

# LER 590EGW: Economics of Gender and the Workforce

Fall 2019

Course Meeting: Tuesdays 2 – 4:50 PM, LER  
Credit: 4 hours

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Course website: [compass2g.illinois.edu](http://compass2g.illinois.edu)

## Course Description

Human resources professionals are often confronted with issues of equity between men and women related to hiring, compensation, and task assignment. This course is designed to help students evaluate explanations for differences in economic outcomes between men and women, using economics as a framework. The course will present evidence on male-female differences in workforce participation, earnings, and occupations. We will then study how these differences may be explained by various factors, including education, on-the-job training, family demands, and discrimination. Further, we will study how employer and government policies may affect labor market outcomes of men and women. Course activities and assignments will highlight how economic intuition has important practical implications for gender-related issues facing human resource professionals. This course fulfills the “Labor Markets and Employment” distribution requirement for the LER master’s program.

## Course Texts

Blau, Francine D. and Anne E. Winkler, The Economics of Women, Men, and Work, 8<sup>th</sup> Ed., Oxford University Press, 2017.

Articles listed below can be obtained by searching in the University of Illinois Library Catalog ([library.illinois.edu](http://library.illinois.edu)).

## Topics and Readings

### Week 1: Introduction [August 27]

Blau and Winkler Chapters 1 and 5

### Week 2: Differences in Labor Force Participation [September 3]

Blau and Winkler Chapters 5 and 6

Week 3: Evidence on Differences in Labor Market Outcomes [September 10]

Blau and Winkler Chapter 7

Week 4: Differences in Educational Attainment [September 17]

Blau and Winkler Chapter 8

Week 5: Differences in On-the-Job Training, Family Responsibilities, and Psychological Attributes [September 24]

Blau and Winkler Chapter 9

Albanesi, Stefania and Claudia Olivetti (2009): "Home Production, Market Production, and the Gender Wage Gap: Incentives and Expectations," *Review of Economic Dynamics*, Vol. 12(1). [Read Sections 1, 3, and 4.]

Niederle, Muriel and Lise Vesterlund (2011): "Gender and Competition," *Annual Review of Economics*, Vol. 3. [Read pages 602-605, 618-623].

Week 6: NO CLASS. Make-up class to be scheduled [October 1]

Week 7: Discrimination [October 8]

Blau and Winkler Chapter 11

Week 8: **Midterm** [October 15]

Week 9: Evaluating Explanations for Differences in Outcomes [October 22]

Blau and Winkler Chapter 10

Week 10: Anti-Discrimination and Affirmative Action Policies [October 29]

Blau and Winkler Chapter 12

Athey, Susan, Christopher Avery, and Peter Zemsky (2000): "Mentoring and Diversity," *American Economic Review*, Vol. 90(4). [Read Introduction and Conclusion].

Lehmann, Jee (2013): "Job Assignment and Promotion Under Statistical Discrimination: Evidence from the Early Careers of Lawyers," Working Paper. [Read Sections 1, 5, 6, and 9].

Holzer, Harry and David Neumark (1999): "Are Affirmative Action Hires Less Qualified? Evidence from Employer-Employee Data," *Journal of Labor Economics*, Vol. 17(3). [Read Introduction and Conclusion].

Week 11: Family-Friendly Policies and Discussion of Policy Design and Randomization  
[November 5]

Blau and Winkler Chapter 16

Olivetti, Claudia and Barbara Petrongolo “The Economic Consequences of Family Policies: Lessons from a Century of Legislation in High-Income Countries,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Vol. 31(1) [Read entire paper].

Flory, Jeffrey A., Andreas Leibbrandt and John A. List (2015): “Do Competitive Work Places Deter Female Workers? A Large-Scale Natural Field Experiment on Gender Differences in Job-Entry Decisions,” *Review of Economic Studies*, Vol. 82(1). [Read Introduction and Discussion].

Burstyn, L., T. Fujiwara, and A. Pallais: “Acting Wife: Marriage Market Incentives and Labor Market Investments,” *American Economic Review*, Forthcoming.

Week 12: Flexible and Alternative Work Arrangements [November 12]

Mas, Alexandre and Amanda Pallais (2016): “Valuing Alternative Work Arrangements,” Working Paper No. 22708, National Bureau of Economic Research. [Read Introduction and Conclusion].

