Econ 341: Economics of Education
Northwestern University, 2021 Spring

- Instructor: Scott Ogawa; sogawa@northwestern.edu (please use email and *not* Canvas Inbox)
- TA: Miguel Santana; msantana@u.northwestern.edu
- Lecture Mon/Wed 3:30 - 4:50, optional section Friday 3:30 - 4:20 pm. Almost surely all online due to Covid-19, though efforts will be made to provide optional in-person experiences, especially towards the end of the quarter.
- Required Textbook: *Economics of Education*, Lovenheim and Turner
- Required hardware: Flexible phone holder (as well as smartphone and a working webcam)

Expectations:
- *Cameras on; take notes:* During lecture, you are expected to be at a desk with a paper/pencil, and to keep your camera on. If you need to step away, leave camera on so that we know you are gone.
- *Tests*: Three unit tests during quarter plus final exam that can grade by up to 1/3 (9:00 am Thursday, June 10) and cannot lower your grade (thus final is optional, in a way).
- *Attendance*: You can miss up to three classes total, and must attend one class per week.
- *Participation*: Largely determined by quizzes and in-class partner worksheets, as well as...
- *Weekly Problem Sets*: Typically to be submitted in groups, often just one problem.
- Optional *Final Paper* or *Presentation*: Potentially boost grade by up to 1/3 (further details will be provided during the quarter).

Tests: If you need to miss a test, contact the professor (and there may be a slight negative impact on your grade).
- Test 1: Monday, April 19
- Test 2: Monday, May 10
- Test 3: Wednesday, May 26 (last day of class)
- Final Exam: Thursday, June 10, 9:00 am (can only increase grade, thus somewhat optional)

Schedule and topics (and links to readings)
- *Part I (Weeks 1 - 4): Returns to Schooling*
- *Part II (Weeks 5 - 8): School Quality*
- *Part III (end of quarter, topics subject to change): School Finance* and/or other facts about education and/or topics by request.

Participation via attendance: In general you are expected to join lecture live (Mon/Wed), to have your camera on, to be present, and be ready to participate. You can miss up to three classes (though never in the same week), no questions asked; in fact, I would expect you to miss a few as stuff comes up. If you need to miss more than that, you should let me know in advance what is going on. To pass the course you can't miss more than 6 lectures. (For students in unfavorable time zones due to Covid-19: Instead of attending live you will be asked to watch the recording and to submit a reflection online within 24 hours.)

Participation via worksheets, reading quizzes, and peer feedback: We will sometimes start classes with very short reading quizzes (always announced in advance). Or during class there may be partner worksheets (announced in advance if there is a concrete way to prepare, otherwise it will be based on material covered in class). While all of this will be marked, the stakes are relatively low: So long as there is no consistent evidence that you have disengaged from the class then your grade will not be affected.

Problem Sets: There will be regular, short problem sets (often a single problem to submit) due each Sunday evening. These will often require you to work with data in some way. These problem sets will often be done in *assigned groups* (though this is subject to change).

Optional Paper or Presentation: At the end of the quarter you can submit a 3-page policy paper or prepare a presentation. Details will be provided during the quarter, though note that the expectations will be extremely high: The paper needs to present an original and interesting policy idea that you care about, while the presentation should be informative and engaging for your classmates.

Grade Calculation (subject to change, depending on how the quarter unfolds): You will get a B-, B, or B+ based on the exams (curved relative to your peers). This may then be bumped down based on problem sets and participation (if you are clearly below average reduction by 1/3; if you have totally disengaged, reduction by more), though I hope this will apply to as few students as possible. If you are clearly above average with peer feedback, problem sets, and all aspects of class then we may bump you up, though this may also be rare. More importantly, from your B-/B/B+ grade, you can get bumped up by 1/3 based on final exam, and another 1/3 based on a paper or presentation.