Labor Economics I

MIT (14.661/14.661A) Fall 2024 D. Acemoglu (daron@mit.edu)
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This course covers traditional and contemporary topics in labor economics and aims to encourage the development of independent research interests. Prerequisites are intermediate microeconomics (including basic duality) and familiarity with econometrics at the level of *Mostly Harmless Econometrics*.

The class is offered in two versions, 14.661 and 14.661A, meeting together.

Class requirements

All 661/661A participants are expected to:

- Attend class and recitation each week
- Take an out-of-class final during exam week
- Complete 4 problem sets
- Come to class prepared to discuss readings
- Be prepared for a weekly brief impromptu presentation (BIP) in which a randomly chosen student summarizes 1 of 2 articles assigned from our reading list. BIPs are timed (90 seconds) and done without slides or notes.

In addition, 661A participants are expected to:

• Complete an empirical project involving replication and extension of published work

The 661A empirical project is detailed in a separate note posted on Canvas. Economics Ph.D. students aiming to satisfy requirements for Labor as a major field should take 661A.

Auditors are expected to do the coursework required for credit.

Grading

Labor students may earn a total of 100 regular points plus 5 participation points as follows:

- 14.661 4 problem sets (10 points each); final (60 points); 5 participation points for attendance awarded as .25 each for up to 20 classes, excluding the first (i.e., up to 5 excused absences)
- 14.661A 4 problem sets (10 points each); final (40 points); empirical project (20 points); 5 participation points awarded as in 14.661

READINGS (Angrist)

Books (mostly for review) are on reserve. An (M) flags studies done as part of an MIT Ph.D. thesis.

- J. Angrist and S. Pischke, *Mostly Harmless Econometrics: An Empiricist's Companion*, Princeton University Press, 2009 (MHE; a graduate reference on empirical methods).
- J. Angrist and S. Pischke, *Mastering 'Metrics*, Princeton University Press, 2014 (MM; 'metrics review and many relevant applications).
- G. Borjas, Labor Economics 8e, McGraw-Hill, 2020.

I. Labor Market Facts and Trends

Goldin, Claudia. "Labor Markets in the 20th Century." NBER Historical Working Paper No. 8, June 1994. [also in *Cambridge Economic History of the US*, chapter 10, pp. 549-624]

Romer, Christina. "Spurious Volatility in Historical Unemployment Data." *Journal of Political Economy* 94 (1), February 1986, 1-37.

Rothstein, Jesse. "Unemployment and Job Search in the Great Recession." Brookings Papers on Economic Activity 43 (Fall 2011), 143-213.

Goldin, Claudia, and Robert A. Margo. "The Great Compression: The Wage Structure in the United States at Mid-century." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, February 1992.

Goldin, Claudia, and Lawrence F. Katz. *The Race Between Education and Technology*. Harvard University Press, 2010.

- T. Lemieux, "The Changing Nature of U.S. Wage Inequality," J. of Population Economics, 2007.
- D. Autor, L. Katz, and M. Kearney, "Trends in U.S. Wage Inequality: Revising the Revisionists," *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, May 2008. (M)
- E. Saez and T. Piketty, "Income Inequality in the United States: 1913-1998," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, February 2003 (and web updates on Saez home page).
- W. Kopczuk, E. Saez, and J. Song, "Earnings Inequality and Mobility in the United States: Evidence from Social Security Data Since 1937," *The QJE*, 125(1), February 2010.
- C.B. Mulligan and Y. Rubinstein, "Selection, Investment, and Women's Relative Wages over Time," The *QJE* 123 (August 2008), 1061-1110.
- H. Farber, "Employment, Hours, and Earnings Consequences of Job Loss; US Evidence from the Displaced Workers Survey," *JOLE* 35 S1 (July 2017).
- D. Autor, "Why Are There Still So Many Jobs? The History and Future of Workplace Automation," *J. Economic Perspectives* 29 (Summer 2015), 3-30.
- D. Autor, "Work of the Past, Work of the Future," The AER 109 (May 2019), 1-32.
- D. Autor and M. Wasserman, "Wayward Sons: The Emerging Gender Gap in Labor Markets and Education," *Third Way*, March 2013.
- K. Charles, E. Hurst, and M. Schwartz, "The Transformation of Manufacturing and the Decline in US Employment," *NBER Macro Annual Volume 33* (2019).
- B. Meyer and J. Sullivan, "Consumption and Income Inequality in the U.S. Since the 1960s," The JPE (forthcoming), manuscript, June 2022.

