
George Mason University • Economics 496/895 • Special Topics in Economics

GENDER ECONOMICS

Fall 2019 • Monday 7.20-10.00pm • Innovation Hall 215G

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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 one book for the class:

- F. Blau and A. Winkler, *The Economics of Women, Men, and Work*, 8th ed. (Oxford University Press, 2018).

All other readings will be made available electronically.

Course requirements

The course grade will be determined using the following weights:

- Attendance and class participation: 10%.
- Reaction papers: 30%.
- Mid-term exam: 30%.
- Final presentation: 30%.

Reaction papers

1 page commentaries on the readings for each week. They can focus on, for example, a personal reflection, 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 3pm on the day of class. The first is due on September 9 and should cover the readings for that day. I will drop the reaction paper with the lowest grade when setting final course grades. There is no reaction paper due on October 21 (the guest lecture).

Midterm Exam

There is one exam (the midterm). The midterm exam covers the material that we go through until (and including) Oct 7. Some questions on the exams may 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. You do not have to bring blue books to the exams.

Presentation

In lieu of a final exam, each student will give a short individual presentation during one of the two last classes of the semester. Further details will be given in class.

Missing class?

If you need to miss a class, please let me know in advance if possible. You will be required to write an overview of at least 4 pages 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.

Schedule

August 26	<u>Lecture 1</u> : Overview and logistics of the course. Gender as an evolving economic force – historical and recent trends.
September 2	<i>Labor day – no class.</i>
September 9	<u>Lecture 2</u> : The economics of career, marriage, and family, part 1: Work in the home and in the market.
September 16	<u>Lecture 3</u> : The economics of career, marriage, and family, part 2: Marriage and family formation.
September 23	<u>Lecture 4</u> : Gender differences in occupations and earnings, part 1: Overview and international perspective.
September 30	<u>Lecture 5</u> : Gender differences in occupations and earnings, part 2: Human capital.
October 7	<u>Lecture 6</u> : Gender differences in occupations and earnings, part 3: Discrimination.
October 15 (Tues!)	<i>In class midterm exam.</i>
October 21	<u>Lecture 7</u> : Guest lecture by Dr. Berber Kramer (IFPRI) on gender and development economics.
October 28	<u>Lecture 8</u> : Experimental and behavioral gender economics, part 1: Exposure and leadership.
November 4	<u>Lecture 9</u> : Experimental and behavioral gender economics, part 2: Preferences and stereotypes.
November 11	<u>Lecture 10</u> : Experimental and behavioral gender economics, part 3: Competitiveness and bargaining.
November 18	<u>Lecture 11</u> : Student presentations
November 25	<i>Thanksgiving week – no class.</i>
December 2	<u>Lecture 12</u> : Student presentations

Readings

Abbreviation: BW = Blau and Winkler, *The Economics of Women, Men, and Work*

You will be required to read some of the chapters/papers for each week **in-dept**. Others can be *skimmed* and you can focus on abstract/introduction/conclusions.

Lecture 1: Gender as an evolving economic force – historical and recent trends (Aug 26)

- Blau, F. and Kahn, L. (2017) “The Gender Wage Gap – Extent, Trends and Explanations.” *Journal of Economic Literature*, 55(3): section 3.1-3.4.
- BW: 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.

Lecture 2: The economics of career, marriage, and family, part 1: Work in the home and in the market (Sep 9).

- Becker, G. (1974) “On the Relevance of the New Economics of the Family.” *American Economic Review*, 64(2): 317-319.
- BW: Chap. 3-4, 6.
- Goldin, C. (1991) “The Role of World War II in the Rise of Women’s Employment.” *American Economic 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.

Lecture 3: The economics of career, marriage, and family, part 2: Marriage and family formation (Sep 16)

- BW: Chap. 13-14.
- 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 Economic 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.

Lecture 4: Gender differences in occupations and earnings, part 1: Overview and international perspective (Sep 23).

- *Blau, F. and Kahn, L. (2003). "Understanding International Differences in the Gender Pay Gap." Journal of Labor Economics 21(1): 106-144.*
- **BW: Chap. 7, 17-18**
- **Blau, F. and Kahn, L. (2017) "The Gender Wage Gap – Extent, Trends and Explanations." Journal of Economic Literature, 55(3): 789-865.**
- *Goldin, C. (2014) "A Grand Gender Convergence: Its Last Chapter." American Economic Review, 104(4): 1091-1119.*

Lecture 5: Gender differences in occupations and earnings, part 2: Human capital (Sep 30)

- *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.*
- **Blau, F. and Kahn, L. (2017) "The Gender Wage Gap – Extent, Trends and Explanations." Journal of Economic Literature, 55(3): 789-865. (especially section 3.1-3.7)**
- **BW: Chap. 8 (all), 9 (until p. 243).**
- **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.*

Lecture 6: Gender differences in occupations and earnings, part 3: Discrimination (Oct 7)

- **Blau, F. and Kahn, L. (2017) "The Gender Wage Gap – Extent, Trends and Explanations." Journal of Economic Literature, 55(3): 789-865. (especially section 3.8-3.9)**
- **BW: Chap. 10-12.**
- *Goldin, C. and Rouse, C. (2000) "Orchestrating Impartiality." American Economic Review, 90(4), 715-741. (pp. 715-724, pp. 737-738).*

Lecture 7: Guest Lecture with Dr. Berber Kramer (Oct 21)

- Potential readings TBA.

Lecture 8: Experimental and behavioral gender economics, part 1: Exposure and leadership (Oct 28)

- *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.*
- **Blau, F. and Kahn, L. (2017) "The Gender Wage Gap – Extent, Trends and Explanations." Journal of Economic Literature, 55(3): 789-865. (especially section 4-6)**
- **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.**

Lecture 9: Experimental and behavioral gender economics, part 2: Preferences and stereotypes (Oct Nov 4)

- **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.**
- *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*.*
- **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.**
- **Niederle, M. (2016). “Gender.” In *Handbook of Experimental Economics* (eds. J. Kagel and A. Roth).**

Lecture 10: Experimental and behavioral gender economics, part 3: Competitiveness and bargaining (Nov 11)

- **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.*
- **Gneezy, U., Niederle, M. and Rustichini, A. (2003) “Performance in Competitive Environments: Gender Differences.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 118(3): 1049-1074.**
- *Exeley, C., Niederle, M. and Vesterlund, L. (forthcoming) “Knowing when to ask – the cost of leaning in.” *Journal of Political Economy*.*
- **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.**

Lecture 11: Student presentations (Nov 18)

- Topics and time slots for those presenting on Nov 18 will be communicated on Oct 28.

Lecture 12: Student presentations (Dec 2)

- Topics and time slots for those presenting on Dec 2 will be communicated on Nov 11.

Academic Integrity

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.

Disability Accommodation

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474, <http://ods.gmu.edu>. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.

Electronic Devices

Cell phones, pagers, laptops or pagers and other communicative devices only allowed in this class when their use is specifically called for. At all other times, please keep them turned off, stowed away and out of sight. Engaging in activities not related to the course (e.g., gaming, email, chat, etc.) will result in a significant deduction to your participation grade.