

ECON 3610 | Economics of Gender and Family
Albers School of Business and Economics | Seattle University
Spring 2021 | Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:45-5:50 | ZOOM

Instructor

Bridget Hiedemann

Professor and Chair, Department of Economics

Email: bgh@seattleu.edu

Office Hours: Monday 11:00 am – 12:00 noon; Friday 1:00-2:00 p.m.

Overview

Demographic trends, changes in social norms, technological innovations, and public policies influence family formation and dissolution as well as the division of labor within a household, the intra-household allocation of resources, and other economic outcomes. While mainstream economic models tend to treat the individual as an autonomous decision-making agent, this course introduces students to models of decision making within families. In particular, we will discuss common preference and bargaining models, apply these models to real-world situations, and think critically about the underlying assumptions of these models. As such, our discussion will encompass mainstream economic models as well as feminist perspectives.

In addition, following the substantial increase in female labor force participation over the second half of the 20th century and the growing acceptance of and legal protections for sexual minorities, we will examine earnings gaps and other labor market disparities by gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation.

Finally, using the tools developed in this course, we will analyze the implications of actual and proposed public policies.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes

This course will enhance students' understanding of

- the role of gender in the family and in the labor market
- the implications of sexual orientation in the family and in the labor market

- the connection between family structure and economic outcomes
- connections between demographic trends, social norms, technological innovations, and economic outcomes
- the role of public policy
- feminist economics

In addition, this course will enhance students' abilities to

- apply economic theory to real-world situations
- distinguish between correlation and causation
- identify and think critically about assumptions underlying economic models
- analyze the effects of proposed or actual public policies
- write clearly and effectively

Course Structure

We will meet twice a week over Zoom. I will publish a Canvas module for each Zoom meeting.

In addition, I will publish asynchronous modules that contain assigned readings, discussion questions, practice problems, upcoming components of the policy analysis, and peer review assignments.

Readings and Discussions

This course includes a substantial amount of reading. Links to assigned articles are available on Canvas.

For some assigned readings, discussion questions will be provided. Participation in class and online discussions of assigned readings is an important part of this course. In addition, the midterm and final exams will include questions about the assigned readings.

Attendance

Attendance is critical for both mastering the theories and models and for participating in breakout room discussions. Each student will be allowed one unexcused absence over the course of the quarter.

Engagement

I welcome questions and insights during our time together on Zoom and between class sessions in office hours or via email. Other ways to show engagement in the course include posting relevant articles or other materials on Canvas.

Policy Analysis

The course includes a policy analysis and two sets of peer reviews. While the readings focus primarily on the United States and other developed nations, the policy analysis provides students with an opportunity to examine a public policy issue facing any part of the world. In addition to the policy analysis paper, each student will provide a brief presentation of their policy analysis.

Exams

The course includes a midterm and a final exam. These exams will include applications of the theory and models covered in class, questions related to the assigned readings, and other questions that require students to think critically about economic models or findings.

Grading

Attendance	5%
Participation in Online Discussions	5%
Overall Engagement in Course	5%
Policy Analysis	30%
Peer Reviews	10%
Midterm and Final	45%

Academic Policies

In keeping with the mission of the school and university, students are expected and required to conform to the norms of academic honesty. Academic misconduct will be dealt with harshly. Academic misconduct includes (but is not limited to) using written or electronic materials on an exam, copying another student's exam or allowing another student to copy yours, and passing off someone else's writing or ideas as your own in writing assignments. Possible consequences for academic misconduct range from zero credit on an assignment to failing the class.

Review the following university academic policies on the Registrar's website:

- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Grading Grievance Policy](#)
- [Complete Set of Policies](#)

Academic Resources

The university offers numerous academic resources for students. Some or all of the following resources may be relevant for students in this course:

[Advice on Study Habits](#)

[Library and Learning Commons](#)

[Writing Center](#)

[Learning Assistance Programs](#)

[English-Language Learning Center \(ELLC\)](#)

[Academic Integrity Tutorial](#)

Accommodation for Disabilities

Seattle University values diverse types of learners. Faculty are committed to providing each student with an equal opportunity to participate in learning experiences. For disability and other learning-related needs and accommodations that you have already arranged via Disability

Services, please communicate with me during the first week of class through email or during office hours. Should concerns arise at any point in the quarter, please let me know as soon as possible.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an “invisible disability” such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, but have not yet arranged support services and/or accommodations, I encourage you to do so through Disability Services staff at DS@seattleu.edu or (206) 296-5740. Disability-based adjustments to course expectations can be arranged only through this process. I am committed to working with you, so please do not hesitate to contact me.

Religious Accommodations

It is the [policy](#) of Seattle University to reasonably accommodate students who, due to the observance of religious holidays, expect to be absent or endure a significant hardship during certain days of their academic course or program.

Office of Institutional Equity

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) prohibits discrimination based on sex in educational programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. This prohibition includes sexual misconduct, which encompasses sexual harassment and sexual violence. Seattle U remains committed to providing a safe and equitable learning, living, and working environment. Seattle U offers emergency, medical, and other support resources, as well as assistance with safety and support measures, to community members who have experienced or been impacted by sexual misconduct.

Seattle U requires all faculty and staff to notify the University’s Title IX Coordinator if they become aware of any incident of sexual misconduct experienced by a student.

For more information, please visit <https://www.seattleu.edu/equity/>. If you have any questions or concerns, you may also directly contact the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Institutional Equity (email: oiie@seattleu.edu; phone: 206.296.2824).

Deadlines

Tentative deadlines related to the policy analysis are indicated below. Any revisions to these deadlines will be indicated on Canvas. Also please see Canvas for deadlines related to online discussions.

I cannot give you credit for peer reviews submitted after the deadline, because a late peer review does not help the author. Similarly, components of the assignment that will be peer reviewed cannot be submitted late, because the reviewer needs time to review your work.

Exams can only be rescheduled in the case of an emergency or for some other compelling reason; in order to reschedule an exam, you must notify me of the circumstances and obtain my approval prior to the start of the exam.

Course Outline

Course Overview

Theory of Individual Labor Supply

Division of Labor within the Household

Decision-Making within Families

Marriage and Divorce

Feminism and Economics

Economics of Child Care

Gender Earnings Gap

Labor Market Disparities by Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

Marriage Premiums or Penalties and the Price of Motherhood

Family Policy

Important Dates and Deadlines

Tentative Research Question and Sources | April 5

Revised Research Question and Sources | April 12

Proposal | April 21

First Round of Peer Reviews | April 25

Exam 1 | May 4

Revised Proposal | May 6

Albers Ethics Week Keynote Speaker | May 11 (during class; attendance required)

Complete Draft | May 23

Second Round of Peer Reviews | May 27

Presentations | June 1 and 3

Final Paper and Response to Peer Reviews | June 4

Exam 2 | June 10 (4:00-5:50 p.m.)