

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 February 4, 2011 News Release of the U.S. employment situation for the month of January 2011. 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-1, what is the size of the non-institutional population? What is the size of the labor force?
3. According to Table A-1, what was the labor force participation rate in January 2011? Was this substantially higher or lower than one month before? one year before?
4. Define the **unemployment rate**.

5. According to Table A-1, what was the unemployment rate in January 2011? Was this substantially higher or lower than one month before? one year before?

6. According to Table A-1, how many people were unemployed in January 2011? How many people were unemployed one year before?

7. According to the BLS news release, what is the definition of a **long-term unemployed** person?

8. According to the BLS news release, how many people were long-term unemployed? What percentage of the total unemployed persons are in this category (you need a previous answer to calculate this number)?

9. What is the definition of a **discouraged worker**?

10. According to the BLS news release, how many discouraged workers were there in January 2011? Was this substantially higher or lower than one year before?

11. According to the BLS news release, what is the definition of working **part time for economic reasons**? This can also be thought of as a type of **under-employment**.

12. Suppose the “workforce” (this is a term I am making up for this assignment) is defined as the labor force plus discouraged workers. What percentage of the “workforce” are unemployed, under-employed for economic reasons, or are discouraged workers?

13. Table A-2 reports unemployment numbers by race and age, and Table A-3 reports unemployment numbers of those with Latino or Hispanic ethnicity. Are there substantial differences between races and ethnicity? If so, what groups of people suffer the most unemployment?

14. Table A-4 reports unemployment numbers by educational attainment. Are there differences in unemployment rates depending on the amount of education one has? If so, what groups of people suffer the most unemployment? What groups suffer the least unemployment? What are the unemployment statistics for these groups?

15. According to Table A-14, what types of jobs are experiencing the highest unemployment rates in January 2011? Which is the highest, and what is this unemployment rate? What type of job is experiencing the lowest unemployment rate, and what is this unemployment rate?

16. What learning outcomes (see syllabus) did you accomplish with this assignment? Explain.