

Economics 394
Tues. and Thurs. 11-12:15
McCormack 01-0206
Fall 2014

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Syllabus

Sex-Segregated Labor Markets

Course Description

To what extent does gender affect people's patterns of labor force participation, educational preparation for work, occupations, hours of work (paid and unpaid) and earnings? When there are differences, what explains them? This class examines how conventional neoclassical economic theory addresses these questions, but also goes beyond the conventional approach to see how feminist economics, institutional theories, and inter-disciplinary research contributes to the analysis. The rationales for, and merits of, current and proposed governmental and business policies will be discussed. The prerequisite for the course is Economics 100 or 101. Economics 102 is recommended.

Course Objectives

Students will be able to describe major historical developments and current empirical patterns of gender and work, and explain and evaluate a variety of theoretical explanations for these phenomena. Students will develop their skills in critical reading and analytical writing as well as their ability to obtain, manipulate, and interpret quantitative information and apply economic models.

Readings

There is no textbook for this course. All readings can be accessed (as pdf files, via links, or via library resources) from the course Blackboard site, available through <https://umb.umassonline.net/>. Use your U Mass Boston student email account user name and password to log in.

Download all of the readings (except those marked as "optional"), and **bring them to class**, since you will need them for in-class assignments. Hard printouts are generally preferred (so you can write marginal notes) and will be *required* during the early weeks of the class; downloaded electronic files on a laptop or other device may be acceptable in later weeks of the course. As an economics student you are entitled, if you wish, to use the economics student computer lab (Wheatley 5-088) to access and download these resources. (Bring your own paper when you want to print.)

Course Requirements

1. Attendance, Attention, and Participation (15%)

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. Lateness will reduce your participation grade.

Absences will be excused for **up to three class periods**. Missing more than three classes, however, will severely damage your grade, both directly (through the attendance grade)

and likely also indirectly (through affecting your other grades). The three excused classes *include* those missed for good reasons such as short-term illness, sports team travel, car trouble, etc., so use them carefully. If you have perfect attendance, I will drop your three lowest grades on participation and in-class work.

Taking notes during classes, and reviewing them before you submit any work, is strongly recommended. All your written and verbal contributions are expected to demonstrate knowledge of the material discussed in class.

Discussions of the readings are an important dimension of this class, and your (prepared!) participation in these is vital.

- I will be paying attention to who is participating in class, and the quality of that participation.
- In addition to participating in the classroom, you may also participate in discussions via Blackboard. For example, you can continue a classroom discussion on-line, or post links to interesting and relevant stories from the media (along with some lines about why you find it interesting), or share relevant personal experiences, or respond to postings made by your fellow students.
- You may also demonstrate your engagement with the course by discussing questions and sharing insights with me individually, during my office hours or by appointment.
- An atmosphere of civility and mutual respect will be expected, in all class-related discussions.

2. Homework assignments, in-class exercises, and quizzes (45%)

In preparation for each class, you will be assigned readings to do at home. You may also be given a short at-home writing assignment or set of exercises. Some of these will be due to me by email before the start of a class, and others at the beginning of a class session. Written work should be typed, or done in pencil or black or blue pen. Specific assignments and their due dates will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard.

You will also, in class, complete short, graded individual or group writing assignments, exercises, or quizzes, and I may also check that you have the currently assigned readings with you.

If you know you are going to miss a class, you may turn in a homework assignment *before* the class meeting, to my office or mailbox or by email, for full credit. In-class assignments missed during one of your three excused absences will be excused. In-class assignments missed during any additional absences will receive a grade of zero and (except for the percents quiz, see below) cannot be made up.

3. Research project (40%)

You will engage in a research project that will result in a short (2500 word, roughly 8-10 pages) independent research paper that draws on at least one class reading, one primary source, one source that contains original research, and one other good quality source. You

will need to talk with me to get approval for your topic, and then prepare a written proposal. Later, you must show me evidence of substantial progress, by turning in evidence of a critical reading of one of your sources. You may turn in an optional 1st draft of your paper for feedback. The final paper itself will be due during finals week. More detailed instructions will follow.

| Important Dates | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| Topic must be approved by: | Oct. 16 |
| Written proposal due: | Oct. 23 |
| Work-in-progress due: | Nov. 13 |
| (Optional) 1 st draft due: | Dec. 4 |
| Final paper due: | Dec. 16 |

The *entire process* of the research project will be graded, not only the final paper. Papers will *not be accepted without complete and timely proposals and satisfactory evidence of work-in-progress*, and lateness will be penalized. The project counts for 40% of your course grade.

