



**Econ2156A 670**  
**Economics of Trade Unions and Labour**  
**Summer 2026**

Instructor: Jason Dean, PhD  
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**Course Information**

**Mode of Instruction:** Online Asynchronous

**Calendar Description:**

The economic and legal aspects of labour relations will be approached under some or all of the following headings: the history and origin of the trade union movement, the economics of trade unions, labour law, wage/price controls and the relationship of unions, firms and governments.

**Pre-requisite(s):** Economics 1021A/B and Economics 1022A/B.

**Extra Information:** 3 lecture hours.

**Course Weight:** 0.50

**Breadth:** CATEGORY A

**Subject Code:** ECONOMIC

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

# COURSE SYLLABUS

ECO2156 - SECTION 670  
TRADE UNIONS AND LABOUR  
SPRING 2026



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<b>Professor:</b>	Jason Dean
<b>Contact:</b>	<a href="mailto:jdean26@uwo.ca">jdean26@uwo.ca</a>
<b>Delivery Mode:</b>	Online Asynchronous
<b>OWL Page</b>	<a href="#">ECONOMIC 2156A - 670</a>
<b>Office Hours</b>	Office hours will be held online using Zoom

## COURSE DESCRIPTION:

*This course introduces the core models and empirical tools of labour economics, focusing on how wages and employment outcomes are shaped by market structures and non-market institutions. Topics include labour supply and demand, monopsony, compensating wage differentials, and human capital theory. Special emphasis is placed on the economic role of trade unions, collective bargaining, labour law, and government interventions such as minimum wage policies and wage controls. Students will analyze how unions influence wages, employment, and firm behaviour through bargaining models and contract theory. Empirical attention is given to the union wage premium, effects on productivity, and negotiated improvements in job quality and workplace safety. Students will critically evaluate theoretical predictions, interpret empirical evidence, and apply visual models to assess the real-world effects of union activity, wage setting, and employment regulation.*

**Prerequisites:** Economics 1021A/B and Economics 1022A/B.

**Course Weight:** 0.50

**Breadth:** Category A

**Subject Code:** ECONOMIC

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course, or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain how labour supply and demand set wages across market structures (including monopsony) and assess how unions and policy interventions change these outcomes.
2. Apply models of compensating differentials, human capital, and union bargaining to evaluate policies such as minimum wages, collective bargaining rights, and job training subsidies.
3. Interpret graphical models and empirical evidence to critique theoretical assumptions and assess the effects of union activity and labour market regulation.

## Weekly schedule

Labour Economics — Summer 2025

WK	DATES	TOPICS <sup>1</sup>	CH. <sup>2</sup>	ASSESSMENTS <sup>3</sup>
1	May 4–10	Intro and labour supply: attachment, policy, incentives	1–3	<p>OWL Quiz 1</p> <p>Intro meeting — Zoom, May 4 at 6:00 pm</p>
2	May 11–17	Lifecycle supply and labour demand (theory and effects)	4–5	<p>OWL Quiz 2</p> <p>5-min video explainer — due Fri May 15 at midnight</p>
3	May 18–24	Wages: equilibrium, monopsony, compensating differentials	7–8	<p>OWL Quiz 3</p> <p>Midterm — Fri May 22 at 6:00 pm</p>
4	May 25–31	Human capital theory and earnings function	9	<p>OWL Quiz 4</p>
5	Jun 1–7	Unions and collective bargaining: theory and evidence	14	<p>OWL Quiz 5</p> <p>AI infographic assignment — due Jun 5 at midnight</p>
6	Jun 8–12	Union wage impacts: models and empirical evidence	15	<p>OWL Quiz 6</p>
<p>Final exam (OWL) — Friday, June 12 at 6:00 pm</p>				

<sup>1</sup> Weekly lesson notes, lecture slides, and recorded chapter videos (where available) will be posted to OWL.

<sup>2</sup> Benjamin, Dwayne, Morley Gunderson, Thomas Lemieux, and W. Craig Riddell. *Labour Market Economics*. 11th ed. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 2021. ISBN: 9781259654848.

<sup>3</sup> OWL quizzes and major assessments (midterm, final exam, and assignments) are completed online through OWL. Due dates are listed in the schedule above.

Zoom: [westernuniversity.zoom.us/j/94740027340](https://westernuniversity.zoom.us/j/94740027340)

# Course format and student responsibilities

Labour Economics, Spring 2026

## COURSE DELIVERY

This course is primarily asynchronous and delivered through OWL. All required resources, including video lectures, PowerPoint slides, and assigned readings, are posted in advance so students can learn at their own pace. **Asynchronous**

An introductory meeting will be held via Zoom on **Sunday, May 4 at 6:00 pm** to walk through the syllabus, course expectations, and OWL navigation. Attendance is strongly encouraged. **Synchronous**

The **midterm exam** (Friday, May 22 at 6:00 pm) and **final exam** (Friday, June 12 at 6:00 pm, Zoom proctored) are synchronous. Students must be available at the scheduled times. **Synchronous**

## ASSESSMENTS AND PRACTICE

Six weekly OWL quizzes (2.5% each, 15% total) are due each Sunday by midnight and are completed asynchronously through OWL. These reinforce key concepts and help prepare students for the midterm and final exams.

