Workforce Development:
Economic Mobility and the Future of Work

Course Number: _____
Meeting Time: _____
Classroom: _____
Office Hours: _____or by appointment on Zoom
Email: _____@austin.utexas.edu
Course Website Link: _____

I. Course Description

Less than 45% of the U.S. population has any formal education beyond high school but almost 65% of all jobs require a postsecondary degree or credential. This gap means millions of jobs remain unfilled and, worse, millions of Americans are unable to find work. The gap is even wider when considering high-paying jobs. Of the top 25 highest paying jobs in 2023, all but one (commercial pilot) require *at least* a four-year college degree, a requirement only 38% of Americans can meet. Without the right education, many Americans are locked into poverty and out of economic mobility.

What is the government's role in addressing this mismatch? Local governments currently offer free education from kindergarten through high school. Should government also offer free post-secondary education or training? Are there changes that can be made to K-12 education to make high school graduates more employable in today's economy? What interventions are needed to help working adults obtain the education they need to advance in their careers?

These are the types of questions that form the foundation of workforce policy, an inter-disciplinary area of public policy that sits at the intersection of education and the labor market. Its purpose is to foster economic growth and reduce poverty by aligning the skills of a local workforce with the evolving needs of nearby industries. It includes public policies related to K-12 and post-secondary education, job specific training, and adult education, and it connects with societal challenges related to economic mobility, immigration, incarceration, and the future of work.

This course will introduce students to the dynamic field of workforce development policy. Students will build a foundational understanding of the current workforce preparation ecosystem including today's key players, programs, funding streams, and policy questions. They will also learn how to critically evaluate workforce programming by examining successful and unsuccessful efforts over time. Classes will be taught using experiential learning (learning by doing), a core component of workforce development policy. We will use real world situations and discussions with visiting practitioners to interactively learn together with limited lecture time.

II. Student Learning Objectives

Students who successfully complete the course will be able to:

- Articulate how the convergence between U.S. demographic changes and the increasing technological complexity of work are changing the government's role in preparing individuals for work
- Identify the primary government agencies and laws governing education and workforce policy in the U.S. at the local, state, and federal levels
- Compare the evolution of delivery models for career and technical education in K-12 public education (ex: P-TECH, Career Academies, ECHC, Pre-Apprenticeship)
- Debate the college for all movement and its evolution into a career pathways framework
- Articulate the unique role (and challenges) of community colleges in workforce preparation
- Evaluate career focused interventions in K-16 education (ex: experiential learning, work-based learning, apprenticeships, and career exploration and advising)
- Utilize occupational, demographic, and immigration data to determine workforce policy recommendations
- Assess public job training programs for short-term and long-term impact in comparison to private programs and traditional post-secondary education

III. Assignments and Grading

As experiential learning is a core component to workforce policy, class assignments are designed to help students build the skills they will need in a career in public policy including: (1) using a range of research tools and methodologies to find and digest complex information with diverging points of view; (2) synthesizing written and numerical information into an easily digestible form; (3) persuasively communicating orally, in writing and through numbers; (4) collaborating with peers and critics; and (5) creating evidence-based solutions to complex problems. Instead of exams, which are rare in the world of work, assignments for this course are structured to mirror the type of work you will do as a public policy expert in the field of workforce development.

Assignments and grading will be as follows based on a scale of 100 points with plusses and minuses used in final letter grade assignments:

- **Workforce Journal (6 points):** Students will write their thoughts on the weekly reading and discussion prompts in a Workforce Journal on a weekly basis. Students will choose 5 of their journal entries to write a longer [200 words] summary of their thoughts. Students will submit their Workforce Journal and their 5 journal summaries via Canvas by Friday, November 22. This assignment will be scored as pass/fail.

- **Workforce policy debate (14 points):** Much of our class time will be spent discussing and debating how to improve workforce outcomes. To organize our discussions, students will be

given discussion prompts prior to class that correspond to the assigned reading. Additionally, each student will be assigned a class during which they will lead class discussion on the discussion prompts. Students are expected to actively participate in every class discussion and will be graded accordingly on a pass/fail basis (1 point for every class). If you cannot make a class, please email me prior to class time. Students will lose a point for every absence not approved by me prior to class.

