

**University of Waterloo**  
**Department of Economics**  
**ECON 452-001**  
**Topics in Labour Economics**  
**Winter 2020**  
**1:00-2:20pm Monday, Wednesday, EV3 3412**

**Instructor:** Kate Rybczynski

**Office:** 210 Hagey Hall

**Office Hours:** 2:30-3:30 pm, Monday, Wednesday, or by appointment

**Office Phone:** 519-888-4567x32146

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**Web Page:** <http://www.arts.uwaterloo.ca/~krybczyn/452/>

(This web page is password protected, attend the first class, check learn, or e-mail me for the password)

**Course Description:**

This course introduces students to theoretical and empirical research in various topics in labour economics. We will study topics ranging from compensating differentials, human capital, labour market discrimination, self-employment, and search and matching models. In addition to reviewing labour market theory, students will learn several methodological tools used to address common research questions. We will review strengths and limitations of the theory and analyses, and discuss the implications for researchers and policymakers. This course will also build students' experience in crafting and presenting good research in the field of labour economics: students will complete a research proposal, an empirical paper and two research presentations with class feedback.

**Course Goals and Learning Outcomes:**

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Discuss the strengths (weaknesses) of theoretical explanations for observed labour market outcomes.
- Concisely explain the methods, findings, and contributions of labour economics research articles.
- Present research in a clear and compelling manner.
- Craft an empirical labour economics paper that exhibits sound research decisions, and is well written.

**Required Readings:**

- There are no required texts for this course.
- A list of articles for each topic are available on the course website and may be updated prior to the start of each topic.
- If you haven't taken ECON 351, you a good introductory text is: Labour Market Economics, Benjamin, Gunderson & Riddell (2002). Helpful Econometric resources include any editions of the following texts: Introductory Econometrics: A Modern Approach, 5e, Wooldridge (2012), Econometric Analysis, Fifth Edition, Greene (2003), Econometric Analysis of Cross Section and Panel Data, Wooldridge (2002), Angrist, Joshua D., and Jorn-Steffen Pischke. Mostly harmless econometrics: an empiricist's companion. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- The [Writing Centre](#) offers useful resources and appointments to help you polish your term papers.

**Resources Available On Line:**

- Lecture slides
- Reading Lists & Recommendations
- Announcements
- LEARN – password for course website & communication

**Course Requirements and Assessment:**

<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Date &amp; Location</i>	<i>Weighting</i>
Presentation 1 (other)	Jan 27-Feb 5, in class	20%
Research Proposal	Feb 27, 11:59pm, (on learn)	20%
Presentation 2 (own)	March 16-25, in class	25%
Empirical Paper	April 1, 11:59pm (on learn)	25%
Participation	Attendance and constructive feedback at presentations	10%
<hr/> Total		100%

**Course Outline (Approximate):**

Week	Topic
1-3	Determination of Relative Wages
4-5	Presentations
6-7	Human Capital v Signalling
8-9	Discrimination & Wage Differentials
9	Incentives
10	Self-Employment
11-12	Presentations
13	Search & Matching

**See Reading List for each Topic. Specific readings will depend on presentation choices.**

**ECON 452 Policies:**

***Attendance -***

- I will take attendance during presentations, and those who do not attend their classmates' presentations will lose participation marks.
- For full participation marks, I expect you to provide constructive feedback on your classmates' work at least once during the term.

***Missed Presentations -***

- You will be permitted to make up a missed presentation if you provide a Verification of Illness form.
- Other causes for missing presentations may be accepted at the instructor's discretion, but must be properly documented.
- Students may be granted alternative presentation dates, but advance notice is required for all absences other than illness or emergency.

***Late Work -***

- Your empirical analysis and term paper must be submitted by 11:59pm, on learn, on the due date. If late, 10% will be deducted for the first day, and 5% each day thereafter.

