
George Mason University • Economics 496/695 • Special Topics in Economics

GENDER ECONOMICS

Fall 2014 • Wednesday 7.20-10.00pm • Robinson Hall B220

Prof. Johanna Mollerstrom • Contact: jmollers@gmu.edu

Office hours by appointment.

Course Description

The course draws on empirical and theoretical insights from multiple fields within economics. The objective is to understand the role of gender in economic decision making, and the changing significance, timing, and meaning of work, career, and family. We will also consider the interplay between culture, norms and gender, and the impact on economic decision making and outcomes. The course focuses mostly on the developed world, but we will occasionally contrast this with a global perspective.

Readings

You will need two books for the class:

- F. Blau, M. Ferber, and A. Winkler, *The Economics of Women, Men, and Work*, 7th ed. (Prentice Hall, 2013).
- G. Becker, *A Treatise on the Family* (Harvard University Press, 1993), enlarged paperback edition.

All other readings will be made available electronically.

Course requirements

The course grade will be determined using the following weights:

- Attendance and class participation: 25%.
- Reaction papers: 25%.
- Mid-term exam: 25%.
- Final exam: 25%.

Reaction papers

1-2 page commentaries on the readings for that week. Can focus on, for example, questions for discussion, comparisons between the readings, or new research or policy ideas related to the readings (for graduate students the reaction paper *must* discuss either a research or a policy idea). These papers should be submitted to me via e-mail by 5pm on the day of class. The first is due on September 3. I will drop the reaction paper with the lowest grade when setting final course grades.

Exams

There are two in-class exams. The mid-term exam covers the material covered until (and including) Oct 6. The final exam covers the complete course, but the exam will focus on material covered after the mid-term.

Some questions on the exams will be different for graduate and undergraduate students. In general, graduate students are expected to show a more in-depth understanding of especially technical details of the material.

Missing class?

If you need to miss a class you will be required to write an overview of the readings for that week (in addition to the reaction paper) and submit to me no later than 6 days after the missed class. The overview must be at least 4 pages.

Schedule

August 27	Overview of course. Gender as an evolving economic force – historical and recent trends.
September 3	The economics of career, marriage, and family, part 1: Work in the home and in the market.
September 10	The economics of career, marriage, and family, part 1: Work in the home and in the market, ctd.
September 17	The economics of career, marriage, and family, part 2: Marriage and family formation.
September 24	Gender differences in occupations and earnings, part 1: Overview and international perspective.
October 1	Gender differences in occupations and earnings, part 2: Human capital.
October 6	Gender differences in occupations and earnings, part 3: Discrimination.
October 15	<i>Midterm exam.</i>
October 22	Norms, culture and reform, part 1: Exposure and leadership.
October 29	Norms, culture and reform, part 2: The role of policy.
November 5	Experimental and behavioral gender economics, part 1: Preferences and stereotypes.
November 12	Experimental and behavioral gender economics, part 2: Competitiveness and bargaining.
November 19	Experimental and behavioral gender economics, part 3: Neuroeconomics. Concluding remarks.
November 26	<i>Day before Thanksgiving – no class.</i>
December 3	<i>Final exam.</i>

Readings

Abbreviations: BFW = Blau, Ferber, and Winkler, *The Economics of Women, Men, and Work*; Treatise = Becker, *A Treatise on the Family*.

You will be required to read some of the readings for each week in-dept. Others can be skimmed and you can focus on abstract/introduction/conclusions. I will tell you which readings to focus on for the next week at the end of class.

Gender as an evolving economic force – historical and recent trends (Aug 27)

- BFW: Chap. 1-2, 5.
- Goldin, C. (2006) “The ‘Quiet Revolution’ that Transformed Women’s Employment, Education, and Family.” *American Economic Review*, 96(2): 1-21.
- Lundberg, S. and Pollak, R. (2007) “The American Family and Family Economics.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 21(2): 3-26.

The economics of career, marriage, and family, part 1: Work in the home and in the market (Sep 3 & 10)

- BFW: Chap. 3-4, 6.
- Treatise: Chaps. 1-2.
- Becker, G. (1974) “On the Relevance of the New Economics of the Family.” *American Economic Review*, 64(2): 317-319.
- Goldin, C. (1991) “The Role of World War II in the Rise of Women’s Employment.” *American Economics Review*, 81(4): 741-756.
- Mammen, K. and Paxson, C. (2000) “Women’s Work and Economic Development.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 14(4): 141-164.
- Strober, M. (1994) “Rethinking Economics Through a Feminist Lens.” *American Economic Review*, 84(2): 143-147.