- **Occupational data use case (20 points):** Occupational data is the official way of understanding which jobs and skills are expanding and contracting, which drives how workforce education is structured. Students will be assigned (with some leeway for personal preferences) a group (ex: K-12 students, opportunity youth, foster youth, immigrants, veterans, individuals with disabilities, ex-offenders, long term unemployed…). Focusing on that group, students will create an occupational data "use case" based on data from at least two primary occupational data sources (Bureau of Labor Statistics, O*Net, Federal Reserve Economic Data, U.S. Census Bureau…). The use case will include a problem statement, a detailed analysis of the occupational data including explanatory graphs, and their conclusions from their research. Students will document their use case in a Powerpoint presentation (maximum 8 slides) that they will present to the class.

- **Case study presentation (20 points):** Students will create and present a case study (maximum of 10 slides) of a program focused on their assigned group (see above). The presentation will include an overview of the program, a summary of its impact (both positives and opportunities for improvement), success metrics and 2-3 discussion questions for the class. The presentation must include qualitative and quantitative analysis. Students will present their case study to the class.

- **Grant proposal (40 points):** MacKenzie (formerly Bezos) Scott recently announced she will donate $1.25 million over 5-years ($250,000 a year) to an LBJ student with an innovative plan for reducing poverty through a workforce education and training program. She indicated that she is agnostic on the group being served or the methodology used. But, she wants the initial pilot program to serve at least 50 individuals within the 5-year period with the potential for scaling in the future. Ms. Scott is looking for proposals (maximum of 12 pages) that include: a problem statement, an overview of the group being served and why that group was chosen, a detailed description of the education/training that will be offered, how the education/training will be developed and delivered, what additional support services participants may need (ex: childcare, transportation, professional clothing…), occupational data supporting why the proposed education/training program is appropriate for the group, a list of key personnel and partners, how the program will be evaluated, a 5-year timeline, a budget, sustainability plan, and an executive summary. Students will create a grant proposal for Ms. Scott based on a group of their choice (they can continue focusing on their previously assigned group or choose another) and will present their proposals to the class.

IV. Calendar

The selection of readings may change if new and better readings become available on a given topic. Any changes to the reading will be communicated in advance. Links to each class day's reading will be provided on Canvas by Thursday of the prior week.

Lesson 1 (Week of August 26): A historical overview of the U.S. workforce education and training ecosystem and why workforce policy is important today.

We live in a time of rapid technological change that is impacting how every job is performed. Almost overnight, jobs are being eliminated by automation, digitization, and artificial intelligence while at the same time the jobs that remain are becoming more technologically complex. These rapid changes are creating opportunities for highly-skilled (usually college-educated) workers, but many others are falling behind. And, as technology advances, traditional education is struggling to teach the new, emerging skills employers need to compete globally. Around 77% of jobs in the next decade will require tech skills, but only 13% of schools offer computer science courses and even less blend tech skills with teaching of traditional education topics like English, history, math, and science.

Readings: None

Discussion Questions:

- What is workforce development policy?
- How does workforce development policy interact with traditional education and how does it differ? Why is there sometimes tension between them?
- Should the government sponsor worker training for jobs where there are not sufficient qualified workers (high-demand jobs) or should that be the responsibility of individuals and business?
- How is technology changing traditional jobs and the skills needed to perform those jobs?
- What are "good" jobs for the future?
- Who participates in workforce training and education?

In Class Activity:

Elon Musk has asked the LBJ School to help design the curriculum for the new, online university which will be a part of his K-12 school in Austin. The K-12 school is running smoothly with 52 students, 11 faculty members, 9 administrators, and an endowment of $100 million. His vision is that the university will be an extension of the K-12 school (students can earn college credit in high school) and that the curriculum will be focused entirely on "high-demand" jobs. Our class has been asked to determine which type of degrees and degree paths will be offered, keeping in mind that all classes will be taught online.

