American University

*Econ 574: Gender Perspectives on Economic Analysis: Microeconomics, Labor, Poverty and Social Policy*

**Fall 2008***

**Mondays 5:30 – 8:00 pm**

**Professor Caren Grown**  
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Office Hours: Mon- 1:00-4:00 pm and Tues- 2:00 – 5:00 pm, Fri (by appt)

**Professor Maria Floro**  
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Office Hours: Tues- 2-5 pm, Wed- 3-5 pm, and 8-9 pm (by appt.)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**
This course explores the gender dimensions of economic life by introducing students to the rich body of studies and research on gender-aware analyses in microeconomics, labor, poverty, and social policy. Using analytical models, empirical studies, case histories and ethnographic research, it will enhance understanding of theories of the household and household bargaining; conceptualization and measurement of the reproductive economy, care work and unpaid work; male and female participation in labor markets; sex-differentiated ownership of and access to assets and income; gender inequality and poverty; and related social policy issues.

**PREREQUISITES AND COURSE FORMAT:**
Students taking this course are expected to have taken intermediate-level microeconomics and macroeconomics since the level of discussion as well as assigned readings presupposes familiarity with economic concepts, tools and analyses.

This course will take the combined format of lecture and **active student participation** in class discussions. Students are expected to participate in all class meetings and **have read the materials ahead of time**. Students may also wish to form study groups.

**GRADING, COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND DUE DATES:**
Students are expected to complete the following assignments. Grades will be based on a weighted average of the various assignments.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Reaction/Thought Essays</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Every week</td>
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<td>2. South Africa Time Use Exercise</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>October 13</td>
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<td>3. Research Paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thesis Statement/Outline</td>
<td></td>
<td>September 15, 2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td></td>
<td>October 27, 2008</td>
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<td>Final Paper</td>
<td></td>
<td>December 1, 2008</td>
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<td>4. Class Participation, Seminar Leadership</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Throughout</td>
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<td>and Paper Presentation</td>
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<td>5. Final Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>December 8</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Students are required to receive a passing grade (70 or above) in all course requirements to receive a passing grade for the course. Grades are calculated as: A (90-100), B (80-89%), C (70-79%), D (60-69%), F (59% and below). Please note that each letter category includes both pluses and minuses.

Late submissions and extensions will NOT be accepted/given unless accompanied by a written letter (stating medical or important emergency reason) and accompanying note from doctor.

**Reaction/Thought Essay (15%)**
You will be expected to write four-five paragraph reaction/thought essays each week, posted on Blackboard, on the set of assigned readings for that week. You should state at least three critical points that you think are raised in the readings, discuss how each of the readings addresses these points, and, finally, provide a short evaluation of the assumptions, methodology and/or analysis of the authors. You should conclude with your own reflection on the issue or topic. **Your contributions must be posted on BB by 12:00 pm (noon) each Monday.**

**South Africa Time Use Exercise (15%)**
In early October you will receive instructions for an empirical exercise analyzing time use data from South Africa. In this exercise you will perform various statistical tests and regressions to explore relationships among time use variables and outcomes and analyze and interpret the results. Instructions for the exercise will be handed out in class and posted on BlackBoard on or before October 6 and **due on October 13.**

**Research Paper (30%)**
The research paper should be your own in-depth exploration of any topic covered in this course with a maximum length of 20 pages (text). It should be an in-depth exploration of any topic covered by any of the themes in the course.

The research paper involves **three steps** in order to facilitate feedback and comments:

1) Thesis statement and outline (with a list of references)
2) Literature review and
3) Final research paper that includes a revised literature review and any one of the following:

- Developing or modifying a formal economic model (bargaining, credit, etc) by incorporating gender variables,
- Exploring or developing feminist methodology in studying a particular issue and applying it through interviews, qualitative and quantitative surveys, participant observation, or another method.
- Empirical (econometric) analysis of any topic covered in the course using time series or cross-section statistics

Below is a brief description of each component of the research paper.

**Thesis and Outline of paper (with list of references)**
The thesis statement should include a clear statement of the ISSUE that you would like to address. State clearly the importance of or the rationale for conducting such a study. Your outline MUST include a list of possible references which serve as your starting point for the literature review. **DUE DATE: September 15, 2008 (in class)**

**Literature review paper (with references)**
The review of the existing literature should cover: a) pertinent studies that address the issue either conceptually/ theoretically or empirically, and b) policies or projects that either affect the issue or address directly the problem or issue. The reference sections of the books and assigned articles, as well as the syllabus section on supplementary material, are good starting points. The use of AU library databases, JSTOR, and the journal *Feminist Economics* provide additional materials on the subject but you need to be selective and must cite fully these sources. [See tips for writing a good review paper in Blackboard under Handouts.]

The literature review must be typed, double-spaced and a maximum length of 12 pages. **DUE DATE: October 27, 2008 (in class)**

**Final Paper**
The final research paper involves full development of your thesis statement, a revised literature review, and one of the additional features noted above.