Two assignments are completed and submitted through OWL: a **5-minute video explainer** (10%, due Friday, May 15 at midnight) and an **AI infographic assignment** (10%, due Thursday, June 5 at midnight).

Ungraded practice problem sets are also available on OWL for additional exam preparation.

## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Students are responsible for following the weekly schedule closely and engaging with all provided materials, including assigned textbook chapters, video lectures, and lecture slides, to maintain consistent progress throughout the course.

## IMPORTANCE OF TEXTBOOK READINGS

Timely completion of the assigned readings aligned with each week's lesson is essential. The textbook complements the video lectures and slides, and consistent reading significantly improves performance on quizzes, exams, and overall course outcomes.

## Evaluation plan

Labour Economics — Summer 2025

ASSESSMENT	WEIGHT	DUE DATE	
AI infographic assignment	10%	Thu Jun 5 at midnight	Assignment
5-minute video explainer	10%	Fri May 15 at midnight	Assignment
Weekly OWL quizzes (6 × 2.5% each)	15%	Each Sunday by midnight	Weekly
Midterm exam	25%	Fri May 22 at 6:00 pm	Exam
Final exam (Zoom proctored)	40%	Fri Jun 12 at 6:00 pm	Exam
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>		

<sup>1</sup> All quizzes and assessments are completed online through OWL.

<sup>2</sup> Exam dates and assignment deadlines also appear in the weekly schedule above.

### REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

- Benjamin, Dwayne, Morley Gunderson, Thomas Lemieux, and W. Craig Riddell. Labour Market Economics. 11th ed. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 2021. ISBN 9781259654848.
- The textbook can be purchased at the Western Bookstore at a cost of **\$142.75**

### UNGRADED PRACTICE PROBLEM SETS:

- Practice assignments are posted on OWL. It is important that students complete these in full, as they are critical for learning the core concepts tested on the midterm and final exams.

### GRADED OWL QUIZZES:

- There is one multiple-choice quiz in OWL each week, for a total of 6 quizzes. Quizzes draw from textbook readings, posted materials, and the ungraded OWL assignments.
- Quizzes are available throughout the week and must be submitted by Sunday at midnight. Treat each as a timed in-class test—there won't be time to look everything up. Complete all required readings and ungraded assignments beforehand.
- Meeting weekly deadlines is your responsibility; extensions will not be granted without documented justification.

## FIVE-MINUTE VIDEO EXPLAINER

- You will create a 5-minute video in which you clearly explain a concept from the course, rooted in economic theory—not a surface-level summary. You must be visible speaking in the video and use one figure or diagram from the course material to support your explanation. Significant marks will be deducted for vague, unsupported, or superficial content.
- Choose any relevant topic covered in the course, such as the labour-leisure tradeoff, monopsony wage-setting, or the human capital earnings function. Your goal is to demonstrate understanding, not recite slides. For example, don't just describe monopsony—explain how it affects wages relative to competitive markets using the corresponding graph.
- Upload your video to YouTube and set the privacy to Unlisted. Post the video link in OWL by the deadline listed in the schedule. Make sure the video is accessible through the submitted link and that the privacy settings are configured correctly.

## AI INFOGRAPHIC ASSIGNMENT

- Students will use an AI image-generation tool to create an infographic that clearly illustrates one specific course concept. The goal is not simply to produce an attractive image, but to show that you understand the concept well enough to represent it accurately and clearly in visual form.
- Strong submissions will reflect careful thought about what the concept means, which relationships or mechanisms matter most, and how to communicate them effectively to a viewer.
- Simply entering a vague prompt and accepting the first output will usually not produce a strong result, because AI-generated images often look polished while still misrepresenting the underlying economics.

## MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAM

- You must complete the midterm and final exam at the scheduled times.
- Both exams will be proctored live via Zoom, and attendance with your camera on is **mandatory**.
- If you miss either due to illness or another valid reason approved through the dean's office, an alternative assessment will be assigned. Both exams will consist of multiple-choice questions, with a balanced mix of conceptual, factual, and quantitative/graphical content.
- Details on coverage and format will be provided in advance of each exam.

# King's University College General Course Policies 2025-2026

## **1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences**

### **Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)**

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

### **Academic Consideration for Student Absence**

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at [here](#).

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course. Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course. For further information, please see:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>

### **Absences from Final Examinations**

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details [https://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/exams/index.html](https://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/exams/index.html).

## **Religious Accommodation**

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

## **2. Support Services**

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/personal-counselling>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King’s University College:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>

## **GBSV Support:**

King’s is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/campus-safety-and-reporting/gender-and-sexual-violence>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing [Care@kings.uwo.ca](mailto:Care@kings.uwo.ca) or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western’s Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by [email](#) or by calling 519-661-3568.

See also [https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html)

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

### **3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices**

**Use of Electronic Devices:** Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

**Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom:** King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/campus-safety-and-reporting/student-code-of-conduct>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

### **4. Statement on Academic Offences**

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at [here](#).

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with you instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/OriginalityReports-TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

## **5. Copyright of Course Material**

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member.

Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

## **6. Use of Recordings**

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

## **7. Policy on Attendance**

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.