Lesson 2 (Week of September 2): Show me the money – how workforce development dollars flow and who are the key players.

In the past, workers could readily obtain job training through their job, their union, or publicly funded training programs. However, over the last 20 years, governments, unions, and businesses have reduced their worker training investments. This has created a training vacuum. Nonprofits and foundations have grown to partially fill this gap, but most individuals must still secure private funding for their work-required training, adding to the growing U.S. student debt load.

Readings:

- "What is the Role of Government in the Workforce?" Data Science in the Public Interest: Improving Government Performance in the Workforce, Chapter 2, Joshua D. Hawley, 2020 (link).
- "Public Funding for Job Training at the State and Local Level," Kelly S. Mikelson, Ian Hecker, Income and Benefits Policy Center, June 2018 (link).
- "Texas Workforce Organizations Landscape Analysis," Aaron Niznik, Sandra Barone, Tanya Gardner, and Jeff Webster, Trellis Company, 2022 (link).
- Explore: Capital Idea (tuition funded by non-profit), Elite Career Training (tuition funded by Texas Workforce Commission), and Lincoln Technical (tuition funded by student loans).

Discussion Questions

- Who should pay for education and training after high school – individuals, businesses, the federal or state government, or nonprofits?
- Who should decide which training programs will be offered?
- Should the government regulate private pay adult training programs (i.e., trade schools)?
- Given limited budgets, should state governments divert funding from public universities to job training programs or vice versa?

In Class Activity:

- A presidential candidate has confidentially asked the LBJ School for help in preparing for a debate over public funding for worker training. The candidate has a corporate business background and is not familiar with public job training programs or funding. She understands the business need for a trained workforce and is sympathetic to the cost of college – she paid her way through school with loans. But, she is not sure that it is the role of the government to provide or pay for higher education or training. We will divide ourselves into three groups representing (1) publicly funded job training, (2) privately funded job training, and (3) free college for all. Each group will prepare and present talking points for her.

Lesson 3 (Week of September 9): How Career and Technical Education (CTE) in public K-12 school systems prepare students for work

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Career and technical education (CTE) teaches students the technical skills required for a specific career path through hands-on training where students practice how a job is performed in a real-world situation. CTE is different from, but complementary to, traditional education which teaches core academic subjects including math, English, history, and science through memorization.

Historically, traditional education focused on preparing students for college (not a specific career), and CTE (and its predecessor vocational education) focused on preparing students for careers that did not require a college degree. However, over the last 20 years, the line between the two has blurred. CTE has evolved to include careers requiring post-secondary education, and traditional education has evolved to include more experiential learning and career focused discussions while teaching academic subjects. As CTE has evolved, the delivery models have also changed. There is currently a CTE renaissance underway with many new models being developed and promoted by private business and philanthropy (ex: Pathways in Technology Early College High School, Career Institutes, National Academy Foundation, Tech Prep...).

Readings:

- "The History and Growth of Career and Technical Education in America," Howard R. D. Gordan and Deanna Schultz, Waveland Press, Inc., pages 1-22, 2020 (link).
- "The Uncertain Pathway from Youth to a Good Job: How Limits to Educational Affordability, Work-Based Learning, and Career Counseling Impede Progress toward Good Jobs," Anthony P. Carnevale, Kathryn Peltier Campbell, Ban Cheah, Artem Gulish, Michael C. Quinn, and Jeff Strohl, Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2022 (link).

Discussion Questions:

- Should CTE education be mandatory for all students?
- How should school districts decide which career pathways to focus on?
- How can school districts include more career exploration and career-oriented discussions when teaching traditional academic subjects?
- What are the downsides of CTE education?
- How can schools encourage student participation in CTE without socio-economic bias?
- At what age should CTE education start?