II. Labor Supply

'Metrics: Sections 3-4 in Angrist and Krueger, "Empirical Strategies in Labor Economics," Chapter 23 in the HOLE, Volume 3A, 1999 (AK99).

A. Basics

- A. Deaton and J. Muellbauer, *Economics and Consumer Behavior*, Cambridge University Press, 1980, especially Chapter 4.
- O. Ashenfelter and J. Heckman, "The Estimation of Income and Substitution Effects in a Model of Family Labor Supply," *Econometrica*, 42[1], January 1974, 73-86.

Heckman, James J., "Shadow Prices, Market Wages and Labor Supply," *Econometrica*, 42[4], July 1974, 679-94.

- R. Blundell and T. MaCurdy, "Labor Supply: A Review of Alternative Approaches," The <u>HOLE</u> Volume 3A, chapter 27, 1999.
- G. Imbens, D.B. Rubin, and B. Sacerdote, "Estimating the Effect of Unearned Income on Labor Supply: Evidence from a Survey of Lottery Players," *American Economic Review* 91 (2001).
- D. Cesarini, E. Lindqvist, M. Notowidigdo, and R. Östling, "The Effect of Wealth on Individual and Household Labor Supply: Evidence from Swedish Lotteries," *American Economic Review*, 107 (December 2017).

B. Tax and Transfer Programs

- R. Moffitt, "Welfare Programs and Labor Supply," *Handbook of Public Economics*: Volume 4. eds. A. Auerbach and M. Feldstein, September 2002.
- N. Eissa and J. Leibman, "Labor Supply Response to the Earned Income Tax Credit," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 111 (May 1996).
- B. Meyer and D. Rosenbaum, "Welfare, the Earned Income Tax Credit, and the Labor Supply of Single Mothers" (with Dan T. Rosenbaum), *Quarterly Journal of Economics* CXVI, August 2001, 1063-1114.

Greenberg, D., and H. Halsey, "Systematic Misreporting and Effects of Income Maintenance Experiments on Work Effort: Evidence from the SIME-DIME," *Journal of Labor Economics*, 1[4], October 1983, 380-407.

- O. Ashenfelter, "Determining Participation in Income-Tested Social Programs," *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 78[383], September 1983, 517-525.
- O. Ashenfelter and M. Plant, "Non-Parametric Estimates of the Labor Supply Effects of Negative Income Tax Programs," *Journal of Labor Economics*, 8[1] Part 2, 1990, S397-S415.

Plant, M., "An Empirical Analysis of Welfare Dependence," *American Economic Review*, 74[4], September 1984, 673-684.

- R. Blank, "Evaluating Welfare Reform in the United States," *Journal of Economic Literature*, December 2002, 1105-66.
- D. Card and D. Hyslop, "Estimating the Effects of a Time-Limited Earnings Subsidy for Welfare-Leavers," *Econometrica* 73 (November 2005), 1723-1770.

- J. Rothstein, "Is the EITC as Good as an NIT? Conditional Cash Transfers and Tax Incidence." *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 2(1), February 2010, p.p. 177-208.
- R. Chetty, J. Friedman, and E. Saez, "Using Differences in Knowledge Across Neighborhoods to Uncover the Impacts of the EITC on Earnings," The *AER* 103 (December 2013), 2683-2721.
- B.D. Meyer, C. Murphy, and J.X. Sullivan, "Changes in the Distribution of Economic Well-Being During the COVID-19 Pandemic," NBER Working Paper No. 29878 (March 2022).

C. Household and Family Models

'Metrics: MHE Chapter 4; MM Chapter 3 (Instrumental variables).