The economics of career, marriage, and family, part 2: Marriage and family formation (Sep 17)

- BFW: Chap. 13.
- Treatise: Chaps. 3-5.
- Antonovics, K. and Town, R. (2004) “Are All the Good Men Married? Uncovering the Sources of the Marital Wage Premium.” *American Economics Review*, 94(2): 317-321.
- Ashraf, N., Field, E. and Lee, J. (forthcoming) “Household Bargaining and Excess Fertility: An Experimental Study in Zambia.” *American Economic Review*.
- Goldin, C. and Katz, L. (2000) “Career and Marriage in the Age of the Pill” *American Economic Review*, 90(2): 461-465.

- Jayachandran, S. and Kuziemko, I. (2009) "Why do Mothers Breastfeed Girls Less than Boys? Evidence and Implications for Child Health in India." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 126(3): 1485-1538.
- Lundberg, S. and Pollak, R. (1996) "Bargaining and Distribution in Marriage." *Journal of Economics Perspectives*, 10(4): 139-158.
- Stevenson, B. and Wolfers, J. (2007) "Marriage and Divorce: Changes and Their Driving Forces." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 21(2): 27-52.

Differences in occupations and earnings, part 1: Overview and international perspective (Sep 24)

- BFW: Chap. 7, 17-18.
- Blau, F. and Kahn, L. (2003). "Understanding International Differences in the Gender Pay Gap." *Journal of Labor Economics* 21(1): 106-144.
- Fortin, N. and Lemieux, T. (2000) "Are Women's Wage Gains Men's Losses? A Distributional Test." *American Economic Review*, 90(2): 456-460.
- Goldin, C. (2014) "A Grand Gender Convergence: Its Last Chapter." *American Economic Review*, 104(4): 1091-1119.

Differences in occupations and earnings, part 2: Human capital (Oct 1)

- BFW: Chap. 8.
- Bertrand, M., Goldin, C. and Katz, L. (2010) "Dynamics of the Gender Gap for Young Professionals in the Financial and Corporate Sectors." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 2(3): 228-255.
- Goldin, C. and Katz, L. (2008) "Transitions: Career and Family Life Cycles of the Education Elite." *American Economic Review*, 98(2): 363-369.
- Joy, L. (2000) "Do Colleges Shortchange Women? Gender Differences in the Transition from College to Work." *American Economic Review*, 90(2): 471-475.

Differences in occupations and earnings, part 3: Discrimination (Oct 6)

- BFW: Chap. 10-12.
- Bertrand, M., Chugh, D. and Mullainathan, S. (2005) "Implicit Discrimination." *American Economics Review*, 95(2): 94-98.
- Blau, F. and Ferber, M. "Discrimination: Empirical Evidence from the United States." *American Economic Review*, 77(2): 316-320.
- Castillo, M., Torero, M., Petri, R. and Vesterlund, L. (2013) "Gender Differences in Bargaining Outcomes: A Field Experiment on Discrimination." *Journal of Public Economics*, 99: 35-48.
- Coate, S. and Loury, G. (1993) "Will Affirmative-Action Policies Eliminate Negative Stereotypes?" *American Economic Review*, 83(5): 1220-1240.

- Goldin, C. and Rouse, C. (2000) “Orchestrating Impartiality.” *American Economic Review*, 90(4), 715-741. (Only pp. 715-724, pp. 737-738).

Norms, culture and reform, part 1: Exposure and Leadership (Oct 22)

- Andersen, S., Bulte, E., Gneezy, U. and List, J. (2008) “Do Women Supply More Public Goods than Men?” *American Economic Review*, 98(2): 376-381.
- Beaman, L., Chattopadhyay, R., Duflo, E., Pande, R. and Topalova, P. (2009) “Powerful Women: Does Exposure Reduce Bias?” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 124(4): 1497-1540.
- Carrell, S., Page, M. and West, J. (2010) “Sex and Science: How Professor Gender Perpetuates the Gender Gap.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 125(3): 1101-1144.
- Chattopadhyay, R. and Duflo, E. (2004) “Women as Policy Makers: Evidence from a Randomized Policy Experiment in India.” *Econometrica*, 72(5): 1409-1443.
- Jensen, R. and Oster, E. (2009) “The Power of TV: Cable Television and Women’s Status in India.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 124(3): 1057-1094.
- Washington, E. (2008) “Female Socialization: How Daughters Affect Their Legislator Fathers.” *American Economic Review*, 98(1): 311-332.