Speaker:

- Dr. Usamah Rodgers, Superintendent of Desoto ISD

Lesson 4 (Week of September 16): The debate between college and career education

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Over the last two decades, student debt in the U.S. has more than doubled. Currently, around forty-four million U.S. borrowers collectively owe $1.7 trillion+ in federal student loans and private loans, an amount that is larger than all auto loans and credit card debt combined. Ballooning student debt has prompted many to question whether obtaining a college degree is worth the cost. Extensive research supports the conclusion that those with a college degree earn more than those without; however, that conclusion does not tell the whole story. Many students never complete their degree (but still must pay their student debt) and others obtain a degree in a career field that does not have a high market value. This raises interesting, but thorny, questions on who should go to college, what degree paths students should pursue in college, and the government's role in subsidizing post-secondary education.

Readings:

- "College-for-all vs. career education? Moving beyond a false debate," Sara Carr, The Hechinger Report, 2013 (link).
- "Education and Economic Mobility," Ron Haskins, Brookings Institute, July 2, 2016 (link).
- "The Convincing and Confusing Value of College Explained," Brandon Busteed, Forbes, September 3, 2019 (link).
- "National College Completion Progress Rate Stalls," NSC Blog, National Student Clearinghouse, November 29, 2022 (link).
- "Blanket Loan Forgiveness, Loan Subsidies, and Failed Job-Training Programs," Rachel Greszler and John Schoof, Heritage Foundation, June 1, 2022 (link).

Discussion Questions:

- Should compulsory K-12 education extend to post-secondary education (2 or 4 years)? What are the trade-offs?
- Should post-secondary education be subsidized by the government? If so, should individuals be allowed to choose any education degree path they prefer, regardless of related job opportunities? Should there be any consequences if someone does not complete their degree?
- What interventions are needed to improve college completion rates?

Assignment:

- Occupational use case presentations are due on Canvas by Friday, September 13. Students will present their use case during class.

Lesson 5 (Week of September 23): Creative alternatives to the traditional U.S. school to work model

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As the cost of post-secondary education rises and students question the value of a college degree, some thought leaders are calling for wholesale change to our modern K-16 education system. The blending of CTE and traditional education in K-12 (discussed in Lesson 3) is a start, but the pace of change is slow and those changes do not dramatically impact post-secondary systems. It is still difficult for many individuals to access, complete, and pay for higher education, and some degrees are not valuable in the job market. Taking a moment to dream, what could our K-16 education system look like if we were designing a system from scratch?

Reading:

- "The Big Blur: An argument for erasing the boundaries between high school, college, and careers, and creating one new system that works for everyone," Nancy Hoffman, Joel Vargas, Kyle Hartung, David Alstadt, and Erica Cuevas, JFF, June 2021 (link).
- "Gold Standard: The Swiss Vocational Education and Training System," Nancy Hoffman and Robert Schwartz, National Center on Education and the Economy, 2015 (link).
- Explore: National Academy Foundation (NAF), Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH), and Texas College & Career Readiness School Models.

Discussion Questions:

- What is the biggest impediment for people living in poverty in the U.S. to obtaining a college degree?
- What is the most interesting aspect of the Swiss educational system and how might it be implemented in U.S. schools?
- What is a downside to the Swiss educational system?
- Should U.S. businesses be more involved in education? If yes, what should their role be and how can the governments encourage business partnerships?
- Given the urgency of the problems, why has change been so slow?

Guest Speaker:

- Nancy Hoffman (JFF)

Lesson 6 (Week of September 30): Alternative paths for those without a college degree

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Approximately 62% of Americans do not have a four-year college degree. In the past, a college degree was not required to obtain a middle-class job that paid a living wage. Employers would hire workers with relevant job experience or an applicable two-year degree or industry certificate. In the early 2000s, many employers began adding four-year degree requirements to jobs that traditionally did not require them as a way of differentiating talent and signaling employability skills. Recently, the skills-based hiring movement has been pushing back on this trend. With skills-based hiring, employers hire talent based on the skills they possess, not their educational credentials or prior work experience. For example, a skills-based job candidate may not have a degree in computer science but may have the skills to perform a web developer job. Today, 73% of companies use some form of skills-based hiring.

