

ECONOMICS OF TRADE UNIONS AND LABOUR  
ECONOMICS EC2156A-001  
Department of Economics  
Western University

September 2023

**Instructor:** Phuong Vu  
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**Office hours:** *Mondays 3:45 PM – 4:45 PM (in-person at 4160 SSC)*  
*Wednesdays 10:45 AM – 11:45 AM (in-person at 4160 SSC)*

**Delivery mode:** *In-person*

**Meeting time(s):** *Tuesdays 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM and Thursdays 12:30 PM – 2:30 PM*

**Classroom:** FNB3210

**Course website:** <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal>

**Undergraduate inquiries:** 519-661-3507 or SSC Room 4075 or [econugrd@uwo.ca](mailto:econugrd@uwo.ca)

**Registration:**

You are responsible for ensuring you are registered in the correct courses. If you are not registered in this course, the Department will not release any of your marks until your registration is corrected. You may check your timetable by using the Login on the Student Services website at <https://student.uwo.ca>. If you notice a problem, please contact your home Faculty Academic Counsellor immediately.

**Prerequisite/Antirequisite Note:**

**Prerequisite(s):** [Economics 1021A/B](#) and [Economics 1022A/B](#), or [Economics 2001A/B](#).

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites, and that you have not taken any anti-requisite courses. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as a basis for appeal. If you are found to be ineligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. This decision cannot be appealed.

If you find that you do not have the course prerequisites, it is in your best interest to drop the course well before the end of the add/drop period. Your prompt attention to this matter will not only help protect your academic record but will ensure that spaces become available for students who require the course in question for graduation.

**Course Objectives:**

The goal of this course is to provide you with the economic and legal aspects of labour relations. You will learn about the history and origin of the trade union movement, the

economics of trade unions, labour law, the wage/non-wage effects of trade unions, and the relationship between unions, firms, and governments.

### **Course Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Recognize and understand the rationales and effects of union interventions in the labour market as well as various government and legislative influences.
- Apply the assumptions and predictions of the basic labour market and union models to make outcome predictions and explain related policy implications in terms of economic theory.
- Interpret issues arising in labour relations to evaluate outcomes in hypothetical, historical, and/or contemporary situations.

### **Textbook(s) and Course Materials:**

**Required textbook:** *Labour Market Economics*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition, by Benjamin, Gunderson, Lemieux, Riddell, and Schirle

**Bookstore link:** [https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=UWO&term=W2023A&courses%5B0%5D=001\\_UW/ECO2156A](https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=UWO&term=W2023A&courses%5B0%5D=001_UW/ECO2156A)

### **Classroom Policies:**

- Please note that standard rules of etiquette apply in the classroom. They include but not limited to:
  - Give full attention to anyone speaking, whether the person is the instructor or a fellow student.
  - Turn off (or put on vibrate) your cellphone. Do not answer your cellphone in class. Also do not text during class.
  - Be on time for class. If you are late or have to leave early, enter and exit as quietly as possible.
  - Videography/photography is NOT permitted as it may violate the privacy of your classmates.
- You are expected to attend class on a regular basis. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you have missed from a classmate. There are no further lecture notes other than what is available on OWL.

### **Email Policies:**

- Please use your UWO email address in all communications as I am not allowed to respond to non-UWO email.
- In your email subject, please include your name/student number/course number and section number as it will help me process your request or answer your questions faster.
- I will try to respond to all emails within 48 hours except for weekends and/or holidays.
- Please note that I might NOT respond to email such as following:
  - Any question that is on this syllabus or elsewhere on OWL such as exam time and date, course materials, makeup policy etc. If you are not clear about any provided information, feel free to ask me at the end of the lectures.

- Requests for EXTRA assignments, reweighting of exams, assignments etc. as they are prohibited under Senate regulations.
- Requests for any extra lecture notes other than the ones provided on the OWL course page.

### **Technical Requirements** *(delete or add, as applicable)*

- *Laptop or computer*
- *Stable internet connection*
- *Microphone*
- *Webcam*

For technical support, see the OWL help page or contact Western Technology Services Helpdesk (<https://wts.uwo.ca/about-wts/contact.html>). Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox are the preferred browsers for OWL; update your browser frequently.

### **Topics Covered and Readings:**

#### Topic 1: Unions and the Labour Market (Chapters 1, 2)

- Introduction to Labour Economics
- Labour Supply: Individual Attachment to the Labour Market

#### Topic 2: Labour Market Outcomes (Chapters 5, 7)

- Demand for Labour in Competitive Labour Markets
- Wages and Employment in a Single Labour Market

#### Topic 3: Models of Union Behaviour and Bargaining (Chapters 14, 14A)

- Overview of Unions in Canada
- Union Preferences – What do Workers Care about?
- Models of Contract Determination

#### Topic 4: Union Impact on Wage and Non-Wage Outcomes (Chapter 15)

- Wage differentials and effects of unions across sectors
- How unions affect non-wage outcomes

#### Topic 5: Disputes in Collective Bargaining – Strikes and Alternatives:

- Collective Bargaining
- Disputes in Collective Bargaining – Strike and Alternatives

#### Notes:

- There are no classes and official office hours on Thanksgiving (Oct 9, 2023) during the Reading Week (October 30, 2023, to November 5, 2023).
- Tentative course schedule is subject to change(s). Any changes to this schedule will be provided in class. Some chapters will not be covered entirely. Please see OWL for details on the material covered for each chapter. Students will be held responsible for all material presented in lectures, regardless of whether the material appears in the textbook.

