Assignment on Unemployment  
(due Monday November 1)


1. Calculate the unemployment rate to the nearest tenth of a percent for September 2010 using the Civilian Labor Force and the Unemployment Level. Show that it is the same as the unemployment rate in the table.

2. Click the “Include Graphs” option at the top, and print out the graph of the unemployment rate. (On a PC you would right-click and View Image, and print the image. On a Mac just drag it to the desktop and then print) Do the same for the Employment-Population Ratio. Do you think the unemployment rate tells the whole story? What more do Discouraged Workers and U-6 tell you? (see definitions below)* What do you think the unemployment rate and U-6 will be when we have totally recovered from the recession?

3. Calculate the percentage of people unemployed for more than 27 weeks to the total number of people unemployed during the month of September for each of the years 2000, 2003, 2008 and 2010. How is the structure of unemployment changed in this recession?

4. Click on “More formatting Options” at the top and choose “3 Month Net change” starting in 2000. What do the data on the change in Employment Level tell you about the timing and effect of both the current and the 2001 recession?

5. At the bottom of the main data webpage go to Create Customized Maps and click on the world icon to view the unemployment rate for by state. What were the unemployment rates in the four states with the highest unemployment rates in 2006? What factors might explain this in each state? Then go to 2010 – what has changed? What might explain the similarities and differences?

6. Back on the main data webpage and click Unemployment at the top of the page. There you will find Local Area Unemployment Statistics – click on the Top Picks icon. A list of states will come up. What is the latest unemployment rate for your hometown or area? How does it compare to the state and nation? To your hometown a year ago?

*Marginally attached workers  Persons not in the labor force who want and are available for work, and who have looked for a job sometime in the prior 12 months (or since the end of their last job if they held one within the past 12 months), but were not counted as unemployed because they had not searched for work in the 4 weeks preceding the survey. Discouraged workers, who are not currently looking because they believe there are no jobs available or there are none for which they would qualify, are a subset of the marginally attached.