Readings:

- "Skills-Based Hiring is on the Rise," Joseph Fuller, Christina Langer, and Matt Sigelman, Harvard Business Review, February 11, 2022 (link).
- "Skills-Based Hiring Requires Commitment to Change," Roy Maurer, Society for Human Resources Management, March 23, 2023 (link).
- "Texans have many educational credential options to begin a career," María Méndez, The Texas Tribune, June 27, 2023 (link).
- "The Overlooked Value of Certificates and Associate's Degrees: What Students Need to Know Before They Go to College," Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2020 (link).

Discussion Questions:

- What are the impediments to employers implementing skills-based hiring?
- What types of jobs need someone who has a four-year college degree versus a two-year college degree or a certificate?
- What are the drawbacks to skills-based hiring?
- What types of skills does obtaining a four-year degree provide?
- When considering subsidies for education (ex: Pell grants), should governments differ between certificates, 2-year degrees and 4-year degrees?

Assignment:

- Case study presentations must be uploaded to Canvas by Friday, September 27. Each student will have 15 minutes to present their case study during class (10-minute presentation and 5-minute Q&A).

Lesson 7 (Week of October 7): The adult job training ecosystem and the important role of community colleges

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For many, attending a two-year or four-year college program is out of reach. What are other options for those who need new, work-relevant skills? For many, an industry certification is the right answer. Approximately 25% of U.S. adults hold some type of noncredit certificate, license, or other vocational award. But how does one know which certification to obtain and where to obtain it? The U.S. has a vast job training ecosystem funded by government and private dollars. Much of the ecosystem has minimal public or government oversight, and accessing and navigating the ecosystem is challenging for individuals. Fortunately, local community colleges are the largest providers of workforce training, and they are known entities within their communities. Approximately five million students enroll in community college noncredit programs in the U.S. each year, more than half of which are in career and technical courses.

Reading:

- "Employment and training for mature adults: The current system and moving forward," Paul Osterman, Brookings, November 2019 (link).
- "Government-Supported Job Training in the US," Peter Mueser, Kenneth Troske, and Brent Orrell, American Enterprise Institute, July 21, 2023 (link).
- "Navigating Public Job Training" David Deming, Alexis Gable, Rachel Lipson, and Arkādijs Zvaigzne, Harvard Project on Workforce, March 2023, (link).
- Optional: "Investing in People: An Evaluation of Travis County Investments in Workforce Development," Cynthia Juniper Patty Rodriguez Heath Prince, David McCoy, and Thomas Boswell, Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources, March 2023 (link).

Discussion Questions:

- Should community colleges align their non-credit bearing workforce training courses with their academic credit bearing courses so that completing those courses count towards a 2 or 4-year college degree?
- What success data should the government require programs receiving federal workforce funds track and report?
- What are challenges in tracking participants' progress through publicly-funded training programs?
- How have the priorities of federally funded workforce training changed over time? What should be the priorities now?

Guest Speaker:

- Tamara Atkinson (Workforce Solutions Capital Area)

Lesson 8 (Week of October 14): Making the sausage… how workforce policy is developed

Workforce policy historically started as a patchwork of federal laws focused on helping specific populations with barriers to employment (ex: dislocated workers, veterans, ex-offenders, foster youth, persons with disabilities…). As it developed and matured, the federal government's role shifted to delivering block grants to states, leaving the policy work of determining where those dollars are spent at the state level. Recently, both federal and state governments have focused on combining and streamlining programs to reduce administrative overhead and to make the system easier for participants to navigate. Today, much of the policy action remains at the state level while services are delivered locally.

Reading:

- "Policy Levers Available Through The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act," National Governor's Association, January 2023 (link).
- "60x30 Texas Higher Education Strategic Plan: 2015-2030," Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (link).
- "2022-2030 Strategic Plan: Building a Talent Strong Texas," Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (link).
- "Linking Education and Workforce: Spurring Economic Growth Across Texas," Tri-Agency Workforce Initiative, 2020 Commissioners' Report Executive Summary, January 2022 (link).

