
∞ Harvard University • Economics 980x Junior Seminar ∞

PERSONAL ECONOMICS

Fall 2020 • Monday 12:45 to 2:45pm • Anywhere

Professor Claudia Goldin • cgoldin@harvard.edu

TF Ayushi Narayan • ayushi_narayan@g.harvard.edu

Syllabus and Readings

Goals of the Course:

- To explore—empirically, historically, comparatively, and theoretically—the changing significance, timing, and meaning of work, career, dating, marriage, family, and other “personal” decisions.
- To involve students in the creative process of researching, writing, and presenting original research using primary sources (large-scale, cross-section data sets).
- To discuss and understand policy relevant issues concerning *Personal Economics* using print and on-line media especially those concerning the Covid19 economy and society.

Readings:

All readings are hyperlinked. If a link does not work, bring it to the attention of one of the teaching staff. Many of the readings are also in *Files/Ec980x_Readings*.

Course Requirements:

1. Create two original, directed Research Papers (there is no page requirement but 10 to 15 pages each is a reasonable length). The teaching staff will work closely with each of you to find a topic and provide direction. You will first produce Part 1 (topic, question(s), hypothesis, literature). You will also explore the data set, learn how to analyze the data with Stata, and then dive into it to produce Part 2, the empirical analysis and the final paper. At the end of the course you will deliver in class a [15-minute presentation](#) on one of your papers. Also see [Great Paper Writing](#) as a general guide to writing research papers.
2. Short Assignments (Comments), Readings, *Pages*: Write and post Comments (about two pages) on course readings (*these will be assigned each student will get five*). Five weeks have two starred (*) readings each for the prepared comments. Written comments must be posted by 3pm EDT/EST the Sunday before class to *Assignments*. You should also check *Pages* each weekend for additional questions that will be discussed in class, for occasional breaking-news on the topic, and for the presentation notes.
3. Post (at least) two *Topical Articles* (with pithy comments) to the *Discussion* page of the Ec980x website during the semester and provide comments on two of the *Topical Articles* posted by others. A few examples have been provided on the *Discussion* page.

Grades:

Your grade will be 60-70% research papers, 30-40% critical summaries and class discussions.

Course Organization:

The course is organized as a lecture and discussion seminar.

Syllabus and Readings (arranged alphabetically by author)

