of your grade this semester. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to make up the materials you missed. I recommend you either get notes from a classmate or make an appointment with the TA to catch up on what you missed.

Missing Class: If you are unable to attend class, it is your responsibility to make sure you are caught up on the materials you missed. I **do not** make complete versions of the slides public. However, there are multiple channels through which you can get the materials you miss:

1. Obtain notes from a classmate
2. While I do not circulate completed slides, I do make slide outlines available to students. The slide outlines provide a framework for the topics covered in class, and you can fill in the missing information using the textbook.
3. You can go through the slides and get the information you missed with the TA. To do so, you can either attend the TA office hours or email the TA to schedule an alternative time to meet if you cannot make office hours.

Re-grade Requests: You may resubmit an exam with an additional sheet explaining **in a few words** why you deserve a better grade. Remember, you are graded based on what you put down on your exam, NOT what you know. Re-grade requests are accepted for one week after the graded test is returned. Your entire exam will be regraded, and the

score may go up or down as a result. Please note that I scan all answer sheets after you turn in your exam. Any modifications to original answers will result in an automatic zero on the exam and additional sanctions per the Academic Integrity Policy (see below). Out of fairness to all students, grades for the class cannot be bumped up at the end of the semester upon request. I cannot make an exception for one person that I do not make for the entire class.

Late Work and Make-up Policy

- **Exams:** Make-up exams for the midterm will only be offered if a student has their reason for absence verified by the Student Outreach and Retention (SOaR) office. Verified absences can stem from a positive COVID test or from other illnesses or circumstances, such as a death in the family. If you cannot take the midterm for any reason and do not receive an official verified absence notification from SOaR, the weight of the midterm will be placed onto the final, so that the final is worth 60% of your grade. Make-up exam accommodations for the final will only be made if your absence is excused by SOaR. The Barnes Center and SOaR staff allow students to report test results a day or two after the fact, so if you do not have an absence verified at the time of the exam, I can excuse the absence once I receive verification from SOaR.
 - **Please note in your calendar now the date of our final exam and make plans to be on campus for it.** The exam dates and times are scheduled by the registrar's office and out of my control. Out of fairness to all students, I am not able to accommodate requests to take the exam on alternate days for travel reasons.
- **Homework:** Homework submitted late will receive point deductions as detailed above. There are no exceptions to the homework policy, so if you are worried about missing a deadline, I recommend getting the assignment turned in ahead of the due date. I will drop the lowest homework grade in calculating your final grade at the end of the semester.

Academic Dishonesty: Complete academic honesty is expected of all students. Any incidence of academic dishonesty, as defined by the SU Academic Integrity Policy will result in both course sanctions and formal notification of the College of Arts & Sciences. For more information about the policy: <http://class.syr.edu/academic-integrity/policy/>. In this course, students are encouraged to study together, but exams must represent the work of the individual student.

Center for Disability Resources: Students with disabilities who desire accommodations are asked to go through the Center for Disability Resources (CDR). To reach CDR, please call (315) 443-4498 or email disabilityresources@syr.edu. CDR is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented Disabilities Accommodation Authorization Letters, as appropriate. CDR policy stipulates that all paperwork associated with academic accommodations due to a disability be completed and returned to their office at least 10 days in advance of the exam date requested. All scheduled exams will be administered in the CDR testing center at 804 University Avenue. You must contact the CDR Service Coordinator at least 2 days

prior to the scheduled exam to confirm the date and time of the event. Only students who register with the CDR office in a timely manner will be given accommodations on exams.

Faith Tradition Observance: Syracuse University's religious observance policy (<https://policies.syr.edu/policies/university-governance-ethics-integrity-and-legal-compliance/religious-observances-policy/>) recognizes the diversity of faiths represented in the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holy days according to their traditions. Under the policy, students are given an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance, provided they notify their instructors no later than the academic drop deadline. For observances occurring before the drop deadline, notification is required at least two academic days in advance. Students may enter their observances in MySlice under Student Services/Enrollment/My Religious Observances/Add a Notification.

Mental Health: Mental health and overall well-being are significant predictors of academic success. As such it is essential that during your college experience you develop the skills and resources effectively to navigate stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health concerns. There are a range of resources available at the Barnes Center (<https://ese.syr.edu/bewell/>) and I encourage you to seek out support for mental health concerns as needed. Counseling services are available 24/7, 365 days, at 315-443-8000.

Tentative Course Outline:

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Due
1	1/18	Introduction		
2	1/23	Foundations of Economics of Education	Ch. 1, 2	HW 0
	1/25	Human Capital Model I	Ch. 4	
3	1/30	Human Capital Model II	Ch. 4	HW 1
	2/1	Signaling Model I	Ch. 5	
4	2/6	Signaling Model II	Ch. 5	
	2/8	Empirical Tools I	Ch. 3.1-3.2	HW 2
5	2/13	Empirical Tools II	Ch. 3.1-3.2	
	2/15	Empirical Tools III	Ch. 3.3	
6	2/20	Empirical Tools IV	Ch. 3.3	
	2/22	Review for Midterm 1		HW3
7	2/27	Midterm 1		
	3/1	Returns to Education	Ch. 6	
8	3/6	Education Production Function	Ch. 7	
	3/8	Financing of Local Public Schools	Ch. 8	HW 4
9	3/13	Spring Break (NO CLASS)		
	3/15	Spring Break (NO CLASS)		
10	3/20	Relationship between Inputs and Outputs	Ch. 9	
	3/22	Relationship between Inputs and Outputs	Ch. 9	HW 5
11	3/27	School Choice	Ch. 10	
	3/29	Teacher Labor Markets	Ch. 12	HW 6
12	4/3	Market Dimensions of Higher Education	Ch. 13	
	4/5	Review for Midterm 2		HW 7
13	4/10	NO CLASS		
	4/12	Midterm 2		
14	4/17	Market Dimensions of Higher Education	Ch. 13	
	4/19	Economics of College Life	Ch. 15	
15	4/24	Paying for College	Ch. 14	
	4/26	Paying for College	Ch. 14	
16	5/1	Review for Final		HW 8
	5/4	Final Exam 12:45pm-2:45 pm	Location:	HBC 032