Discussion Questions:

- Which federal, state, and local government agencies are involved in workforce development policy, and, for each, what are their roles and responsibilities?
- What policy levers are most effective for governors wishing to change workforce policy in their state? What barriers do they face?
- Of the system performance metrics required by WIOA, which is the least effective and which is the most effective?
- Texas' workforce policy focuses on schools governed by the Texas Education Agency and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. This leaves out workforce training providers that are not associated with a college or university. Should the state's workforce policies include them in their strategic planning? If so, how?

Guest Speaker:

- Charlotte Cahill (JFF) and/or Kerry Ballast (Texas Workforce Commission)

Lesson 9 (Week of October 21): Data sharing and data analytics in workforce development policy

Using data-based decision-making in workforce development policy is uniquely challenging. The sheer number of individuals and data elements involved create significant analytic complexity. Adding to the complexity is the ever-changing nature of businesses and jobs and the transient nature of work today where individuals may work in multiple geographies every day. Layered on top are privacy requirements and lack of alignment on the most important data elements to track. Despite these challenges, the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor began encouraging states to build longitudinal workforce data in the early 2000s through the Statewide Longitudinal Data System grants (U.S. Department of Education), the Workforce Data Quality Initiative, and WIOA. Today, most states have some level of integrated individual-level workforce data.

Reading:

- "Data Science in the Public Interest: Improving Government Performance in the Workforce," Chapter 3 – Evidence Based Decision-Making (pages 39-57), Joshua D. Hawley, Ohio State University, 2020, (link).
- "Workforce Data Quality Initiative White Paper," Kristin Wolff, Dallas Oberlee, Ben Mahrer, WDQI Technical Assistance Team, April 2023 (link).
- "Impact Study of Goodwill San Antonio's Good Careers Academy Job Training Programs," Michael U. Villareal and Han Bum Lee, University of Texas at San Antonio, November 2021 (link).
- Explore: U.S. Department of Commerce's Workforce Development - Data, U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration Workforce Data Quality Initiative, and U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration's Guide to State and Local Workforce Data.

Discussion Questions:

- What types of data would be helpful when evaluating outcomes from education and job training programs? For each type, is the data being tracked? What data is missing?
- What are the biggest challenges to tracking, maintaining, analyzing and reporting performance outcomes for education and training?
- How should schools balance their regulatory and ethical responsibilities to protect their students' data with the need to track student outcomes?
- Should private training programs be required to track and report performance outcomes?
- With limits on public funding, should states prioritize building training programs or longitudinal data tracking systems for evaluating existing programs?

Guest Speakers:

- Renzo Soto (TechNet)

Lesson 10 (Week of October 28): Business' role in preparing our workforce for work

When thinking of solutions to today's worker skills shortage, many ask what individuals and governmental entities (ex: independent school districts, government agencies, colleges, and universities…) can do to fix the problem. This ignores the role of another important stakeholder – business. Although many businesses have been reducing their investments in worker training programs over the last 20+ years, that trend is slowly reversing. More and more businesses are understanding the importance of partnering with schools and universities to prepare and train their future workforce.

Reading:

- "Hiring in the Modern Talent Workplace," U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2020 (link).
- "The Partnership Imperative: Community Colleges, Employers, & America's Chronic Skills Gap," Joseph B. Fuller and Manjari Raman, Harvard Business School, December 2022 (link). "Regional Partnerships: Creating highly tailored educational and work-based learning opportunities in communities," Business-Higher Education Forum Workforce Partnership Initiative Case Studies, 2021, (link).
- Explore: Charlotte Works, Boston Private Industry Council, and Broward Up.

Discussion Questions:

- What is the biggest barrier for employers who want to partner with their local schools?
- What is the most important action an employer can take to help train tomorrow's workforce?
- In the age of constant technological innovation, how can employers help education partners stay current with emerging skill requirements?

In class exercise:

ClosedLoop, an Austin-based artificial intelligence company in the healthcare industry, has developed a new way of using AI to diagnose patient illnesses. The technology can reduce physician initial assessment time by 75%. Because the technology will be so disruptive to doctors' offices, ClosedLoop needs to train hundreds of technology experts to help doctors and their staff understand how to use the technology. They anticipate it will take 3-5 years of intensive client education before clients trust the product. ClosedLoop has asked the LBJ School to help determine whether they should develop the training program internally or partner with their community college. They do not have an internal training function and are a small staff. But, they are concerned that their community college may not move quickly enough or have the right skills to teach an AI curriculum.

