Handout for October 2025 Newsletter
Visualizing Unemployment Rates in FRED

Purpose.
1. Create a plot of unemployment rate data.
2. Change the graph's date range to show values since 2007.
3. Describe and discuss patterns in the evolution of the labor market data over time.

Pedagogical Rationale. This assignment requires that you first look for data and plot them into a graph. Next, you will change the date range. Lastly, you will describe and discuss patterns in the evolution of the data series. These tasks will develop your proficiency in searching for, transforming, and interpreting data.

Grading. Your grade will be determined by (a) how precisely you complete the search and transformation data tasks and (b) how accurately you interpret the data.

Steps to Search for and Transform the Data.
1. Browse FRED data by release by navigating to "Employment Situation > Current Population Survey (Household Data)." Alternatively, go to
https://fred.stlouisfed.org/release/tables?rid=50&eid=461
2. Select "Table A-1. Employment status of the civilian population by sex and age."
3. Select the "Monthly, Seasonally Adjusted" option.
4. Select the following data series by clicking the boxes next to their titles:
    a. "Total. Unemployment Rate."
    b. "Men, 20 Years and Over. Unemployment Rate."
    c. "Women, 20 Years and Over. Unemployment Rate."
5. Click on the "Add to Graph" button at the bottom of the webpage.
6. Change the date range by typing "2007-01-01" as the start date of the graph.

Writing Prompts. Answer the following questions:
1. Compare the unemployment rate of women and the unemployment rate of men between 2007 and 2025. Was one frequently higher than the other? Did that pattern alternate over time? What could explain those changes?
2. Change the date range of the graph by typing "1948-01-01" as the start date and "1988-01-01" as the end date of the graph. Compare the unemployment rate of women and the unemployment rate of men between 1948 and 1988. Was one frequently higher than the other? Did that pattern alternate over time? What could explain those changes?