



Seminar invitation

'Did employers in the USA back away from skills training in the 2000s?'

Delivered by

Professor Jeff Waddoups

University of Nevada, Las Vegas



Abstract: Analysts and policy-makers have long accepted the idea that formal employer-sponsored training plays an important role in the formation of human capital stocks of advanced economies. Recently, influential studies in the USA (e.g. Cappelli, NBER, 2014) have argued that while employers' claim that their hiring problems lie the dearth of skills in the labour force, in reality their problems may be self-inflicted, or based in part on their own substantial withdrawal of commitment to training their own workforces. The purpose of the present study is to examine empirical evidence on whether there has been a significant shift in the incidence and intensity of employer-paid training over the decade of the 2000s in the U.S. economy. Using data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), I show that employers indeed have reduced their training activities. The incidence of training in the previous 12 months fell roughly 28 percent overall during the period between 2001 and 2009. The results show that the decline in employer-paid training was wide-spread, affecting most industries, occupations, and demographic groups. Results also demonstrate that the intensity of training has not changed over the period. Standard decomposition methodology of the training gap between 2001 and 2009 provides little evidence about the source of the reduced commitment based on observable characteristics.

Speaker: Jeff Waddoups received a B.A. degree in 1984 and a Ph.D. degree in 1989 from the University of Utah in Economics, with specialisations in labour economics and industrial relations. In 1989 he joined the Department of Economics at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas where he has developed and taught courses at the graduate and undergraduate levels in labour economics, research methods, labour law, statistics, health economics, the economics of discrimination, and macroeconomics. He has also held adjunct faculty positions at Penn State's Human Resource and Employment Relations masters' program, Griffith University's Department of Management, and the Helsinki School of Economics Bachelor of Business Administration Program. He is the author or co-author of 45 academic articles, and is an internationally and nationally recognised scholar with publications in some of the top journals in labour economics and industrial relations including in such journals as *Industrial & Labor Relations Review*, *Industrial Relations*, and the *British Journal of Industrial Relations*.

Professor Waddoups has developed a number of areas of research expertise over his career. Most recently, he has focused on the impact of unions and collective bargaining on the incidence of job training both in Australia and the U.S. and the impact of responsible contracting policies on construction costs. He has also examined the extent to which low-wage employers are subsidised through uncompensated health care at public hospitals and the impact of collective bargaining on wages and other outcomes in the hotel-casino industry. He currently directs the graduate program for the Department of Economics. While he's not working you'll probably find him on the golf course or spending time with his family, which includes his partner Dawn, eight children and step-children ranging in age from 13 to 30, and four grandchildren.

Tuesday, 7th October 2014

10 am - 11:30 am

Room 2.01, Building N54 (Nathan)

Tea/coffee provided