

In-class Exercise: Measuring Employment

Directions: Work in groups of up to four people and answer the following questions. All papers will be collected, but only one member's paper will be randomly selected and graded and all members of the group will receive the same grade.

By signing below, you agree that the following work represents the efforts of everyone in the group, and you are willing to accept as your own grade for the group project the grade earned from this representation of your group's work. Every member must agree to these terms to earn a non-zero grade for this assignment.

_____ Signature Group Member 1	_____ Print Name	_____ Date
_____ Signature Group Member 2	_____ Print Name	_____ Date
_____ Signature Group Member 3	_____ Print Name	_____ Date
_____ Signature Group Member 4	_____ Print Name	_____ Date

Directions: The following questions concern the Bureau of Labor Statistics March 4, 2016 News Release of the U.S. employment situation for the month of February 2014. Using the information in this news release, answer the following questions in the space provided. **When available, use the *seasonally adjusted* statistics to answer the questions.**

1. Define **labor force** and **labor force participation rate**.
2. According to Table A, what is the size of the non-institutional population in February 2016? What is the size of the labor force in February 2016? What was the labor force participation rate in September 2016? Show the math for the labor force participation rate calculation. How does this compare to one month before? One year before?
3. Define the **unemployment rate**.
4. According to Table A, how many people were unemployed in February 2016. What was the unemployment rate? Show the math for the unemployment rate calculation. How does this compare to one month before? One year before?

5. According to the BLS news release, what is the definition of a **long-term unemployed** person? How many people were long-term unemployed in February 2016? What percentage of the total unemployed persons are in this category?

6. What is the definition of a **discouraged worker**? How many discouraged workers were there in February 2016? How does this compare to one year before?

7. According to the BLS news release, what is the definition of working **part time for economic reasons**? How many workers were part time for economic reasons in February 2016? What percentage of the labor force is this?

8. According to the BLS news release, how many workers were involuntarily part time in February 2016 (part time for non-economic reasons)? What percentage of the labor force is involuntarily part time?

9. Suppose the “workforce” (this is a term I am making up for this assignment) is defined as the labor force plus discouraged workers. For February 2016, calculate the size of the workforce and compute what percentage of the workforce are either unemployed, part time for economic reasons, or are discouraged workers (report a single statistic to answer this question).
10. How does your answer above compare to the unemployment rate? Which do you think is a better measure for the health of the labor market?
11. According to Table A, which racial group suffers the highest level of unemployment? What was this unemployment rate in February 2016? Which racial group has the lowest level of unemployment? What was this unemployment rate in February 2016?
12. Table A-4 reports unemployment numbers by educational attainment. Report the unemployment rates for February 2016 for each category for education attainment. Do you want to finish your college degree?

13. Table A-10 reports unemployment rates by age groups. Report the unemployment rates in February 2016 for the following age groups: 18-19 years, 20-24 years, 25-34 years, 35-44 years, 45-54 years, and 55+ years.

14. According to Table A-13, what two occupations experience the highest unemployment rates in February 2016? What two occupations experience the lowest unemployment rates in February 2016? Report all these unemployment rates. In what field listed on this table do you most expect to be working in the future? What was the unemployment rate in that field in February 2016?