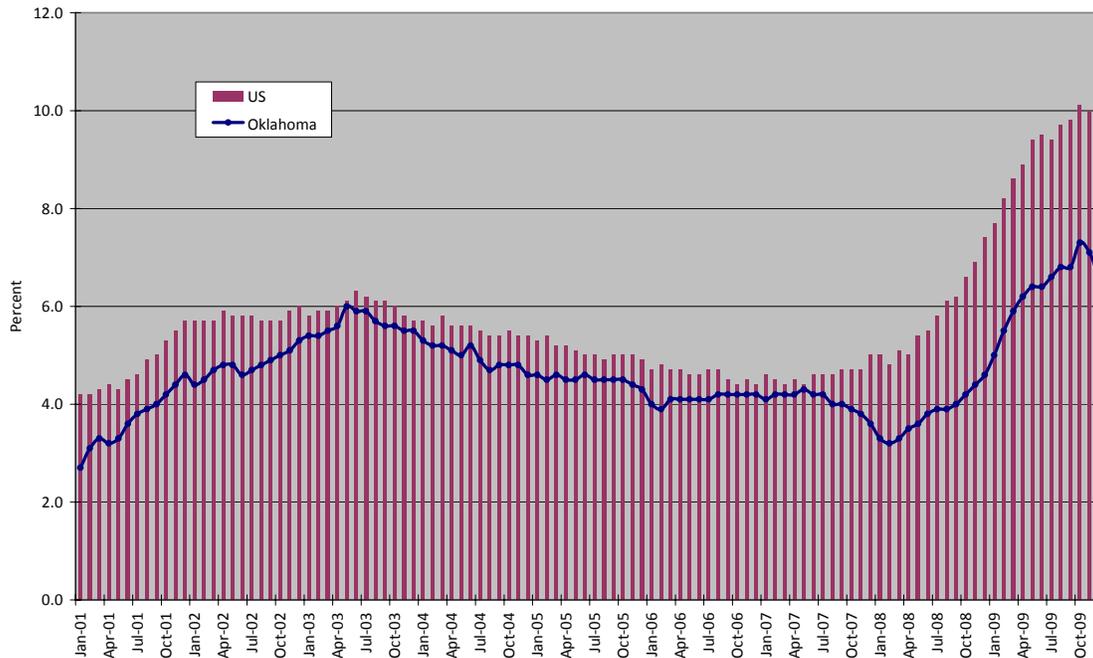


U.S and Oklahoma Unemployment Rate (Seasonally Adjusted)

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics



The unemployment rate measures the percentage of people in the state who are without work and is calculated by dividing the estimated number of unemployed people in the state by the civilian labor force. The result expresses unemployment as a percentage of the labor force.

After reaching a low of 3.8 percent in February 2008, unemployment rates in Oklahoma began to rise around the middle of 2008 and have continued upward since, with rapid increases during the first half of 2009.

Oklahoma's rise in unemployment has followed the national trend, with the U.S. rate reaching a high of 10.1 percent in October 2009. The U.S. unemployment rate declined slightly to 10.0 percent in November 2009 and remained at that rate through December. In Oklahoma, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for October 2009 reached a high of 7.3 percent—nearly double from 4.2 percent a year ago. Oklahoma's unemployment rate had not reached those levels since 1987. Since October, the unemployment rate has been declining to a preliminary 6.6 percent in December 2009.

Oklahoma's current rate is still well below the 9.2 percent rate reached in 1983, and there were 16 consecutive months in 1982 and 1983 in which the rate was higher than now. Nevertheless, unemployment tends to lag economic recovery and could remain high even after recovery begins.