Guest Speaker:

- Gilbert Zavala (Austin Chamber of Commerce)

Lesson 11 (Week of November 4): The importance of experiential and work-based learning

Before public education was compulsory, most people learned their trade through work-based learning. Craftsman and farmers would employ young people as an inexpensive form of labor in exchange for providing them food, housing, and training. During the industrial revolution, formal workplace training declined as work tasks were standardized and workers became more interchangeable. Society began to view K-12 education as the primary way to prepare individuals for work, and experiential and work-based learning became less common. As the technological revolution has made work more complex, there is growing consensus that most workers need some level of education and training beyond traditional K-12 education, prompting a renewed interest in experiential and work-based learning.

Reading:

- "How Important is a College Degree Compared to Experience?" Soren Kaplan, Harvard Business Review, February 3, 2023 (link).
- "Experiential Learning and Its Impact on College Students," Rebecca Gavillet, Texas Education Review, p. 140-149, 2018 (link).
- "Next Generation Apprenticeships at Aon," The Aspen Institute, February 2023 (link).
- "Texas Work-Based Learning Framework," Texas Education Agency (link).
- "Why Aren't There More Apprentices in America," Anthony Hennen, The James Martin Center for Academic Affairs, January 12, 2018 (link).
- Explore: New America Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship, JFF Center for Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning, and Career Connect Washington.

Discussion Questions:

- How can high schools use experiential learning to teach academic subjects like English, history, math, and science?
- Which jobs could be taught using experiential learning instead of post-secondary education?
- How would you advise a high school senior choosing between an apprenticeship and attending college?
- What metrics should be used to determine whether an apprenticeship program was successful?
- What are the critical elements of any experiential or work-based learning program?
- What skills can an individual learn through work-based learning that they are unlikely to learn in a classroom?

Guest Speaker:

- Ashley King, Director of Health Care Partnerships at Workforce Solutions Capital Area (Baylor Scott and White apprenticeship program).

Lesson 12 (Week of November 11): Immigration's impact on the US workforce

Workforce demand is one of the primary drivers behind U.S. immigration policy. As baby boomers retire and our native-born population growth slows, one policy solution for unmet labor market needs is to increase foreign immigration. The U.S. currently has the largest population of foreign-born workers of any country in the world with 29.8 million foreign-born workers (18.1% of the total U.S. workforce). Most immigrants work – the unemployment rate for foreign-born individuals in the U.S. is 3.4%, slightly lower than native-born Americans at 3.7%. Despite such a large population, limited government resources are spent training foreign-born workers as compared to native-born workers.

Reading:

- "How Does Immigration Fit into the Future of the U.S. Labor Market?" Pia M. Orrenius, Madeline Zavodny and Stephanie Gullo, Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, Working Paper, March 2020, (link).
- "Building the new high road: Immigrants and workforce development," Rachel Lipson, Harvard Kennedy Schools Project on Workforce, September 28, 2022, (link).
- Foreign Born Workers: Labor Force Characteristics – 2022, Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 18, 2023 (link).
- Explore: Upwardly Global, Project Feast, and Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio.

Discussion Questions:

- How does immigration impact the skills gap in the U.S.?
- Should government sponsored job training programs be offered to anyone regardless of immigration status?
- What are the macroeconomic effects of immigration on the labor market outcomes for native-born workers?
- What are workplace training needs for most immigrants?
- Will automation reduce the need for immigrants in the U.S.?

