

ECONOMICS OF TRADE UNIONS AND LABOUR
ECONOMICS EC2156A-650
Department of Economics
Western University

Fall 2023

General Information:

Instructor: Deanna Walker
Office: 4035 SSC (not in use at this time)
Phone: 519-661-2111 ext. 85452 (not in use at this time)
E-mail*: dwalke44@uwo.ca (avoid directory autoprompt, only this address reaches me)
*Subject line must include “2156” and sender must be your uwo.ca address. I send class messages by OWL (no-reply@uwo.ca) to your uwo.ca address. See email policy on OWL

Office hours: Mondays 9:30-11:30am ET by zoom (meeting links on OWL). If no one is attending I will answer emails at those times.

Delivery mode: Online, asynchronous. Times are according to Eastern time zone ET (EDT)

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

Undergraduate inquiries: 519-661-3507 or SSC Room 4075 or 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:

The prerequisite(s) for this course is (are) **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 economic and legal aspects of labour relations will be approached under some or all of the following headings: the history and origin of the trade union movement, the economics of trade unions, labour law, wage/price controls and the relationship of unions, firms and governments.

Course Learning Outcomes:

- Students will recognize the rationales and effects of union interventions in the labour market as well as various government and legislative influences.
- Students will apply the assumptions and predictions of basic labour market and union models in order to make outcome predictions and explain related policy implications in terms of economic theory.
- Students will interpret issues arising in labour relations in order to evaluate outcomes in hypothetical, historical, and/or contemporary situations.
- Students will develop increased independence and responsibility in locating and examining information (including course meta-information), interpreting and integrating that information, and formulating individual thought.

Textbooks:

Benjamin, Gunderson, Lemieux, Riddell, Labour Market Economics, 8th edition, McGrawHill Ryerson, 2017

Benjamin, Gunderson, Lemieux, Riddell, Labour Market Economics, 9th edition, McGrawHill Ryerson, 2021

Either edition is suitable. Supplemental material and other references will be posted on OWL.

Expectations:

Upon registration, students will carefully review this syllabus and the “Welcome! Start Here” tab on OWL. Students are responsible for all information found here and on the OWL website.

A. Students are responsible at all times throughout the term for stable and reliable internet connection as well as compatible electronic devices and software. You may be asked to submit work in pdf format. Unless otherwise specified, the following are all acceptable: work created by tablet, annotated pdf, a scan or photograph of written work converted to pdf.

B. Students are expected to have competence in prerequisite topics, and to independently follow instructions and submit work with accuracy. The student bears all responsibility for errors, clerical or otherwise. Failure to abide by instructions given may also result in penalties.

C. To pass the course, a student must complete all components of the course. If any component has not been completed, a pass will not be granted regardless of the grade on the remaining components.

Students are expected to work consistently throughout the term. This includes on-time completion of each unit's readings and OWL lesson work, participation in OWL forum discussion posting, and working through problem sets for submission.

This course also has a final examination. **A student who has not maintained satisfactory engagement with the course will not be permitted to write the final exam.** (See the Policy Regarding Class Attendance and Engagement in the Please Note appendix to this course outline, and also the university's Attendance Regulations for Examinations.)

D. Students are responsible at all times for clear articulation and reading comprehension. Work which shows a lack of proficiency in English may either be failed or, at the discretion of the instructor, returned to the student for revision to a literate level.

E. In fairness to students working honestly, I pursue as cheating any dishonest behaviour to gain academic advantage, without warning or second chances. Students will be held to the [Student Code of Conduct](#) (see also **Professionalism, Privacy, and Copyright** below).

All submissions in this course are required to be your own, independent, individual and original work; created by yourself, from your own thoughts, in your own words.

Ideas or work that are not your own must not be incorporated unless your use is minor, clearly distinguished as not yours, and properly acknowledged. **Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, will be treated as a scholastic offence.** A helpful tutorial with quizzes for self-testing is available at https://usm.libwizard.com/f/plagiarism_tutorial. Assessments in this course may be subject to Turnitin analysis.

Topics Covered and Relevant Chapters:

Unit 1: Unions and the Labour Market (Ch 1, 8)

- Competitive labour market model and Neoclassical predictions
- Special considerations about labour markets and function of the wage rate
- Do workers need union empowerment?

Unit 2: Labour Market Outcomes (Ch 5, 7)

- Competitive and Monopsonistic demand for labour
- Union effects on market outcomes under different market structures
- Can government regulation achieve worker objectives without unions?

Unit 3: Models of Union Behaviour and Bargaining (Ch 14, 14A)

- Overview of unions in Canada
- Union preferences - what do workers care about?
- Models of contract determination

Unit 4: Impact of Unions (Ch 15)

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

Unit 5: Labour Supply (Ch 2)

- Participation and hours-of-work decision, special constraints
- Union influences on individual and market labour supply

Unit 6: Labour Demand (Ch 5, 6)

- Demand for labour in the presence of unions
- Labour and product market structures
- Quasi-fixed costs and compensation negotiation

The above list is tentative and may be modified as the course progresses.
Supplemental material and other references will be posted on OWL.

Grading:

As described under “Expectations,” a student must show satisfactory engagement to be admitted to the final exam, and all components of the course must be completed in order to be given credit for the course. Upon meeting this requirement, the grade will be calculated as follows:

Lesson Work: 6%

Discussion Posts: 18%

Homework: 24%

Final Exam: 52%

For each unit you will complete OWL lesson work and homework. You will also participate in three discussions (details on OWL). Relevant dates are as follows (submission by 11:55 PM ET):

Material Coverage	Lesson	Discussion	Homework
Unit 1	Sept 15*	Sept 27	Sept 20
Unit 2	Sept 27		Oct 4
Unit 3	Oct 11	Oct 25	Oct 18
Unit 4	Oct 25		Nov 8
Unit 5	Nov 15	Nov 29	Nov 22
Unit 6	Nov 29		Dec 6

*Note differing submission weekday of Lesson work for Unit 1

The date and time for the final examination in this course will be scheduled by the Registrar. The final exam period is December 10-22.

Any missed components of the assessment will receive a grade of zero. Late submissions may be given some consideration for completion requirements, but will not be graded. If under extenuating circumstances an absence is formally excused, a student may be offered a form of accommodation as deemed appropriate by the instructor. Such accommodation will take into account the particulars of the situation and may involve altering the weight, coverage, length and/or format of the student's coursework at the instructor's discretion. Students who miss any assessments must follow Western University's formal procedures in order for missed work to receive academic consideration. See the 'Please Note' section of this course outline for details of these procedures.

Any required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>) Examination may be subject to remote proctoring. The final exam and all coursework are not collaborative and must represent your own independent, individual and original thought.

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 the 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.
- Students may be required to take an academic integrity pledge before assessments

Tips on How to Be Successful in this Class:

This particular course offering has risk of some pitfalls if you are not careful. Students should understand the level of autonomy and self-discipline required to be successful.

- Easy ideas can lead to challenging questions unexpectedly. Give yourself more time than you think you need. Take breaks and return.

- Expect to need help. The textbook is not targeted for this subject and applications will not all be obvious. You will need meticulous thought and deduction. Ask questions in discussions and office hours.
- Weekly work is your investment. Our exam will not be restricted to given “types” of questions so cramming is less effective. Use the whole term to study.
- Due to the challenges, I give opportunity to boost your grade (directly and indirectly) through effort and diligence on minor unit work. Just remember this means interim grades tend to be inflated relative to final grades.

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.
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).

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. **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. 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. 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
- **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), 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. **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
- **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
- **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/ 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.