

## Econ 353: Gender and Economics Course Narrative

In this course students examine both labor market and public policy issues related to gender from an economic perspective. Students enter the class with at least one semester of introductory economics, where they have learned about various economic theories. In this course they will expand on their knowledge of economic theory. One important area of expansion is in understanding labor markets in order to analyze issues such as gender discrimination. However, another important function of the course is to learn when economic analysis benefits from a deeper examination of gender and household interactions (which are often ignored when approaching consumer choice from an individualistic perspective). While understanding economic theory, and the benefit of including a gender perspective for this economic theory, is an important component of this course, empirical analysis and examination of data are of primary importance. Historical and cross-national comparisons are essential to building students' understanding of the changing economic roles of women and men. This course encourages student participation by having them relate issues that they learn about to their own lives. For example, in one homework assignment students keep a time diary of their housework during the week. Then they compare their results to averages in this country and in other countries by gender, age, and marital status. An important topic of discussion in this course is labor market discrimination on the basis of gender. As with the other topics, multiple "ways of knowing" are used. Economic theory is applied to the topic, empirical statistical methods are explained, data are examined, and personal experiences are discussed.

In the end students use several of the Foundational Studies program's ways-of-knowing (quantitative literacy, health and wellness, social and behavioral sciences, historical studies, and ethics and social responsibility) in their examination of gender-related economic issues. Taking, for example, the issue of family-friendly policies, economic reasoning is utilized to examine the need and/or the effects of these policies. Discussions and panel presentations often touch on the importance of family-friendly policies or work-life balance to overall health and well-being. Changing and evolving policies are examined from a historical perspective. Ethics and social responsibility are brought into the discussion of why firms would provide various services, the fairness of providing benefits for some employees and not others, to what extent society as a whole benefits from family-friendly policies, and what difference it would make to have public provision of services rather than employer based provision. Economic, health and wellness, historical, and ethical considerations also are at play in the discussion of government mandates of various benefits (for example the Family and Medical Leave Act).

Students analyze various issues and write about them in problem sets, exams, and in a researched and documented paper. They also develop their verbal communication skills through coordination of a panel presentation and class discussions. Information literacy is an important component of this course, as is practice in interpreting statistics and data presented in tables and graphs. Critical thinking skills are utilized consistently in the course as students examine controversial issues from various perspectives.

Econ 353: Gender and Economics  
Indiana State University  
MWF 11-11:50 am

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Office Hours: MF 9:15 am-10:45 am and T 9:15am -11:45 am or by appointment

### **Course Description and Objectives**

This course serves three purposes. It is an upper division elective within the Economics major, an elective within the Women's Studies minor, and it is also an Integrative Upper Division Elective for Foundational Studies 2010. As an upper-division economics course, this course examines the relevance of gender and household issues for economic analysis, in addition to utilizing economic analysis to better understand a broad range of labor market and public policy issues related to gender. Specifically, this course analyzes the economic aspects of issues related to gender, such as gender wage gaps, labor force discrimination, family-friendly policies in the workplace, the valuation of unpaid household work, and the differential impact of public policies. We will also examine the importance of gender in economic theories of household behavior. To look at these issues from an economic perspective, we will review and expand students' understanding of economic theory. As an integrative upper-division elective in the Foundational Studies program the course utilizes several of the Foundational Studies program's ways-of-knowing (quantitative literacy, WoK-QL; health and wellness, WoK-H&W; social and behavioral sciences, WoK-SBS; historical studies, WoK-Hist; and ethics and social responsibility, WoK-E&SR) to understand the issues involved.

In this course I expect students to:

- § improve analytical skills in order to apply economic theory to gender-related issues
- § develop their abilities to apply economic theory using words, mathematical expressions, and graphs
- § develop their abilities to clearly articulate different perspectives on gender-related issues
- § learn to apply material from this course to situations in the news and in their own lives
- § demonstrate oral communication skills through discussions, interviews, and presentations
- § improve written communication skills through research and written analysis
- § improve library research skills, particularly finding articles through computer databases
- § learn to interpret results from empirical statistical models
- § learn where to obtain relevant economic statistics and how to interpret them

To be an Integrative Upper Division Elective a course must meet the following learning objectives (IUDELO):

1. Use a thematic approach to a particular topic or issue that integrates multiple ways of knowing;
2. Engage in a project or conduct research that makes use of multiple ways of knowing to address a particular topic or issue;
3. Analyze and write at an advanced level.