4. Successful completion of two "essential skill" exercises. (Required to pass)

Being able to

- (a) clearly and accurately calculate and use descriptive statistics
 - (b) read critically, summarize accurately, and analytically evaluate sources of information
- are two skills that are vital for economic analysis. I will be giving (a) a quiz on percents and (b) assigning a critical reading exercise (as the “work-in-progress” part of the research project). Both *must* be completed satisfactorily. If you receive a grade of B or better on your first try on these assignments, you will have satisfied this requirement. If not, you will need to study, revise, and practice until your work shows substantial improvement. Extra help will be available during my office hours and by appointment to help you reach a high standard. ***Failure to submit work demonstrating substantial improvement, if requested, will result in failure of the course.***

Assessment

| Component | Grade Weight |
|--|------------------------------|
| Attendance and participation | 15% |
| Homeworks, in-class exercises, and quizzes | 45% |
| Research project | 40% |
| Successful completion of two essential skill exercises | Required for a passing grade |
| Total | 100% |

Grading Scale: A = 93, A- = 90, B+ = 87, B = 83 B- = 80,
C+ = 77, C = 73, C- = 70, D+ = 67, D= 63, D- = 60

Reasonable Accommodation

Your success in this class is important to me. If there are circumstances that may affect your performance in this class, please let me know as soon as possible so that we may work together to develop strategies for adapting assignments to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course.

Resources for students with disabilities are provided by The Ross Center for Disability Services at UMass Boston (617.287.7430), www.umb.edu/academics/vpass/disability. You will need to provide documentation of disability to them in order to receive official university services and accommodations.

If, for reasons *not* related to a officially recognized disability, you want adjustments to due dates or other accommodations, these requests must be (a) *reasonable* (b) be made *as soon as the problem is known*, and (c) (except in rare cases) be *documented* (such as with a note from a doctor or coach).

Academic Support

My regular office hours are Wednesday 1-2:15 pm and Thursday 9-10:45 am. Any changes will be announced in advance. The best way to reach me to make an appointment is by email (julie.nelson@umb.edu). I can also respond to your questions by e-mail.

If your reading and/or writing skills are weak, I **strongly** encourage you to apply to work with a tutor at the Reading, Writing, and Study Strategies Center (Campus Center 1-1300, 617-287-6550). Start this process early—at beginning of the term! Do not expect to be able to get an appointment late in the semester, or expect the tutor to edit your research paper for you.

Academic Honesty

It is the expressed policy of the University that every aspect of academic life--not only formal coursework situations, but all relationships and interactions connected to the educational process--shall be conducted in an absolutely and uncompromisingly honest manner. The University presupposes that any submission of work for academic credit is the student's own and is in compliance with University policies, including its policies on appropriate citation and plagiarism. These policies are spelled out in the Code of Student Conduct, available from

http://www.umb.edu/life_on_campus/dean_of_students/student_conduct.

You are encouraged to visit and review the UMass website on Avoiding Plagiarism:

<http://umb.libguides.com/content.php?pid=239509&sid=1976122>

You will be required to submit an electronic version of your research paper, which then will be submitted to a plagiarism detection service.

Discussions of the substantive issues raised in this class are encouraged both inside and outside of class, and such honing of ideas does not constitute dishonesty. Consultations with fellow students or tutors that help you refine your thoughts or think about how you might revise your work are permitted—and even encouraged—as long as you do the actual work of writing yourself.

TOPICS, READINGS, and RESOURCES

These are not necessarily listed in exactly the order they will be covered. Consult Blackboard for updated reading assignments, and active links that will get you to all of the assigned materials. This course emphasizes *careful* reading, not high volumes of reading..

1. Introduction to the course, and a brief history of gender and economics in the United States

Understand and review the powerpoints presented in class.

