

**ECONOMICS OF TRADE UNIONS AND LABOUR**  
**ECONOMICS EC2156B-001**  
**Department of Economics**  
**Western University**

**January 2025**

**Instructor:** Phuong Vu  
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**Office hours:** In person (4160 SSC)  
• *Mondays: 11:45 AM – 12:45 PM*  
• *Wednesdays: 2:45 PM – 3:45 PM*

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

**Meeting time(s):** *Mondays: 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM, Wednesdays: 10:30 AM -12:30 PM*

**Classroom:** *FNB 1250*

**Course website:** <https://westernu.brightspace.com/>

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

*(The prerequisites and antirequisites for your course can be found in the Western Calendar at: <http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/Courses.cfm?Subject=ECONOMIC&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID>)*

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:

This course aims 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 and Other Learning Materials

*Labour Market Economics*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition, by Benjamin, Gunderson, Lemieux, Riddell, and Schirle, McGraw-Hill, 2021

Below is the link for the **eBook** version that students can purchase through the UWO Book Store:

[https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=UWO&term=W2024B&courses%5B0%5D=001\\_UW/ECO2156B](https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=UWO&term=W2024B&courses%5B0%5D=001_UW/ECO2156B)

**Note:** Students may purchase second-hand or earlier editions of this textbook. However, please note that these editions may lack up-to-date information and could contain slight differences in content compared to the latest version. Also, Chapter 14 of the textbook has an online appendix (Chapter 14A), which was not available in the previous versions of the physical textbook.

## Email Policies:

- Please use your UWO email address in all communications.
- Please **enter the course number (ECON2156)** in the subject heading of your email (or at least in your email) and include **your student number and section** so that I can support you as soon as possible. I will try to respond to all emails within 48 hours, except for weekends and holidays.
- Please check the course Brightspace site and/or syllabus for information such as exam time and date, course materials, makeup exam policy, etc. If you need clarification about information, please feel free to ask me at the end of the lectures or via email.
- Please do NOT send emails to request extra assignments, assessments reweight (other than what is allowed according to the syllabus), etc., because they are prohibited under Senate regulations.

## 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 during Fall Reading Week (February 15 to February 23, 2025).
- 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 the course Brightspace site 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:

Assessment	Tentative Time and Date:	Topic	Weight
Midterm 1	Wednesday, February 12, 2025 10:45 AM – 12:00 PM	Topics 1, 2	25%
Midterm 2	Wednesday, March 12, 2025 10:45 AM – 12:00 PM	Topic 2, 3	25%
Final Exam	To be scheduled by the Office of Registrar	All topics covered	50%

- Please note that all times and dates mentioned above are tentative and subject to Exam Central's approval. The assessment dates, times, and choices may change if classes move to an online status. All times are ET.

- Exam format: Midterms and the final exam are MCQs, in-person, closed-book exams.
- Exam duration: Each midterm exam lasts 75 minutes, and the final exam lasts 120 minutes.
- During exams, students are forbidden to communicate with anyone other than an examination proctor or the instructor. Students are NOT allowed to use any books, notes, study guides, diagrams, communication equipment such as a cell phone, computer programs or software, online resources or websites, or other aids unless authorized by the instructor; such authorization must be stated explicitly during the examination.
- **Policies regarding missed exams:**
  - **Midterm Exams:** There will be one make-up exam each midterm. Students can miss one midterm exam using self-attestation and notification to the instructor before or within 24 hours of the missed exam. If a student misses both midterm exams, they must obtain approval from Academic Counselling for the other missed exam and must notify the instructor before or within 24 hours of the missed exam. If a student misses both midterms without using self-attestation and without approval from Academic Counseling, they will receive a grade of zero for both exams. The weight of any approved missed midterm exam or exam using self-attestation will be transferred to the final exam.
  - **Final Exam:** The final exam will cover materials from the entire semester. Students who miss the final exam must take their documentation to Academic Counselling and notify the instructor within 24 hours. Once Academic Counselling approves your documentation for the missed Final exam, the instructor will set a makeup date. Students who miss any assessment must follow Western University's procedures to approve their absence to receive accommodation. If a student does not receive approval from the Academic Counselling for the Final exam, the instructor will assign a grade of zero for that exam. The makeup final exam may differ from the official final exam in length and format.

### **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**.
- Recordings (audio or video) are not permitted without explicit, written permission. Permitted recordings must not be distributed or shared.

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

- Log onto Brightspace daily to ensure you have seen everything posted to help you succeed in this class.
- Start each week by checking the weekly announcement and reading the assigned textbook chapter(s). Then, read the course notes provided for you. You must read the textbook, as the course notes do not contain all the material that you need to know.

- **Attend all lectures and tutorials.** Take notes as you go through the lesson material. Keeping notes (handwritten or digital) will help you learn more effectively than just reading or watching.
- Connect with others. Try forming a study group and meet regularly for study and peer support.
- Do not be afraid to ask questions. If you have questions or are struggling with a topic, please do not hesitate to contact your instructor(s) or teaching assistant(s).

**PLEASE NOTE**  
**DEPARTMENT & UNIVERSITY POLICIES FOR WINTER 2025**

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. A [\*new academic consideration and flexibility in assessment\*](#) policy is in effect starting September 2024. Students can miss one assessment per course per term without medical documentation. Faculty can designate one assessment per course for which students **cannot** self-attest.
3. 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).
4. **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.
5. **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 4.

6. It is a Department of Economics policy that **NO** assignments be dated, stamped or accepted by staff. Students must submit assignments to the instructor.
7. **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.

8. **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.
9. **ADD AND DROP DEADLINES:**

- Deadline to **ADD** second term full or half course: **January 14, 2025**
- Deadline to **DROP** second term full or half course: **March 31, 2025**

### **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 **48 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/medical\\_certificate.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medical_certificate.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/academic\\_consideration.html](https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/academic_consideration.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 2024 Diversity Calendar available at <https://www.edi.uwo.ca/> (see bottom right of page).

**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 Gender-Based and Sexual Violence:** Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: [Get Help](#). To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca).

**Statement on Mental Health and Support Services:** Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about 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 unity 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.