Because this course is part of the larger Foundational Studies Program, it is important to place its goals within the context of the program's goals. By the conclusion of your Foundational Studies Program at ISU, you will be able to (FSLO)

1. Locate, critically read, and evaluate information to solve problems;
2. Critically evaluate the ideas of others;
3. Apply knowledge and skills within and across the fundamental ways of knowing (natural sciences, social and behavioral sciences, arts and humanities, mathematics and history);
4. Demonstrate an appreciation of human expression through literature and fine and performing arts;
5. Demonstrate the skills for effective citizenship and stewardship;
6. Demonstrate an understanding of diverse cultures within and across societies;
7. Demonstrate the skills to place their current and local experience in a global, cultural, and historical context;
8. Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical implications of decisions and actions
9. Apply principles of physical and emotional health to wellness;
10. Express (yourself) effectively, professionally, and persuasively both orally and in writing.

The program is also designed to build skills for applied learning. These Skill and Applied Learning Objectives (S&ALO) require that the course contribute to

1. Explicitly demonstrate how the curriculum will develop critical thinking skills
2. Explicitly demonstrate how the curriculum will develop information literacy skills
3. Include a graded writing component, which whenever possible is developmental
4. Must incorporate opportunities for students to critically read and analyze sophisticated, complex text, and to write intensively.
5. Must include assignments that apply information from within and across various "ways of knowing"

### **Required Materials**

Blau, Francine D., Marianne A. Ferber, and Anne E. Winkler. 2006. *The Economics of Women, Men, and Work*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Pearson Prentice Hall: New Jersey. (Referred to as BFW in outline)

Wall Street Journal (10 week subscription)

## General Class Procedures

I expect you to complete the assigned readings before class and to come prepared for discussion. The calendar gives a general outline of the timing of the textbook readings. The textbook will be supplemented with additional readings, including scholarly articles and book selections. These readings will be placed on reserve in the library or be readily available online. In addition, I may occasionally assign articles or require students to find articles to read on specific topics. In order to understand economic theory and be able to apply it to different gender-related issues, you will need to practice solving problems yourself. The assigned problem sets will give you the opportunity to do this. If you have any difficulties or questions during the course, please contact me about them sooner rather than later.

## Attendance and Participation

Although you will not be graded specifically for class attendance, attendance at all class meetings is very important. If you do not attend class you will not be able to participate and actively learn about the topics under study. If you do miss or come late to class, you are responsible for finding out what you missed.

## Grading

Midterm Exam	(15%)
Final Take Home Exam	(20%)
Problem Sets (5)	(15%)
Women's History Month Panel Discussion	(10%)
Research Paper	(15%)
Current Events Participation	(10%)
Service-Learning Project	(15%)

Note: All students are expected to adhere to the Code of Student Conduct. Academic dishonesty in any portion of the academic work in this course shall be grounds for awarding a grade of F for the work or the entire course.

## Exams (35%)

There will be **one midterm exam** during the semester (15%) and a **cumulative final take-home exam** (20%). **Make-up exams will only be allowed in clear cases of emergency.** If at all possible, I must be notified of an absence **before** the scheduled exam. Exams will be based on material from the textbook and additional readings, material covered in class, and homework assignments. Exams will be a combination of short answer and essay questions, requiring both written answers and use of mathematical analysis and graphs.

### **Problem Sets (15%)**

Problem sets will generally consist of problems and analysis of gender-related issues. At times, the homework may also include short projects, such as interviewing other students about specific issues. You will have at least one week to complete each problem set. Problem sets must be handed in at the **beginning** of class on the date due. While I encourage you to work on the problems in study groups with your fellow students, you must turn in your own individual work. There will be five problem sets over the course of the semester. Late problem sets will **ONLY** be accepted in cases of documented emergencies.

### **Women's History Month Panel Discussion on Work and Family (10%)**

Students will organize a panel discussion on combining work and family during Women's History Month in March. You will be involved in contacting people from campus and community to share their experiences on the panel, as well as doing background research on the topic, and developing questions for the panelists. Hearing first-hand experiences will be an important way to learn about this topic and will give you useful organizing experience. To receive full-credit for this part of the course students will write a brief summary and assessment of the panel discussion (one page).

Note: The specific topic of the panel presentations varies. This is the topic from Spring 2009. When the course is taught in the fall the panel topic may be related to the Women's Studies program "Take Back the Night" activities instead of Women's History Month.
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### **Research Paper (15%)**