## Assessments and Grading:

### Option 1: Without class participation

Assessment	Tentative Time and Date:	Topics	Weight
Midterm 1	Thursday, Oct 12, 2023 12:45 PM to 2:00 PM	Topics 1, 2	25%
Midterm 2	Wednesday, Nov 09, 2023 12:45 PM to 2:00 PM	Topic 2, 3	25%
Final Exam	To be scheduled by the Office of Registrar	All topics covered	50%

### Option 2: With class participation

Assessment	Tentative Time and Date:	Topics	Weight
Class Participation	Throughout the semester		10%
Midterm 1	Thursday, Oct 12, 2023 12:45 PM to 2:00 PM	Topics 1, 2	23%
Midterm 2	Wednesday, Nov 09, 2023 12:45 PM to 2:00 PM	Topic 2, 3	23%
Final Exam	To be scheduled by the Office of Registrar	All topics covered	44%

- *Your course grade will be calculated using both options, and the higher grade will be recorded.*
- *Please note that all times and dates mentioned above are tentative and subject to the approval of the Office of Registrar. Also, please note that in the event that classes move to online status, the assessment dates, times, and choices may change. All times are Eastern Time.*
- *The midterms and the final exam will be closed book and will be held in person. Assessments are in a mixed format (a combination of multiple choice, true/false, calculation/graphing, and/or fill-in-the-blank questions, etc.). More information on the class participation component in Option 2 will be provided on OWL.*
- **Policies regarding missed assessments:**
  - **Midterm exams:**
    - There will be ONE makeup for students whose documentation has been approved by Academic Counseling for missing the exam. Students must also follow the rules for notifying me regarding missed assessments specified on OWL. Students with approved documentation who cannot attend the makeup will have the weight of the exam shifted to the final exam.
  - **Final Exam:**
    - If the instructor and Academic Counselling accept your documentation,

you are eligible to take a makeup exam which will be set by the Department of Economics. The makeup Final exam will be held AFTER the original Final exam date.

- ***For all missed exams***, you must take your documentation to Academic Counselling within 48 hours of the exam. You must also notify your instructor within 24 hours of the exam that you have missed. You must meet both deadlines. Failure of not doing so will result in a grade of zero.
  - Missing both midterms and/or the final exam is likely to result in an inability to meet the course learning outcomes and/or to pass the course.
  - Makeup assessments may differ in length and format from the originally scheduled assessments.
- **Note:** Missed work can *only* be excused through one of the mechanisms above. Being asked not to attend an in-person course requirement due to potential COVID-19 symptoms is **not** sufficient on its own. Students should check the Western website to see what directives for Covid are to be followed. Western has been and will continue to follow directives established by the Middlesex-London Health Unit. That directive will state whether students should or should not come to campus/class and any other requirements (e.g., masks are mandatory). Please check on your own and do not email the instructor, the Department Undergraduate Advisor/Coordinator or the Faculty of Social Science Academic Counselling Office.

### **Professionalism, Privacy and Copyright:**

- Students are expected to follow the [Student Code of Conduct](#).
- All lectures and course materials, including slides, presentations, outlines, and similar materials, are protected by **copyright**. Students may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational purposes only.
- Students may not record lectures, reproduce (or allow others to reproduce), post or distribute lecture notes, assessments, or any other course materials publicly and/or for commercial purposes without written consent of the instructor.
- Recordings (audio or video) are not permitted without explicit, written permission of the instructor. Permitted recordings may not be distributed or shared.

### **Tips on How to Be Successful in this Class:**

Students in this class should understand the level of autonomy and self-discipline required to be successful.

- Make it a daily habit to log onto OWL to ensure you have seen everything posted to help you succeed in this class.
- Follow weekly checklists created on OWL or create your own to help you stay on track.
- Regularly attend our class and work as many problems as you need to do to feel comfortable with the material. There are end-of-the-chapter questions in the textbook and further practice questions. To be successful in this class, active learning is required.

- Connect with others. Try forming an online/in-person study group and meet on a weekly basis for study and peer support.
- Do not be afraid to ask questions. If you have questions or are struggling with a topic, I encourage you to email me, come to my office hours to discuss your questions or ask me questions at the end of the class if time allows.

**Please Note**  
**Department & University Policies for Fall 2023**

The University expects all students to take responsibility for their own Academic Programs. Students should also check their registration to ensure they are enrolled in the correct courses.