- Sept. 2** **1. Changes in the Family, Marriage, Work, and Women's Economic Status**
We = Mo
- A.J. Binder, and J. Bound. "[The Declining Labor Market Prospects of Less-Educated Men](#)," *JEP* 33 (Spring 2019), pp. 163-90.
 - F. Blau, and A. Winkler. "[Women, Work, and Family](#)." NBER WP no. 23644 (August 2017).
 - S. Lundberg, and R.A. Pollak. "[The American Family and Family Economics](#)," *JEP* 21 (Spring 2007), pp. 3-26.
 - S. Ruggles. "[Patriarchy, Power, and Pay: The Transformation of American Families, 1800-2015](#)," *Demography* 52 (2015), pp. 1797-823.
- Sept. 7** Labor Day. No class
- Sept. 14** **2. Work in the Home and Work in the Market**
- * • A. Andrews, et al. "[How are Mothers and Fathers Balancing Work and Family Under Lockdown?](#)" Institute for Fiscal Studies Working Paper (May 2020), pp. 8-27.
 - F. Blau, M. Ferber, and A. Winkler. *The Economics of Women, Men and Work*, [Appendix 3A, pp. 68-74](#). § Rest of [Chapter 3](#). [Watch video presentation of the division of labor model](#).
 - J. Guryan, E. Hurst, and M. Kearney. "[Parental Education and Parental Time with Children](#)," *JEP* 22 (Summer 2008), *only* pp. 23-39; § rest of article.
 - * • G. Ramey, and V. Ramey. "[The Rug Rat Race](#)," *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, (Spring 2010) *only* pp. 129-62. § Rest of article.
- Sept. 21** **3. Dating, Mating, Cohabiting, and Marriage**
- * • S. Anderson. "[The Economics of Dowry and Brideprice](#)," *JEP* 21 (Fall 2007), pp. 151-74. § "[Human Capital Effects of Marriage Payments](#)," *IZA World of Labor* (2014), pp. 1-10.
 - G. Becker. *Treatise on the Family*, [chap. 4](#), *read only* pp. 108-119, "Assortative Mating in Marriage Markets." [Watch the video on the positive assortative mating model](#).
 - * • A. Isen, and B. Stevenson. "[Women's Education and Family Behavior: Trends in Marriage, Divorce, and Fertility](#)." In J. Shoven (ed), *Demography and the Economy* (2010).
 - B. Stevenson, and J. Wolfers. "[Marriage and Divorce: Changes and Their Driving Forces](#)," *JEP* 21 (Spring 2007), pp. 27-52.
- Sept. 28** **4. The Political Gender Gap (and Divorce)**
- Part 1 of Research Paper #1 due by 9pm posted to the Ec980x website (see [Research Paper #1](#)). Comments on proposals will be sent through Canvas and appointments can be made.
- L. Cascio, and N. Shenhav. "[A Century of the American Woman Voter](#)," *JEP* 34 (Spring 2020), pp. 24-48.
 - L. Edlund, and R. Pande. "[Why Have Women Become Left Wing? The Political Gender Gap and the Decline in Marriage](#)," *QJE* 117 (Aug. 2002), *only* pp. 917-40, 953-54; § rest of article.
 - B. Stevenson. "[The Impact of Divorce Laws on Marriage-Specific Capital](#)," *Journal of Labor Economics* 25 (Jan. 2007), *only* pp. 75-81 (Sections I and II) and conclusion.
- Oct. 5** **5. Economics of Fertility**
- * • M.J. Bailey, B. Hershbein, and A.R. Miller. "[The Opt-In Revolution? Contraception and the Gender Gap in Wages](#)," *AEJ: Applied Economics* (July 2012), pp. 225-54.
 - G. Becker. *Treatise on the Family*, chap. 5: "[The Demand for Children](#)," pp. 135-44; 151-54; § pp. 145-50.
 - * • F. Feyrer, B. Sacerdote, and A. Stern. "[Will the Stork Return to Europe and Japan? Understanding Fertility within Developed Countries](#)," *JEP* 22 (Summer 2008), pp. 3-22.
 - C. Goldin, and L. Katz. "[On the Pill: Changing the Course of Women's Education](#)" *Milken Institute Review* (2001) 3(Q2), pp. 12-21. § This is a summary; the longer paper ("The Power of the Pill") is [here](#).
- Oct. 12** Columbus Day, Indigenous Peoples' Day. No class