Norms, culture and reform, part 2: The role of policy (Oct 29)

- BFW: Chap. 15-16.
- Edlund, L. and Pande, R. (2002) “Why have Women Become Left-Wing? The Political Gender Gap and the Decline in Marriage.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 117(3): 917-961.
- Ekberg, J., Eriksson, R. and Friebe, G. (2013) “Parental Leave – A Policy Evaluation of the Swedish ‘Daddy-Month’ Reform.” *Journal of Public Economics*, 97:131-143.
- Lefebvre, P., Merrigan, P., Verstraete, M. (2009) “Dynamic Labour Supply Effect of Child-care Subsidies: Evidence from a Canadian Natural Experiment on Low-fee Universal Child Care.” *Labour Economics*, 16, 490-502.
- Lott, J. and Kenny, L. (1999) “Did Women’s Suffrage Change the Size and Scope of Government?” *Journal of Political Economy*, 107(6): 1163-1198.

Experimental and behavioral gender economics, part 1: Preferences and Stereotypes (Nov 5)

- BFW: Chap. 9.
- Aguiar, F., Branas-Garza, P., Cobo-Reyes, R., Jimenez, N. and Miller, L. (2009) “Are Women Expected to be More Generous?” *Experimental Economics*, 12(1), 93-98.
- Andreoni, J. and Vesterlund, L. (2001). “Which is the Fair Sex? Gender Differences in Altruism.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 116(1): 293-312.
- Coffman, K. (2014) “Evidence on Self-Stereotyping and the Contribution of Ideas.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* (forthcoming).
- Croson, R. and Gneezy, U. (2009). “Gender Differences in Preferences.” *Journal of Economic Literature*, 47(2): 448-474.

- Eckel, C. and Grossman, P. (2008). "Differences in the Economic Decisions of Men and Women: Experimental Evidence." In *Handbook of Experimental Economics Results* (eds. C. Plott and V. Smith), chapter 57.
- Ellingsen, T., Johannesson, M., Mollerstrom, J. and Munkhammar, S. "Gender Differences in Social Framing Effects." *Economics Letters*, 118: 470-472.

Experimental and behavioral gender economics, part 2: Competitiveness and Bargaining (Nov 12)

- Babcock, L., Laschever, S., Gelfand, M. and Small, D. (2003) "Nice Girls Don't Ask." *Harvard Business Review*, 81(10): 14-16.
- Baldiga, K. (2014) "Gender Differences in Willingness to Guess." *Management Science*, 60(2): 434-448.
- Buser, T., Niederle, M., Oosterbeek, H. (2013) "Gender, Competitiveness and Career Choices." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, forthcoming.
- Exeley, C., Niederle, M. and Vesterlund, L. (2014) "Should All Women Ask? Exploiting the Power of Lab Experiments." Working paper.
- Gneezy, U., Niederle, M. and Rustichini, A. (2003) "Performance in Competitive Environments: Gender Differences." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 118(3): 1049-1074.
- Niederle, M. and Vesterlund, L. (2007) "Do Women Shy Away From Competition? Do Men Compete Too Much?" *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 122(3): 1067-1101.

Experimental and behavioral gender economics, part 3: Neuroeconomics (Nov 19)

- Apicella, C., Dreber, A., Campbell, B., Gray, P., Hoffman, M. and Little, A. (2008) "Testosterone and Financial Risk Preferences." *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 29(6): 384-390.
- Bos, P., Terburg, D., van Honk, J. (2010) "Testosterone Decreases Trust in Socially Naive Humans." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 107(22): 9991-9995.
- Buser, T. (2012a) "Digit Ratios, the Menstrual Cycle and Social Preferences." *Games and Economic Behavior*, 76: 457-470.
- Buser, T. (2012b) "The Impact of the Menstrual Cycle and Hormonal Contraceptives on Competitiveness." *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 83: 1-10.
- Eisenegger, C., Naef, M., Snozzi, R., Heinrichs, M. And Fehr, E. (2010) "Prejudice and Truth about the Effect of Testosterone on Human Bargaining Behaviour." *Nature*, 463(7279): 356.
- Sapienza, P., Zingales, L., Maestripieri, D. (2009) "Gender Differences in Financial Risk Aversion and Career Choices are Affected by Testosterone." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 106(36): 15268-15273.