Becker, Gary S., 1981, A Treatise on the Family, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Gronau, R., "Leisure, Home Production. and Work -- The Theory of the Allocation of Time Revisited," *Journal of Political Economy*, 85[6], December 1977, 1099-1124.

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Gelbach, J., "Public Schooling for Young Children and Maternal Labor Supply," *American Economic Review*, 92, March 2002, 307-322. (M)

- M. Fitzpatrick, "Revising Our Thinking About the Relationship Between Maternal Labor Supply and Preschool," *J. Human Resources* 47 (Summer 2012).
- M. Kearney, "Is There an Effect of Incremental Welfare Benefits on Fertility Behavior? A Look at the Family Cap," *Journal of Human Resources* 39(2), 2004. (M)
- T. Hofmarcher and E. Plug, "Specialization in Same-Sex and Different-Sex Couples," *Labour Economics* 77 (August 2022).

LATE-Breaking IV 'Metrics

- J. Angrist and I. Fernandez-Val, "Extrapolating: External Validity and Overidentification in the LATE Framework," Chapter 11 in *Advances in Economics and Econometrics (Tenth World Congress)*, 2013.
- J. Angrist, V. Lavy, and A. Schlosser, "New Evidence on the Causal Link between the Quantity and Quality of Children," *The Journal of Labor Economics* (October 2010).
- P. Kline and C.R. Walters, "Evaluating Public Programs with Close Substitutes: The Case of Head Start," The *QJE* 131 (November 2016), 1795-1848.
- D. Aaronson, et al., "The Effect of Fertility on Mothers' Labour Supply Over the Last Two Centuries," The *Economic Journal* 131 (January 2021).

The Pandemic Home Front

C. Amuedo-Dorantes, M. Marcen, and M. Morales, "Schooling and Parental Labor Supply: Evidence from COVID-19 School Closures in the United States," *ILR Review*, May 2022.

- B. Hansen, Joseph J. Sabia, and J. Schaller, "Schools, Job Flexibility, and Married Women's Labor Supply," NBER Working Paper No. 29660 (August 2022).
- N. Bloom, R. Han, and J. Liang, "How Hybrid Work From Home Works Out," NBER Working Paper No. 30292 (January 2023).

D. The Life-Cycle Model

The Life Cycle Model; PIH and ISE Theory; Panel Data 'Metrics

'Metrics: MHE Sections 4.1 and 5.1; MM Chapter 3 (IV and grouped data)

- J. Angrist, "Grouped-Data Estimation and Testing in Simple Labor Supply Models," *Journal of Econometrics*, 47[2], 1991, 243-266.
- J. Angrist, "Does Labor Supply Explain Fluctuations in Average Hours Worked?," NBER Working Paper No. 3312 (March 1990).
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- G. Becker and G. Ghez, <u>The Allocation of Time and Goods Over the Life-Cycle</u>, Columbia University Press, 1975.
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- T. MaCurdy, "An Empirical Model of Labor Supply in a Life-Cycle Setting," *Journal of Political Economy*, 89[6], December 1981, 1059-1085.
- J. Altonji, "Intertemporal Substitution in Labor Supply: Evidence from Micro Data," *Journal of Political Economy*, 94[3] Part 2, June 1986, S176-S215.

Browning, Deaton and Irish, "A Profitable Approach to Labor Supply and Commodity Demand Over the Life-Cycle," *Econometrica*, 53[3], May 1985, 503-543.

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Target Earnings vs the ISH

- A. Mas and A. Pallais, "Valuing Alternative Work Arrangements," The AER, 2017.
- A. Mas and A. Pallais, "Labor Supply and the Value of Non-Work Time: Experimental Estimates from the Field," *American Economic Review: Insights*, 1 (2019).
- C. Camerer, L. Babcock, G. Lowenstein, and R. Thaler, "Labor Supply of New York City Cabdrivers: One Day at a Time," *QJE* 112 (1997), 407-441.

