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

GENDER ECONOMICS

Fall 2022 • Mondays 7.20-10pm • Horizon Hall 3014

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. In addition, we will 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*, 9th ed. (Oxford University Press, 2021).

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 (and questions/comments on classmate's presentations): 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 (i.e. you write the reaction papers *ahead* of the lecture). The first is due on August 29 and should cover the readings for that day.

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, especially of technical details of the material. You do not have to bring blue books to the exams.

Student presentations

In lieu of a final exam, each student will give a short (10-15 minute) presentation on a topics assigned by me (topics will be communicated on October 31, further details about the format will also be provided then). The presentations are held in class on November 30 at 7.20pm.

Missing Class

If possible, please let me know in advance, via email, if you need to miss class. I can then direct you to the resources needed to make up for the missed class.

Lecture schedule

August 22	<u>Lecture 1</u> : Overview and logistics of the course. Gender as an evolving economic force – historical and recent trends.
August 29	<u>Lecture 2</u> : The economics of career, marriage, and family, part 1: Work in the home and in the market.
September 5	<i>Labor day – no class.</i>
September 12	<u>Lecture 3</u> : The economics of career, marriage, and family, part 2: Marriage and family formation.
September 19	<u>Lecture 4</u> : Gender differences in occupations and earnings, part 1: Overview and international perspective.
September 26	<u>Lecture 5</u> : Gender differences in occupations and earnings, part 2: Human capital.
October 3	<u>Lecture 6</u> : Gender differences in occupations and earnings, part 3: Discrimination.
October 11 (Tues!)	<i>Midterm exam.</i>
October 17	<u>Lecture 7</u> : The political gender gap. Norms, Culture and Reform
October 24	<u>Lecture 8</u> : Experimental and behavioral gender economics, part 1: Exposure and leadership
October 31	<u>Lecture 9</u> : Experimental and behavioral gender economics, part 2: Preferences and stereotypes.
November 7	<u>Lecture 10</u> : Experimental and behavioral gender economics, part 3: Competitiveness and bargaining.
November 14	<u>Lecture 11</u> : The Gender Economics of the COVID-19 Pandemic + practice opportunity for final presentations
November 21	<i>Thanksgiving week – no class.</i>
November 28	<u>Lecture 12</u> : Final presentations

Readings

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

You are 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 24)

- 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 (Aug 31).

- 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 Economics Review*, 81(4): 741-756.
- Keller, W. and Utar, H. (2020) *Globalization, Gender and the Family*. NBER Working Paper.
- 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 14)

- 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.
- Donohue, and Levitt, S. (2001) “The Impact of Legalized Abortion on Crime.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, CXVI (2): 379-420.
- 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.

Lecture 4: Gender differences in occupations and earnings, part 1: Overview and international perspective (Sep 21).

- 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 28)

- 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 the start of "Gender Differences in Psychological Attributes").
- 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 5)

- 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).
- Sarsons, H. (2020) *Interpreting Signals in the Labor Market: Evidence from Medical Referrals. Working paper.*

Lecture 7: The political gender gap: Norms, Cultures, Reform. (Oct 19)

- Blau, F. and Kahn, L. (2017) "The Gender Wage Gap – Extent, Trends and Explanations." *Journal of Economic Literature*, 55(3): 789-865. (especially section 5-6)
- BW: 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.
- Lefebvre, P., Merrigan, P., Verstraete, M. (2009) “Dynamic Labour Supply Effect of Childcare 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.

Lecture 8: Experimental and behavioral gender economics, part 1: Exposure and leadership (Oct 26)

- 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.
- Dahl, G. Kotsadam, A., D. Rooth, “Does Integration Change Gender Attitudes? The Effect of Randomly Assigning Women to Traditionally Male Teams.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* (forthcoming).

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

- 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.
- Exley, C., Hauser, O., Moore, M., Pezzuto, J. (2022) “Beliefs about gender differences in social preferences.” NBER Working Paper.
- 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 9)

- 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. (2020) “Knowing when to ask – the cost of leaning in.” *Journal of Political Economy*, 128(3): 816-854.
- Exeley, C., and Kessler, J. (2022). “The Gender Gap in Self-Promotion.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 137(3): 1345-1381.
- 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: The Gender Economics of the COVID-19 Pandemic (Nov 16)

- As this research is developing rapidly, readings will be posted in the beginning of November.

Lecture 12: Final presentations

- Topics will be communicated on October 31 at which point more details regarding the presentations (format, etc) will also be discussed.

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.