The last part of the paper must present your own perspective and analysis of the issue (for PhD students, this involves using primary (household or individual level) or secondary data/info). You need to compare and contrast your results with those in existing studies and provide a brief explanation.

The final paper must be typed, double-spaced and should have a maximum length of 20 pages. Tables and appendices can be extra pages. **DUE DATE: December 1, 2008 (in class – no exceptions).**
The final grade on the Research Paper will be calculated as the weighted average of four categories:

1. Command of the arguments, findings, and significance of the topic (35%).
2. Sophistication and originality of the critical analysis, conceptual/theoretical framework or empirical analysis (35%).
3. Coherence and skill displayed in paper organization (logical format, footnotes, citations, references) and writing (30%).

**Class Participation and Paper Presentation (10%)**
Students are expected to read the assigned reading material, attend classes, do assignments, and come prepared for discussion.

Starting in a few weeks and continuing throughout the semester, I will assign pairs of students to lead discussion of a selected set of readings in the second hour of particular classes. The seminar leaders will be expected to make a 30 minute presentation of the readings and to lead the class in discussion of the main issues.

November 24 and December 1 have been set aside for each student to make a 10-12 minute presentation on their research paper. The schedule of the presentations will be available on or about November 3.

**Final Exam (30%)**
The final exam will cover all the topics discussed in the course. **The date for the final exam is December 8, 2008.**

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**
I take plagiarism and academic dishonesty very seriously, and I am required to report cases to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, whose policy is to fail students for the course. Please read the university's Academic Integrity Code closely, and be sure to ask me if you have any questions. The code is available online at http://www.american.edu/academics/integrity/index.htm.

In writing papers, you must properly cite all sources (1) directly quoted, (2) paraphrased, or (3) consulted in any fashion. Sources include all printed material as well as the Internet. Proper citation means using a standard citation format: MLA, APA, or Chicago.

It is considered plagiarism if you merely rework source material, placing an author's thoughts in other words without contributing your own ideas. For that reason, you must include some kind of source note whenever drawing on someone else's interpretation. A source note can be a sentence or more in your paper, or it can be a footnote. A source note should clarify the extent to which your interpretation is indebted to your source, explaining both (1) what you use and (2) where you depart or differ from the source. It is also considered plagiarism to submit drafts, response papers, and other informal assignments without properly citing sources and acknowledging intellectual debts.
You must receive prior permission from me if you want to submit a paper or part of a paper that you have written for a previous class.

**READINGS:**

*N.B.* The reading assignments may be subject to change. I will notify you ahead of time through the Blackboard e-mail system if there are any changes. Please check Blackboard each week for updates.

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


The course will rely heavily on articles in *Feminist Economics* and other journals, working papers, and e-publications that are either available in the AU library journal database or posted in the course documents section of Blackboard.

**Week 1 - August 25 (Profs. Grown and Floro): Course Overview and Introduction to Gender Perspectives in Economic Analysis**


**Supplementary Readings:**

(These give a good overview of the political economy of gender in the last decade)


Week 2- September 1: No Class – Labor Day

Weeks 3-6: Gender Perspectives in Microeconomics

Week 3- September 8 (Prof. Floro): Household Economics – Gary Becker


Supplementary Readings:


Examples of Bargaining Models:


Supplementary Readings:


Week 6- September 29 (Prof. Floro): Gender and Preference Formation


Supplementary Readings:


**Weeks 7-8 (Prof. Floro): Time Use, Unpaid Work, and Care**

**Week 7- October 6: Unpaid Household Work, Care, and Time Use Patterns: Conceptual Issues and Analysis [Hand out South Time Use Exercise]**


**Supplementary Readings:**


**Week 8- October 13 (Prof. Floro & Seminar Leadership): Measurement and Valuation of Unpaid Work, Time Use Data, and Policy Issues [South Africa Time Use Exercise Due]**


**Supplementary Materials:**


**Time Use Databases:**


UK, EU, Canada, Australia Time Use Surveys: http://www.smu.ca/partners/iatur/tuspp.htm
Weeks 9-11: Gender Inequality and Labor Markets

Week 9 - October 20 (Prof. Grown): Gender Inequality and Labor Markets in the United States


Supplementary Readings:


Week 10 - October 27 (Prof. Grown): Affirmative Action, Pay Equity, and Social Policy in the OECD Countries [Lit Review Due]

Theory and Empirical Evidence:


Country Experiences:


Supplementary Readings:


Week 11- November 3 (Prof. Floro & Seminar Leadership): Gender Inequality and Labor Markets in Developing Countries


Supplementary Readings:


Weeks 12-14: Gender, Poverty, and State Policy in Developed and Developing Countries

Week 12- November 10 (Prof. Floro & Seminar Leadership): Gender and Poverty: Conceptual and Measurement Issues


Supplementary Readings (Gender & Poverty in Different Countries/Regions):


Week 11- November 17 (Prof. Grown & Seminar Leadership): Gender and Social Policies in Developed and Developing Countries


Supplementary Readings:


Week 12- November 24: Student Presentations

Week 13- December 1 (Last Class): Student Presentations

Week 14- December 8: Final Exam