

ECONOMICS OF EDUCATION, Fall A

MTWTh 2:40pm-3:55pm

Professor Randall Reback
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Teaching Assistant: Theo Pippens
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OH: Zoom appointments via <https://reback.youcanbook.me>

OH: Tues. 6-7 PM and 9-10 PM Eastern via Zoom

NOTE: This course is offered for the Fall A term (first ~7 weeks of fall semester)

Prerequisites: (1) Intermediate microeconomics and (2) an introductory statistics course. Intermediate microeconomics cannot be waived as a prerequisite. The introductory statistics course prerequisite may be waived with instructor permission.

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.
- analyze policy topics using arguments tied to both research and theory.

Assigned Readings All readings are posted on Courseworks; click on the relevant class meeting date below or on the Course Syllabus (Under Course Summary) to find the title of the reading(s) and a link to access them.

Grading

Grading: 35% Quizzes, 25% Discussion Questions (effort-based grading), 40% School District Consulting Project

Weekly structure for 9/14 through 10/8:

Mon: DQ response due by 1 PM; lecture; Q&A; DQ; flash assignment; reconvene

Tues: DQ response due by 1 PM; lecture; Q&A; DQ; flash assignment; reconvene

Wed: practice questions (not graded) before class; reading before class but not DQ; lecture; Q&A; practice question solutions; Quiz

Thurs: review Quiz solutions before class; Q&A re. quiz; lecture; Q&A; In the News

4 Quizzes. You will complete the quizzes on your own time via Courseworks, with a 75 minute time limit for each quiz. They will include coverage of some of the quantitative analysis parts of the course, and they will focus on material covered from the prior Thursday up to and including that Wednesday. Your lowest quiz score (including a 0 if you miss one quiz entirely) is replaced by the average of your 2nd and 3rd highest quiz scores.

Project: You will write a consulting report for a school district located in New York State. Your report will advise them on finances, resources, student enrollments, school culture/atmosphere, and Covid-related challenges for the next five years. Your report will include statistical projections/estimates. Detailed instructions, and grading criteria, will be distributed during the first week of classes.

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.

Intellectual Property After input from students, Prof. Reback will update our intellectual property standards here. These standards will apply to the sharing/publishing of course content such as recorded Zoom sessions.

Honor Code The Honor Code will be **strictly** enforced. You must complete all Quizzes on your own, without outside assistance. 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.

Class Meetings:

Date	Details
Tue Sep 8,	Introduction to Topic and Discussion of Course Format
Wed Sep 9,	Why is the Government Involved in Financing Schooling? Why is the Government Involved in Providing Schools?
Thu Sep 10,	Assignment DQ: Sept 10, Rise of Robots School Finance in the U.S.: The Local Role
Mon Sep 14,	Assignment DQ: States' Role in School Finance School Finance in the U.S.: The State Role
Tue Sep 15,	Assignment DQ: Federal Role in School Finance School Finance in the U.S.: The Federal Role
Wed Sep 16,	School Finance in NYC
Thu Sep 17,	Teacher Labor Markets in the U.S.
Mon Sep 21,	Assignment DQ, NY Teacher Market Teacher Labor Markets in New York
Tue Sep 22,	Assignment DQ: Teacher Evaluation Recent Trends in Teacher Evaluation and Compensation
Wed Sep 23,	Evidence from NYC on the Importance of Teachers
Thu Sep 24,	Education Production Function: How do Economists Estimate the Effects of Educational Inputs
Mon Sep 28,	Assignment DQ: Education Production Function Education Production Function: Theory
Tue Sep 29,	Assignment DQ, Seeking Evidence through Statistics Education Production Function: Research Evidence
Wed Sep 30,	Long Run District Spending Trends and the Impact of Covid-19
Thu Oct 1,	Education as an Investment

Date	Details
Mon Oct 5,	Assignment DQ: Education as an Investment Education as an Investment
Tue Oct 6,	Assignment DQ: Education as an Investment, continued Education as an Investment
Wed Oct 7,	Education as an Investment?
Thu Oct 8,	Standards, Testing, and Accountability Programs
Mon Oct 12,	Assignment DQ, Achievement Gap Patterns Achievement Gaps
Tue Oct 13,	Assignment DQ: How Children Succeed Explaining Achievement Gaps
Wed Oct 14,	Segregation
Thu Oct 15,	School Choice Programs
Mon Oct 19,	Assignment DQ: Health and Mental Health and Counseling and Advising The "Other" Things in Schools: Counseling, Wraparound Services, Health Services, Social-Emotional Learning
Tues Oct 20,	Extra Office Hours
Wed Oct 21,	School District Consulting Day