- Oettinger, Gerald S., "An Empirical Analysis of the Daily Labor Supply of Stadium Vendors," *Journal of Political Economy*, 107[2], April 1999, 360-92.
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- E. Fehr and L. Goette, "Do Workers Work More if Wages are High? Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment," *American Economic Review* 97, March 2007.
- H. Farber, "Reference-Dependent Preferences and Labor Supply: The Case of New York City Taxi Drivers," *The American Economic Review* 98 (2008), 1069-1082.
- T. Stafford, "What Do Fisherman Tell Us that Taxi Drivers Don't? An Empirical Investigation of Labor Supply," *Journal of Labor Economics*, 33[3], 2015.
- J. Angrist, S. Caldwell, and J. Hall, "Uber versus Taxi: A Driver's Eye View," *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 13 (July 2021) (M).
- S. Caldwell and E. Oehlsen, "Gender Differences in Labor Supply: Experimental Evidence from the Gig Economy," UC Berkeley Economics Department, manuscript, September 2023 (M).

III. Labor Demand and Demand-Side Institutions and Policies

A. Neoclassical Theory of Firm Behavior

- D. Hamermesh, "The Demand for Labor in the Long Run," Chapter 8 in O. Ashenfelter and R. Layard [eds.] Handbook of Labor Economics, Volume 1, 1986.
- D. Card, "Unexpected Inflation, Real Wages, and Employment Determination in Union Contracts," *American Economic Review*, September 1990, 669-88.
- J. Angrist, "Short-Run Demand for Palestinian Labor," Journal of Labor Economics, July 1996.

Katz and Murphy, "Changes in Relative Wages, 1963-87: Supply and Demand Factors, *The QJE* 107 (Feb 1992), 35-78.

D. Card and T. Lemieux, "Can Falling Supply Explain the Rising Return to College for Younger Men? A Cohort-based Analysis," *The QJE* 116 (May 2001), 705-746.

B. Market Structure and the Min

Basic Theory

'Metrics: MHE Chapter 5; MM Chapter 5 (Diffs-in-diffs).

- D. Card, Using Regional Variation to Measure the Effect of the Federal Minimum Wage," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, October 1992.
- D. Card and A. Krueger (1994), "Minimum Wages and Employment: A Case Study of the Fast Food Industry in NJ and PA," The *AER* 84 (September 1994).

- R. Dickens, S. Machin and A. Manning, "The Effects of Minimum Wages on Employment: Theory and Evidence from Britain", *J. Labor Econ.*, 17[1], January 1999, 1-22.
- A. Manning, *Monopsony in Motion: Imperfect Competition in Labor Markets*, Princeton University Press, 2003.

Propper, Carol and Van Reenen, John. "Can Pay Regulation Kill? Panel Data Evidence on the Effect of Labor Markets on Hospital Performance," *Journal of Political Economy*, 2010, 118 (2). pp. 222-273.

Minimum Wage and Related Wage-Floor Effects

- D. Neumark, J.M. Salas, W. Wascher, "Revisiting the Minimum Wage—Employment Debate: Throwing Out the Baby with the Bathwater?," *ILR Review* 67 (May 2014).
- D. Cengiz, A. Dube, A. Lindner, and B. Zipperer, The Effect of Minimum Wages on Low-Wage Jobs," *The QJE* 134 (August 2019).
- P. Harasztosi and A. Lindner, "Who Pays for the Minimum Wage?," The AER 109 (Aug 2019).
- O. Ashenfelter S. Jurajda, "Minimum Wages, Wages, and Price Pass-Through: The case of McDonald's," *J. Labor Econ.* 40 (April 2022).
- E. Derenoncourt, C. Noelke, D. Weil, and B. Taska, "Spillover Effects of Voluntary Employer Minimum Wages," NBER Working Paper No. 29425 (Rev. June 2022).

C. Immigration and Migration

'Metrics: A. Abadie, "Using Synthetic Controls..." The JEL 59 (June 2021).

- G.E. Johnson, "The Labor Market Effects of Immigration," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 33 (April 1980).
- G. Borjas (1995) "The Economic Benefits from Immigration," JEP 9 (Spring), 3-22.
- J. Altonji and D. Card, "The Effects of Immigration on the Labor Market Outcomes of Less-Skilled Natives," in J. Abowd and R. Freeman, eds., <u>Immigration, Trade, and the Labor Market</u>, University of Chicago Press, 1991, 201-234.
- D. Card, 'The Impact of the Mariel Boatlift on the Miami Labor Market.' *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, vol.43, (January 1990), pp. 245--257.