2. Skills practice, with Introductory Readings on Gender, Economics, Finance, and Management

2a. Critical Reading Skills

Critical Reading Guide and Checklist (handout)

Zhu, Maria Boya, "An Undergraduate Major's Perspective," Newsletter of the Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession (CSWEP)," Summer 2013, p. 7-8 **Skim the CSWEP Newsletter to get an idea of the context for this article, then read the article.**

Hegewisch, Ariane, Cynthia Deitch, and Evelyn Murphy, "Ending Sex and Race Discrimination in the Workplace: Legal Interventions That Push the Envelope." Washington DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research Report #C379, March 2011. **Read and print only the excerpt containing some background information and the section "Consent Decrees in Similar Cases after AEFA."**

Bertrand, Marianne, Claudia Goldin, and Lawrence F. Katz, "Dynamics of the Gender Gap for Young Professionals in the Financial and Corporate Sectors" *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 2 (July 2010): 228–255. **You may, for now, print and read only pp. 228-229, 237, 252-254.**

2b. Numerical Skills

"Getting Precise about Percents" (handout)

Selected tables in the U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Women in the Labor Force: A Databook* (2013 edition, May 2014)

3. Neoclassical Economic Theory: "The Supply Side"

Croson, Rachel and Uri Gneezy, "Gender Differences in Preferences," *Journal of Economic Literature* 47:2 (2009): 448-474. **Take a quick look at the entire article, but print and read in detail only the "introduction" and "summary and discussion."**

Bombardieri, Marcella, "Summers' Remarks On Women Draw Fire," *The Boston Globe*, Jan 17, 2005.

England, Paula, "Wage Appreciation and Depreciation: A Test of Neoclassical Economic Explanations of Occupational Sex Segregation." *Social Forces* 62:3 (1984): 726-749. **You may print and read only pp. 726-730, and the "conclusion."**

4. Neoclassical Analysis of the "Wage Gap"

Francine D. Blau, Marianne A. Ferber, and Anne E. Winkler ("BFW"), "Chapter 7: Differences in Occupations and Earnings: The Role of Labor Market Discrimination" in *The Economics of Women, Men, and Work*, 6th ed., Prentice Hall 2010. Chapter 7, pp. 193-202 (discrimination), 202-210 (occupational differences), and pp. 240-246 (regression analysis)

5. Neoclassical Economic Theory: The "Demand Side"

BFW Chapter 7: pp. 210-225 (models)

6. Beyond Neoclassical Theory: Stereotyping, Power, and Policy

BFW Chapter 7, pp. 225-240 (policies)

Eliot, Lise "Introduction," in *Pink Brain, Blue Brain, How Small Differences Grow into Troublesome Gaps--And What We Can Do About It*. NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2009, pp. 1-18 (plus endnotes).

Hyde, Janet Shibley, "The Gender Similarities Hypothesis," *American Psychologist* 60(6): 581-592. (See especially Table 1.)

Nelson, Julie, "The Power of Stereotyping and Confirmation Bias to Overwhelm Accurate Assessment: The Case of Economics, Gender, and Risk Aversion." *Journal of Economic Methodology*, 2014.

Steele, Claude M. "Stereotype Threat Comes to Life, and for More than One Group," Chapter 3 of *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do*. NY: W.W. Norton and Company, 2010, pp. 44-62.

Williams, Joan C. and Rachel Dempsey. "Forward" (by Anne-Marie Slaughter), "Preface" and "The Experience of Gender Bias Differs by Race," from *What Works for Women at Work: Four Patterns Working Women Need to Know*. NY: New York University Press, 2014, pp. xiii-xxix, 221-258.

Faludi, Susan, *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women*. New York: Anchor, 1992. Chapter 13 excerpts, pp. 378-399.

Akerlof, George A. and Rachel E. Kranton. "Economics And Identity," *Quarterly Journal Of Economics*, 115 (3) (2000): 715-753.

Nelson, Julie A. and Nancy Folbre, "Why a Well-Paid Nurse is a Better Nurse," *Nursing Economics* 24(3) (2006):127-130.

7. Work and Family

Williams, Joan C., Jessica Manvell, Stephanie Bornstein, "‘Opt Out’ or Pushed Out?: How the Press Covers Work/Family Conflict," The Center for WorkLife Law, 2006. **Print and read pp. 1-9 and 29-47.**

Warner, Judith, "The Opt-Out Generation Wants Back In." *The New York Times*, August 7, 2013.

Goodwin, Neva, Julie A. Nelson, Frank Ackerman and Thomas Weisskopf, *Microeconomics in Context*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005. Excerpt from Chapter 15, "Theories of Household Behavior."

Schorr, Melissa, "The day care squeeze." *The Boston Globe Magazine*, December 12, 2010.

Duvvury, Nata, Aoife Callan, Patrick Carney, and Srinivas Raghavendra, *Intimate Partner Violence: Economic Costs and Implications for Growth and Development*. World Bank: Women’s Voice, Agency, & Participation Research Series 2013 No. 3, pp. 1-29.