***Instruction Goals and Support -***

- My objective is to support your own individual learning goals, whether by answering questions during lectures, explaining concepts during office hours/appointments/e-mail, or pointing you to further resources that will strengthen your ability to achieve your goals.
- In order to achieve a healthy balance between my work and personal life, there will be a finite amount of time I can dedicate to answering emails or setting up appointments outside of regular office hours. I will do my best to respond quickly to emails and to accommodate students with time conflicts; however, just be aware that I may not have the time resources to meet all requests or respond in a timely manner, and I encourage you to plan in advance to avoid times of heavy demands on my time (e.g. due dates).
- Some students at UW worry that they were admitted by mistake, that they aren't smart enough, or feel that they do not belong. I want you to know that however you got to UW, we are glad you are here. Whether you have failed past courses or current papers, you are smart enough. You belong here, and I look forward to being a part of your learning process. What is more, different levels of understanding and diverse perspectives enrich the learning experience for all of us.
- When determining your own learning goals, keep in mind that it may take more time or effort or support to achieve specific learning goals particularly if the goals are very high, or if you have not had the same level of preparation or experience as other students. Be kind to yourself, and know that most people will be adjusting their goals as the semester progresses. Also know that I am here to support your learning goals, whether they be to hone your presentation skills, to pass the course, or to achieve a high grade. Grades are never guaranteed of course! Part of my job is to assign a grade for each of you in this course, but I am not here to judge you, and I do not equate lower grades with lower intelligence or worth (we all have different interests and goals).
- **Note:** Accommodation or assistance to facilitate your presentations, can be arranged. Please see AccessAbility contact information on the next page. I am happy to accommodate. If you have any non-disability related concerns or requests, please let me know.

**Territorial Acknowledgement:**

We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River. Learn more about the [Anishinaabe](#), [Haudenosaunee](#), [Six Nations](#), and [territorial acknowledgement](#). For more information about the purpose of territorial acknowledgements, please see the [CAUT Guide to Acknowledging Traditional Territory](#).

**Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:**

*Note for students with disabilities* - [AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall, room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the [AccessAbility Services](#) office at the beginning of each academic term.

**Academic Integrity:**

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Check the [Office of Academic Integrity website](#) for more information.

*Discipline* - A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. [Check the [Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

*Grievance* - A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](#), Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

*Appeals* - A decision made or penalty imposed under [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](#) (other than a petition) or [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes (s)he has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72 - Student Appeals](#).

**Mental Health Support:**

All of us need a support system. The faculty and staff in Arts encourage students to seek out mental health supports as needed. Full details can be found online at the Faculty of ARTS [website](#)

**On Campus**

- Counselling Services: [counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca) / 519-888-4567 ext 32655
- [MATES](#): one-to-one peer support program offered by the Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association (WUSA) and Counselling Services
- Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek from Student Life Centre
- A variety of groups on campus offer further resources and support, including, but not limited to: [GLOW](#) centre for sexual and gender diversity peer support, the [Women’s Centre](#), the [Waterloo Indigenous Student Centre](#), please see [WUSA main web page](#) for further services and clubs which may provide more specific and personalized support for you.

**Off campus, 24/7**

- [Good2Talk](#): Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-4330 x6880
- [Here 24/7](#): Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- [OK2BME](#): set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning teens in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 x 213

Download [UWaterloo and regional mental health resources \(PDF\)](#)

Download the [WatSafe](#) app to your phone to quickly access mental health support information

**Cross-listed courses:**

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

**Academic freedom at the University of Waterloo -[Policy 33, Ethical Behaviour](#)** states, as one of its general principles (Section 1), “The University supports academic freedom for all members of the University community. Academic freedom carries with it the duty to use that freedom in a manner consistent with the scholarly obligation to base teaching and research on an honest and ethical quest for knowledge. In the context of this policy, 'academic freedom' refers to academic activities, including teaching and scholarship, as is articulated in the principles set out in the Memorandum of Agreement between the FAUW and the University of Waterloo, 1998 (Article 6). The academic environment which fosters free debate may from time to time include the presentation or discussion of unpopular opinions or controversial material. Such material shall be dealt with as openly, respectfully and sensitively as possible.” This definition is repeated in Policies 70 and 71, and in the Memorandum of Agreement, Section 6.