Instructor Information:
Professor Randall Reback
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Open Office Hours: M 2-2:30; W 10-11:30

Prerequisites: Intermediate microeconomics and an introductory statistics course.

Mandatory Attendance Dates
Oct 19 (midterm exam)
Dec 7 (policy brief presentations)

Wednesday December 16th, 1:10 PM: Final Exam. **IN DIANA CENTER BUILDING, ROOM 504**. (except for students who made an alternative time arrangement with Prof. Reback prior to 10/20/15)

Student Learning Goals
Students successfully completing this course will have demonstrated the ability to:
- apply microeconomic theory to examine education markets.
- recognize and explain common difficulties in separating correlation from causation when researchers empirically investigate the education production function.
- explain various theories for the positive relationship between educational attainment and future earnings-- i.e., productivity models, screening/signaling models, Marxist models.
- describe basic funding systems commonly used for elementary and secondary public education in the United States and analyze the implications of moving from one type of financing system to another.
- critique research papers, or research evidence summarized in newspaper articles, policy reports, etc., based on the theoretical assumptions of the research, the internal validity of the empirical findings, and the external validity of the empirical findings.
- write an analysis that clearly and succinctly connects existing economics research evidence with a current education policy debate.

Assignments/Grading
Responses to Discussion Questions: ~15%
Answers to discussion questions must be posted on Courseworks (courseworks.columbia.edu), Assignments directory, at least 10 minutes prior to the start of the associated lecture. If this course does not appear on your Courseworks page yet, email me as soon as possible and I will add you to the list. You should bring a hard copy of your answers to class. You may fail to post one week's discussion
question responses without any excuse and that would not affect your course grade. Responses are graded based on effort and can increase/decrease your final course grade by 1/3 of a letter (e.g., B+ versus A-).

Midterm Exam: 25%

Policy Brief: 30%

Due December 2. Must be 2000 words or less, (about 6 double-spaced pages of text). Suggested topics will be distributed in class and will also be listed under the Policy Brief Assignments folder of Courseworks in Files&Resources, along with sample policy briefs, required readings regarding writing style, and the policy brief evaluation form.

Final Exam: 30%

Readings There is not any required textbook for this course. You may print out the readings off Courseworks (Syllabus section).

Honor Code The Honor Code will be strictly enforced. The Code states:

We, the students of Barnard College, resolve to uphold the honor of the College by refraining from every form of dishonesty in our academic life. We consider it dishonest to ask for, give, or receive help in examinations or quizzes, to use any papers or books not authorized by the instructor in examinations, or to present oral work or written work which is not entirely our own, unless otherwise approved by the instructor. We consider it dishonest to remove without authorization, alter, or deface library and other academic materials. We pledge to do all that is in our power to create a spirit of honesty and honor for its own sake.

The Honor Code booklet is distributed to all new students and available from the Dean of Studies Office.

Accommodations Students with disabilities who will be taking this course and may need disability-related accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to see me as soon as possible. Disabled students who need test or classroom accommodations must be registered in advance with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) in 105 Hewitt.