- Oct. 19 6. Bifurcated Families**
- A.J. Cherlin. "[The Real Reason Richer People Marry](#)," *New York Times, Sunday Review*, Dec. 7, 2014, p. SR3.
 - S. Lundberg, R.A. Pollak, and J. Stearns. "[Family Inequality: Diverging Patterns in Marriage, Cohabitation, and Childbearing](#)," *JEP* 30 (Spring 2016), pp. 79-102.
 - S. McLanahan, and C. Jencks. "[Was Moynihan Right? What Happens to the Children of Unmarried Mothers?](#)" *Education Next* (Spring 2015), pp. 15-20.
- Oct. 26 7. An Evolving Economic Force**
- Research Paper #1 due by 9pm posted to the Ec980x website
- F. Blau, and L. Kahn. "[Female Labor Supply: Why Is the United States Falling Behind?](#)," *AER P&P* 103 (May 2013), pp. 251-56
 - D. Costa. "[From Mill Town to Board Room: The Rise of Women's Paid Labor](#)," *JEP* 14 (Fall 2000), pp. 101-22.
 - C. Goldin. "[The 'Quiet Revolution' That Transformed Women's Employment, Education and Family](#)," *AER* (Ely Lecture) 96 (May 2006), pp. 1-21.
 - C. Goldin, and J. Mitchell. "[The New Lifecycle of Women's Employment: Disappearing Humps, Sagging Middles, Expanding Tops](#)," *JEP* (Winter 2017), pp. 161-82.
- Nov. 2 8. Gender Earnings Gaps. A Whodunit.**
- * • M. Bertrand. "[Coase Lecture: The Glass Ceiling](#)," *Economica* (2018), pp. 205-31.
 - G. J. Borjas. *Labor Economics* (2005). Discrimination model only, pp. 356-77 in [chap. 10](#). [Watch the video presentation of the discrimination model.](#)
 - C. Goldin, "[A Grand Gender Convergence: Its Last Chapter](#)," *AER* 104 (April 2014), pp. 1-21.
 - * • C. Juhn, and K. McCue. "[Specialization Then and Now: Marriage, Children, and the Gender Earnings Gap](#)," *JEP* (Winter 2017), pp. 183-204.
- Nov. 9 9. Family-Friendly Policies of Governments and Firms: The Cost of Care**
- Part 1 of Research Paper #2 due by 9pm posted to the Ec980x website.
- S. Bana, K. Bedard, and M. Rossin-Slater. "[Trends and Disparities in Leave Use Under California's Paid Family Leave Program](#)," *AER P&P* (May 2018), pp. 388-91.
 - L. Cascio. "[Public Investments in Child Care](#)." In Hamilton Project, *51 Percent: Driving Growth through Women's Economics Participation* (2017), pp. 123-39.
 - C. Olivetti, and B. Petrongolo. "[The Economic Consequences of Family Policies: A Century of Legislation across the OECD](#)," *JEP* (Winter 2017), pp. 205-30.
 - C. Ruhm, "[A National Paid Parental Leave Policy for the United States](#)." In Hamilton Project, *51 Percent: Driving Growth through Women's Economics Participation* (2017), pp. 107-19.
- Nov. 16 10. Careers, Couples, and Kids**
- * • N. Angelov, P. Johansson, and E. Lindahl. "[Parenthood and the Gender Gap in Pay](#)," *Journal of Labor Economics* (July 2016), *only* pp. 545-562; § rest of article to p. 572.
 - * • G. Azmat and R. Ferrer. "[Gender Gaps in Performance: Evidence from Young Lawyers](#)," *JPE* (Oct. 2017), pp. 1306-53.
 - M. Bertrand, C. Goldin, and L. Katz. "[Dynamics of the Gender Gap for Young Professionals in the Financial and Corporate Sectors](#)," *AEJ: Applied Economics* 2 (July 2010), pp. 228-55.
- Nov. 23 11. College Choice, Career Choice**
- C. Goldin, [Video](#) "[Journey Across a Century of Women](#)," [NBER Feldstein Lecture](#) (July 21, 2020).
 - C. Goldin, and L. Katz. "[Transitions: Career and Family Life Cycles of the Educational Elite](#)," *AER P&P* (May 2008), pp. 363-69.
 - C. Goldin, and L. Katz. "[The Cost of Workplace Flexibility for High-Powered Professionals](#)," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (2011), pp. 45-67.
 - C. Goldin, L. Katz, and I. Kuziemko. "[The Homecoming of American College Women: The Reversal of the College Gender Gap](#)," *JEP* 20 (Fall 2006), pp. 133-56.

* • C. Sloane, E. Hurst, and D. Black. “[A Cross-Cohort Analysis of Human Capital Specialization and the College Gender Wage Gap](#),” NBER Working Paper no. 26348 (Feb. 2020).
if needed

Nov. 30

12noon- 2:45pm **12. Student Presentations in class (plus 1.5 hours on Tuesday Dec. 1 to be scheduled)**

Each student will have 15 minutes to present a research paper summary. See [15 Minutes of Fame](#).

**Monday
Dec. 14**

Research Paper #2 due by 9pm posted to Ec980x website. No extensions allowed (except official ones).

Notes: All assigned readings (•) must be done before class.

§ Additional material that may be discussed in class.

** = for discussion comments, to be assigned.*

Any additional discussion materials including questions for class discussion will be posted on “Pages” with the presentation notes for that class.

Readings are listed in alphabetical order by author (not by importance).

AER = American Economic Review; P&P = Papers & Proceedings

JEP = Journal of Economic Perspectives

JPE = Journal of Political Economy

QJE = Quarterly Journal of Economics