Goldin, Claudia and Lawrence Katz (2016): “A Most Egalitarian Profession: Pharmacy and the Evolution of a Family-Friendly Profession,” *Journal of Labor Economics*, Vol. 34(3). [Read sections I, VI, VII, VIII].

Bloom, Nick, Tobias Kretschmer, and John Van Reenen (2011): “Are family-friendly workplace practices a valuable firm resource,” *Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 32(4). [Read Introduction and Conclusion]

Make-up Class: Cross-Country Differences [TBD]

Blau and Winkler Chapters 17

Olivetti, Claudia and Barbara Petrongolo (2016): “The Evolution of Gender Gaps in Industrialized Countries,” *Annual Review of Economics*, Vol. 8. [Read Sections 1, 2, and 5].

Week 13: Group Meetings [November 19]

Week 14: Fall Break [November 26]

Week 14: Group Presentations [December 3]

Week 15: Group Presentations [December 10]

**i>clicker**

An i>clicker remote is required for in-class participation. See below for details on grading policies for i>clicker questions.

**You may purchase any of the following models:**

The original i>clicker

i>clicker +

i>clicker 2

The mobile application, REEF Polling by i>clicker **will not** be allowed.

You may purchase the remote through the bookstore or through a variety of online vendors.

**How to register:**

To receive credit for the responses you submit with i>clicker, you must register your clicker by the beginning of the second class, September 3 at 2 PM. Students who register after this time will not receive credit for their participation in the classes before they registered their clickers.

To register your i>clicker, go to this course site in Illinois Compass 2g (<https://compass2g.illinois.edu/>) and click on the link at the left entitled “**iclicker Registration**”. Enter your i>clicker Remote ID in the required field and click Submit. The remote ID is the series of numbers and letters found on the back of your i>clicker remote. If your Remote ID is faded or missing visit the Illini Union Bookstore (<http://www.uofibookstore.illinois.edu/>) – they can look it up for you.

Do not register your clicker on iclicker.com. If you do, I will not be able to match your responses with your name and you will not receive credit.

**Cheating Policy:**

Bringing a fellow student’s i>clicker to class and voting for them is cheating and a violation of the University Student Code (<http://studentcode.illinois.edu/>). If you are caught with a remote other than your own or have votes in a class that you did not attend, you will forfeit all clicker points and may face additional disciplinary action.

**Forgotten i>clicker/Dead Batteries/Absence:**

Please realize that we will be using i>clicker in almost every class and i>clicker points will make up **10%** of your final grade. Also remember that it is your responsibility to come prepared to participate with a functioning remote every day. If you forget to bring your remote to class, or the batteries are dead you will not receive i>clicker points for that class. I suggest having spare batteries with you when you come to class. However, I do realize that difficult circumstances do arise, and for this reason I will drop the lowest i>clicker session from your total participation grade.

**Broken/Lost i>clicker Policy:**

If you have lost or broken your i>clicker remote, you will have to purchase another one. Please register your new i>clicker in the same manner that you registered your original one.

Activities and Grades

Grades are determined by the following rubric:

Weekly review questions: 10% (lowest dropped)

In-class i>clicker questions: 10% (lowest dropped)

In-class exercises: 10% (lowest dropped)

Midterm exam: 35%

Final project: 35%

Each component is discussed below.

*Weekly review questions* Short assignments posted every week on the course website (compass2g.illinois.edu) to make sure you understand the readings. Assignments are due at the start of class.

*In-class i>clicker questions* will be given in each lecture. Part of this grade will be based on your attendance in class. If you respond to each question during the lecture, you will be awarded five points. If you do not respond to all questions you will not be awarded any of these participation points. To account for other factors, I will also give five points if you miss responding to one question. This portion of your grade is based on being present in class for most of the class. The second part of your iclicker grade will be based on whether your responses are correct. I will award one point for each iclicker question answered correctly during the lecture.

*In-class exercises* will be given in each lecture. These will typically involve one longer exercise in the second half of the lecture, applying the material to a practical application (usually in teams). For these exercises, your team will generally submit responses and may make a presentation to the class.

A *midterm exam* will take place on October 15 during class. You are responsible for taking the exam on the day it is given.

*Final Project* to be handed in on December 3 at the beginning of class, and presented on December 3 or December 10. The project is described at the end of the syllabus. Hand in one report per group. You will be graded based on the written report (approximately 6 pages double spaced) and the in-class presentation.