Borjas, George J., Richard B. Freeman, and Lawrence F. Katz. "How Much Do Immigrant and Trade Affect Labor Market Outcomes?" Brookings Papers on Economic Activity, no. 1 (1997).

Pischke, Jörn-Steffen, and Johannes Velling, "Employment Effects of Immigration to Germany: An Analysis Based on Local Labor Markets," *The Rev. Ec. Stat.* 79 (Nov. 1997).

- J. Angrist and A. Kugler, "Protective or Counter-Productive? Labor Market Institutions and the Effect of Immigration on EU Natives," *The Economic Journal*, June 2003.
- G. Borjas, "The Labor Demand Curve is Downward Sloping: Reexamining the Impact of Immigration on the Labor Market," *QJE* November 2003.

- P. Cortes, "The Effect of Low-Skilled Immigration on US Prices: Evidence from CPI Data," *JPE* 2008, 381-422. (M)
- D. Card, "Immigration and Inequality," AER 99 (May 2009), 1-21.
- C.L. Smith, "The Impact of Low-skilled Immigration on the Youth Labor Market," *Journal of Labor Economics* 30(1), 2012, 55-89. (M)
- G. Ottaviano and G. Peri, "Rethinking the Effects of Immigration on Wages," *J. of the Eur. Ec. Assoc.* 10 (2012), 152-197.
- G. Borjas, "The Wage Impact of the *Marielitos*: A Reappraisal," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 70 (2017).
- M. Clemens and J. Hunt, "The Labor Market Effects of Refugee Waves: reconciling Conflicting results," *ILR Review* 72 (2019; see also Borjas' rejoinder in the same issue).

IV. Intro to Human Capital

A. Schooling, Experience, and Earnings

Basic Theory

- J. Mincer, Schooling, Experience, and Earnings, New York: NBER, 1974.
- G. Becker, Human Capital, 3rd Edition, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.
- R.J. Willis, "Wage Determinants," Chapter 10 in the *HOLE*, volume 1, 1987.

Ben-Porath, Yoram (1967). "The Production of Human Capital Over the Life Cycle," *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 75, No. 4-1, pp. 352-365.

- R.J. Willis, and Sherwin Rosen, "Education and Self-Selection," *Journal of Political Economy*, 87[5] Part 2, Oct 1979: S7-S36.
- R. Freeman, "Demand for Education," Chapter 6 in *The Handbook of Labor Economics*, Volume 1, 1986.

HK vs Signaling; Ability Bias

K. Lang and D. Kropp (1986), "Human Capital Versus Sorting: The Effects of Compulsory Attendance Laws," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 101, 609-624.

Tyler, John, Richard J. Murnane and John Willett, "Estimating the Labor Market Signaling value of the GED," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, May 2000. (M)

P. Martorell and D. Clark, "The Signaling Value of a High School Diploma," *Journal of Political Economy*, 122[2], April 2014.

B. Empirical Earnings Functions

Returns to Schooling, Experience, and OJT

'Metrics: MM Chapter 6; AK99 Section 2.

Z. Griliches, "Estimating the Returns to Schooling: Some Econometric Problems," *Econometrica*, January 1977.

Angrist, J.D. and A. Krueger, "Does Compulsory Schooling Attendance Affect Schooling and Earnings?" *Quarterly Journal of* Economics, 106[4], Nov 1991, 979-1014.

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- P. Oreopoulos, "Estimating Average and Local Average Treatment Effects of Education when Compulsory Schooling Laws Really Matter," *American Economic Review* 96(1), March 2006, pp. 152-175. See also August 2008 (<u>Link</u>) correction.
- G. Aryal, M. Bhuller, and F. Lange, "Signaling and Employer Learning with Instruments," The *AER* 112 (May 2022).
- J. Angrist and B. Frandsen, "Machine Labor," J. Labor Econ. 40 (April 2022).
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- B. Crepon, et al. (2013). "Do Labor Market Policies have Displacement Effects? Evidence from a Clustered Randomized Experiment," the *QJE* 128, pp. 531-580.