1. **Guidelines, policies, and your academic rights and responsibilities** are posted online in the current Western Academic Calendar at: <http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca>. Claiming that “you didn’t know what to do” is not an acceptable excuse for not following the stated policies and procedures.
2. Students must familiarize themselves with the “**Rules of Conduct for Examinations**” [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/exam/administration.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/administration.pdf).
3. **Cheating as an academic offence:** Students are responsible for understanding what it means to “cheat.” The Department of Economics treats cheating incidents very seriously and will investigate any suspect behavior. Students found guilty will incur penalties that could include a failing grade or being barred from future registration in other Economics courses or programs. The University may impose further penalties such as suspension or expulsion.
4. **Plagiarism:** Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. When taking an idea/passage from another author, it must be acknowledged with quotation marks where appropriate and referenced with footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is an academic offence (see Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students in the Western Calendar at [http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryId=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_20](http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryId=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_20)).

Western University uses software to check for plagiarism and students may be required to electronically submit their work. Those found guilty will be penalized as noted in point 3.

5. It is a Department of Economics policy that **NO** assignments be dated, stamped or accepted by staff. Students must submit assignments to the instructor.
6. **Appeals:** University policies and procedures for appealing a mark can be found in the Student Academic Appeals section in the current Western Academic Calendar at: [http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryId=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_14](http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryId=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_14). **Please note the relevant deadlines.**

Department of Economics procedures for appealing a mark can be found here: [https://economics.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program\\_counselling/responsibilities\\_policies.html#appeals](https://economics.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_counselling/responsibilities_policies.html#appeals). The Department will not consider an appeal unless an attempt has been made to settle the matter with the instructor first. Students who remain dissatisfied with the outcome may proceed to submit an appeal to [econugrd@uwo.ca](mailto:econugrd@uwo.ca). Please follow the instructions and use the appeal form shown in the above link.

7. **Systematic adjustments of a class grade distribution** (either up or down) can occur in Economics courses. The fact that grades have been adjusted is **not** grounds for an appeal.

8. Note the following **add and drop deadlines**:

- Deadline to ADD OR DROP a first term full or half course: **Fri, Sept 15, 2023**
- Deadline to WITHDRAW from a first term full or half course: **Mon, Nov 13, 2023**

### **Policy Regarding Makeup Tests and Final Examinations**

Faculty of Social Science policy states that oversleeping or misreading an exam schedule is NOT grounds for a makeup. This rule applies to midterm and final exams in the Department of Economics.

### **Policies Regarding Academic Accommodation**

- Academic accommodation will not be granted automatically on request. Students must demonstrate by documentation that there are compelling medical or compassionate grounds before academic accommodation will be considered. The Faculty of Social Science's policies on academic accommodation are found at [https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/academic\\_consideration.html](https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/academic_consideration.html)
- **Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities or accessibility challenges should work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD, see [http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/index.html](http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html)), which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).
- **Rewriting Exams and Retroactive Reweighting are NOT Permitted:** Students who proceed to write a test or examination must be prepared to accept the mark. Rewriting tests or examinations, or retroactive reweighting of marks, is **not** permitted. Students must also book travel arrangements AFTER final exam dates have been posted as they must not conflict with test or final exams.
- Unless medically incapable of doing so, students must notify their instructor prior to the test date or at least within **24 hours** when requesting a makeup exam. Failure to follow this procedure may result in denial of academic accommodation and a grade of zero. Students should also set up an appointment as soon as possible to meet with their instructor. If the instructor is not available, send an email message to the instructor, copying the Undergraduate Coordinator at [econugrd@uwo.ca](mailto:econugrd@uwo.ca). **Notifying instructors of a missed exam does not automatically entitle students to a makeup.**
- For medical illnesses, students may consult Student Health Services and request a Student Medical Certificate from the physician. If assessed by an off-campus doctor, students must obtain a certificate from his/her office at the time of the visit/assessment. Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is available here: [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf)



- **Documentation for Accommodation:** Individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds or for other reasons.
- **Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence** is available here: [https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/probation\\_rtw/appeals.html](https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/probation_rtw/appeals.html)
- **Religious Accommodation:** Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

**Policy Regarding Class Attendance and Engagement:** If the instructor deems a student's attendance or engagement in the class to be unsatisfactory, that student may be prohibited from writing the final examination. Examples of unsatisfactory class engagement include frequent absences from an in-person or synchronous online class, lack of assignment submissions, and inadequate use of online course materials. Instructors who intend to make use of this policy will notify the student in advance.

**Statement on Mental Health and Support Services:** Students under emotional/mental distress should visit [http://uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/](http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/) for more information and a complete list of resources on how to obtain help.

**Statement on Remote Proctoring:** While Western intends to hold most classes, mid-terms and finals in-person, the London-Middlesex Health unit may require western to teach in a remote format. If this occurs, all assessments will be done remotely and may involve the use of remote proctoring software (i.e., Proctorio, ProctorTrack). Instructors will provide information on the details should the need arise.