## Course Policies

### **Grading Policies**

Late responses to the weekly review questions will not receive credit, but a missed assignment can be used as the dropped score. Similarly, if class is missed in one week, and as a result the in-class and i>clicker exercises are not completed, this can be used as the dropped score. Similarly, if your iclicker batteries are no longer working in one week or you forget the clicker, you can use this as the dropped i>clicker score. If you have a university-accepted reason (e.g. illness with a doctor's note), you may make up an assignment within 7 days of the original due date after being in touch with Professor Weinstein. If more than two classes are missed because of an illness, and there is an accompanying doctor's note, the student should be in touch with Professor Weinstein and the Assistant Dean of Student Services. I will not grade more than two make-up in-class assignments, even with an accompanying doctor's note. A large part of the value of the in-class assignments comes from working with the group, and responding to other groups' projects. If students miss more than two of these, they may not receive any credit.

In this course, we will be assigning +/- letter grades. Generally, if you receive 93% of the total points for the course this will be an A.

### **Request for Special Accommodations**

To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact Professor Weinstein and the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES)

as soon as possible. To contact DRES, you may visit 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, call 333-4603, e-mail [disability@illinois.edu](mailto:disability@illinois.edu) or go to the DRES website.

Please note accommodations are not retroactive to the beginning of the semester but begin the day you contact Professor Weinstein with a current letter of accommodation from DRES.

### **Academic Integrity**

We will follow Articles 1-401 through 1-406 of the *Student Code* (beginning at [http://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1\\_part4\\_1-401.html](http://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1_part4_1-401.html)). This rule defines infractions of academic integrity, which include but are not limited to cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism. You are responsible for following these guidelines. If you have any questions about whether something would be an infraction, consult with the instructor before proceeding.

The CEO of your company has recently announced one of his primary objectives is to increase the number of women in managerial positions. While nearly 50% of entry-level jobs for college-educated workers at your firm are filled by women, only 25% of mid-level managerial roles are filled by women. This has been true for the past 15 years. The human resources department is responsible for designing a firm-level policy to accomplish this objective, and must deliver a report to the CEO and board of directors discussing the policy. Your group will be assigned a policy to consider, and your task is to write the report (approximately 6 pages) and present the findings to the class with presentation slides. The report should take the following form:

Section 1: Detail the policy [you should add details to the basic policy you are assigned]

Section 2: Provide two reasons based on economic intuition for why it may increase the number of women managers. These reasons should be based on the economic theories and frameworks discussed in class, including but not limited to, the value of market vs. nonmarket time, investments in human capital, and discrimination. This section should thoroughly show that you understand the class material.

Section 3: Provide two reasons based on economic intuition for why it may not increase the number of women managers. These reasons should be based on the economic theories and frameworks discussed in class, including but not limited to, the value of market vs. nonmarket time, investments in human capital, and discrimination. This section should thoroughly show that you understand the class material.

Section 4: Discuss possible unintended consequences of the policy (quality of hires, effects on men, effects on worker productivity, costs to firm).

Section 5: Discuss any research that suggests your policy would or would not be successful. Explain the findings of that research, what type of data it is based on, from which country and time period, and whether and why you think the results would translate to your setting.

Section 6: Provide a detailed discussion of how you could roll out the policy to best evaluate whether it is effective. How will your roll out help you identify the effect of your policy, as opposed to some other factor? For example, if you study the pre- and post-outcomes, how could you rule out that the difference is explained by some nationwide phenomenon, and not your policy.

Section 7: Final conclusions on whether to implement the policy.

**The report should be typed in Times New Roman, size 12, double spaced, and with 1.25 inch margins on each side. Reports over 6.25 pages will receive lower grades.**

The presentation should be 15 minutes, followed by 5-10 minutes of questions from me and from the class.

Your presentation should include one clicker question for the class.

Grading: This project is worth 35% of your final grade. You will receive three grades for the project (1) group report (20% of final course grade), (2) group presentation (10% of final course grade), (3) question to other group during presentation (5% of final course grade). In addition to handing in the final report, each group member will assign themselves a grade for the project as a whole and write a short paragraph explaining (1) why you believe you earned this grade (2) two main take-aways of the project. When assigning your project and presentation grade, I will use this as well as your individual presentation to adjust your individual grade from the group grade. I may adjust individual grades up to one full letter grade from the group's grade (if the group gets a B+, I may adjust individuals' grades anywhere from a C+ to an A+).