C. School Quality and Education Production

- 'Metrics: MHE Chapter 6; MM Chapter 4 (Regression Discontinuity Designs).
- F. Welch, "Black-White Differences in Returns to Schooling," *The AER* 63 (December 1973).
- D. Card and A. Krueger, "School Quality and Black-White Relative Earnings: A Direct Assessment," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 107, February 1992.
- A. Krueger, 'Experimental Estimates of Education Production Functions," QJE 114 (May 1999).
- J. Angrist and V. Lavy, "Using Maimonides Rule to Estimate the Effects of Class Size on Academic Achievement," *QJE* 114 (May 1999), 533-575.
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- S. Dale and A. Krueger, "Estimating the Payoff to Attending a More Selective College: An Application of Selection on Observables and Unobservables," The QJE 117 (Nov. 2002).
- A. Abdulkadiroglu, J. Angrist, and P. Pathak. "The Elite Illusion: Achievement Effects at Boston and New York Exam Schools," *Econometrica*, 2014, 82(1), 137-196.
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- J. Angrist, G. Gray-Lobe, C. Idoux, and P. Pathak, "Still Worth the Trip? School Busing Effects in Boston and New York," NBER Working Paper No. 30308 (Revised June 2024).
- J. Mountjoy, "Community Colleges and Upward Mobility," The AER 112 (August 2022).
- J. Angrist, P. Hull, and C. Walters, "Methods for Measuring School Effectiveness," *Handbook of the Economics of Education*, August 2023.

- J. Guryan, "Desegregation and Black Dropout Rates," The AER 94 (September 2004). (M)
- W. Dobbie and R. Fryer, "The Medium-Term Impacts of High-Achieving Charter Schools," The *JPE* 123 (October 2015).
- S. Billings, D. Deming, J. Rockoff, "School Segregation, Educational Attainment, and Crime: Evidence from the End of Busing in Charlotte-Mecklenburg," The *QJE* 138 (Feb. 2014).
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- J. Angrist, P. Hull, P. Pathak, and C. Walters, "Race and the Mismeasure of School Quality," *AER: Insights* 6 (March 2024).

D. A Few Financial Aid Effects

- S.M. Dynarski, "Does Aid Matter? Measuring the Effect of Student Aid on College Attendance and Completion," The *American Econ. Rev.* 93 (2003). (M)
- J. Angrist, D. Lang, and P. Oreopoulos, "Incentives and Services for College Achievement: Evidence from a Randomized Trial," *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 1 (January 2009).
- E.P. Bettinger, BT Long, P. Oreopoulos, and L. Sanbonmatsu," The Role of Application Assistance and Information in College Decisions," The *QJE* 127 (August 2012).
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- J. Angrist, D. Autor, and A. Pallais, "Marginal Effects of Merit Aid for Low-Income Students," The *QJE* 137 (May 2022).

V. Unions in the Private and Public Sectors

'Metrics: MHE Section 5.1 (Panel Data)

H. Gregg Lewis, Union Relative Wage Effects: A Survey, University of Chicago Press, 1986.

Farber, Henry. "The Analysis of Union Behavior," Chapter 18 In Orley Ashenfelter and Richard Layard (eds), *The HOLE*, Volume II, 1986.

- J.N. Brown and O.C. Ashenfelter, "Testing the Efficiency of Employment Contracts," *Journal of Political Economy* 1986, S40-S87.
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- D. Lee and A. Mas, "Long-run Impacts of Unions on Firms: New Evidence from Financial Markets, 1961-1999," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 2012, 127(1), 333-378.
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- B. Frandsen, "The Surprising Impacts of Unionization: Evidence from Matched Employer-Employee Data," *JOLE* 39 (October 2021). (M)

Second Part - Acemoglu

Cahuc and Zilberberg's *Labor Economics* MIT Press, 2004 is a useful reference. You may also want to consult the lecture notes on my website (Acemoglu, Daron and David Autor, *Lectures in Labor Economics*, Web notes), though these do not cover all our material.

I. Labor Market Externalities

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