Speaker:

Luana Alesio (Riverside Language Program)

Lesson 13 (Week of November 18): Re-engaging opportunity youth

There are approximately 5 million persons in the U.S. between the ages of 16-24 years of age (roughly 1 out of every 8) who are disconnected from both school and work. Many live in rural areas and small towns, and around a quarter live in the South. Most have experienced a significant disruption in their formative years like homelessness, interactions with the juvenile justice or foster care systems, substance abuse, or teen pregnancy. Their disconnection from both school and work is particularly concerning because of their age – they are in a formative stage of life where change is possible. But, if they do not quickly reconnect to school or work, they can face severe long-term effects. Extensive research shows that there are significant long-term gaps between disconnected and connected youth in income, homeownership rates, self-reported health status, and employment.

Reading:

- "Opportunity Youth in Texas," Anna Crockett, Emily Ryder Perlmeter, and Molly Hubert Doyle, Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas – Community Development Publications, October 2019, (link).
- "An Opportunity to Do Better: Youth Pathways to Thriving," Mary Kay Dugan, Jill Young, Deborah Moroney, American Institutes for Research, March 2021 (link).
- "Opportunity Lost: Maximizing large federal funds to support opportunity youth," Ken Thompson, The Aspen Institute's Forum for Community Solutions, December 2017, (link).
- "A Decade Undone," Kristen Lewis, Measure of America, 2020 (link).

Discussion Questions:

- What supports help opportunity youth reconnect with school or work?
- Why do some youth disconnect from work and school and others stay connected?
- How can current public dollars be spent to reconnect opportunity youth? What are the challenges to accessing those resources?
- How does the U.S. rate of opportunity youth compare to other countries?
- What barriers does a disconnected youth encounter when they try to reconnect with school or work?
- What is the biggest challenge to reconnecting opportunity youth to school or work?

Speaker:

- Nicole Colvin (Deep East Texas College and Career Academy at Jasper ISD)

Lesson 14 (Week of December 2): Grant proposal presentations

Reading:

- None.

Discussion Questions:

- None.

Assignment:

- Grant proposal presentations must be submitted on Canvas by Friday, November 22. Students will have 20 minutes to present their grant proposal during class (15-minute presentation and 5-minute Q&A).

V. Policies

a. Academic Dishonesty

Students are expected to respect the LBJ School's standards regarding academic dishonesty. You owe it to yourself, your fellow students, and the institution to maintain the highest standards of integrity and ethical behavior. A discussion of academic integrity, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, as well as helpful information on citations, note taking, and paraphrasing, can be found at the Office of the Dean of Students web page at http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/. The University has also established disciplinary procedures and penalty guidelines for academic dishonesty, especially Sec. 11.504 in Appendix C of the Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities section in UT's General Information Catalog.

b. Acceptable and Unacceptable Use AI

The use of generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Dall-e, etc.) is permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas.
- Fine tuning your research questions.
- Finding introductory information and research on your topic.
- Drafting an outline to organize your thoughts.
- Developing initial source lists.
- Checking grammar and style.

The use of generative AI tools is not permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose discussion board prompts.
- Completing group work that your group has assigned to you, unless it is mutually agreed upon (between you and me) that you may utilize the tool.
- Writing a draft of a writing assignment or presentation.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs, descriptions, or papers to complete class assignments (memos, discussion posts, presentations, or annotated bibliographies).

You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query, and your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited in order to stay within the UT Honor Code.

c. Disability Access

Students with disabilities may request appropriate accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (Disability Access).

d. Mental Health

Students who are struggling for any reason are encouraged to reach out to the Counseling and Mental Health Center. I am also available if you feel comfortable.

e. Personal Pronoun Use

Class rosters are provided to me with each student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by a name that is different from what appears on the official roster, and by the gender pronouns you use (she/he/they/ze, etc). Please advise me of any changes early in the semester so that I can update my records from the start.

f. Religious Holidays

If our class conflicts with your religious holiday, please notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of the holy day. If you must miss a class or class assignment in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

g. Campus Safety

Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside. Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building. Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class. In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office. The Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): can be reached at 512-232-5050. Emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: https://preparedness.utexas.edu/emergency-plans. More information on how to sign up for emergency text alerts, contact information for various UT offices, wellness resources, and campus initiatives relating to safety and/or wellness can be found at https://www.utexas.edu/campus-life/safety-and-security.