The research paper will provide you a way of applying the analysis we learn in class to a gender-related topic of your choosing (from a list of topics provided by the instructor). **In this paper you must demonstrate an integration of the Social Science Way of Knowing (as demonstrated through economic analysis) and at least one additional Way of Knowing from the Foundational Studies Program (quantitative literacy, health and wellness, social and behavioral sciences, historical studies, and ethics and social responsibility). For example, in analysis of domestic violence you might explore both the economic and ethical/social responsibility aspects of policy responses to this societal problem.** The paper will be double-spaced, word-processed, and 8-10 pages long (not counting title and reference pages). You may find it necessary to obtain information through interlibrary loan, so please be sure to leave enough time for that process. You may **not** use only internet websites as sources. In order to have the research process proceed in a timely fashion (throughout the semester) you have two earlier deadlines for your research paper: submission of an outline and preliminary bibliography and then a one page analysis of ONE scholarly article from your preliminary bibliography. Each of these components will be 5% of your final research paper grade. There are two due dates for your completed paper. If you submit your paper by the first due date, it will be graded and returned to you with comments. Then, if you would like to improve your grade, you will have the chance to rewrite the paper based on my comments and resubmit the revised paper by the second due date. You will submit the revised paper along with the first version of your paper with my comments. If you choose to submit your paper at the second due date, then you will not have the opportunity to rewrite the paper for an improved grade. [See handout in Appendix utilized for library sessions and starting research paper]

### **Current Events Participation (10%)**

Reading the Wall Street Journal on a regular basis is a course requirement. This will allow students to relate the course material to current economic conditions. Students will be expected to share in current events discussions in class. At times students will also be asked to write paragraphs during class reflecting on current events and relating them to class topics. I will expect students to keep papers from the previous week. I will at times assign specific articles that are particularly useful for class discussion. At the end of the semester, students will write a 1-2 page reflective essay incorporating current events, personal reflection and economic analysis. Students will also give brief (5-10 minute) individual presentations on the topic of their reflective essays.

### **Service-Learning Project (15%)**

Students will develop a report on how the organization or business chosen could improve its family-friendly policies. This would be developed in conjunction with and then reported to the relevant persons in the organization or business. This project is designed to allow students to better understand family-friendly policies and how they might affect women's and men's career and family choices. By examining the policies of either ISU or a specific business or organization in Terre Haute and developing recommendations to improve these policies, this project will provide students with a practical application for the material covered in class.

**"The Sycamore Standard"**  
**Indiana State University**

Students at Indiana State University are expected to accept certain personal responsibilities that constitute the "standard" for behavior in a community of scholars.

As a student at Indiana State University:

I will practice personal and academic integrity; I will commit my energies to the pursuit of truth, learning, and scholarship; I will foster an environment conducive to the personal and academic accomplishment of all students; I will avoid activities that promote bigotry or intolerance; I will choose associations and define my relationships with others based on respect for individual rights and human dignity; I will conduct my life as a student in a manner that brings honor to me and to the University Community; I will discourage actions or behaviors by others that are contrary to these standards.

Adopted by the Indiana State University Student Government Association April 17, 2002

**Policy on Academic Integrity**

“Indiana State University requires that all students read and support the **Policy on Academic Integrity**. Academic Integrity is a core value of our community of learners. Every member of the academic community (students, faculty, and staff) is expected to maintain high standards of integrity in all facets of work and study. The **Policy on Academic Integrity** describes appropriate academic conduct in research, writing, assessment, and ethics. The policy is found in the **Code of Student Conduct** and on the web at <http://www.indstate.edu/academicintegrity/studentguide.pdf>

**AMERICAN WITH DISABILITES ACT STATEMENT**

“Indiana State University seeks to provide effective services and accommodation for qualified individuals with documented disabilities. If you need an accommodation because of a documented disability, you are required to register with Disability Support Services at the beginning of the semester. Contact the Director of Student Support Services. The telephone number is 237-2301 and the office is located in Gillum Hall, Room 202A. The Director will ensure that you receive all the additional help that Indiana State offers. If you will require assistance during an emergency evacuation, notify your instructor immediately. Look for evacuation procedures posted in your classrooms.

**Laptop Usage**

While there will be no assignments or examinations for which the laptop will be used (in class), your use of a laptop is generally permitted as long as such usage remains within the bounds of the Code of Student Conduct and it conforms to the provisions of its use as laid out in this syllabus. There may be occasions where laptop usage is forbidden and if that occurs, failure to comply with this direction will be viewed as a violation of the Code of Student Conduct.

**Academic Freedom**

*Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject.*

The preceding comes from the American Association of University Professors statement on academic freedom. Though the entire statement<sup>1</sup> speaks to many issues, it is this portion on the conduct of the course that is most relevant. For the purpose of Foundational Studies courses this means that faculty have the right to conduct their class in a fashion they deem appropriate as long as the material presented meets the learning objectives laid out by the entire faculty

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/policydocs/contents/1940statement.htm>

## Calendar

Jan. 12-16

Introduction to Course  
Brief Review of Economic Concepts  
Historical Overview  
BFW, Ch. 1 and 2

Jan. 19-23 (No class Mon. Jan. 19 for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day)

Labor Force Participation: Economic Theory and Trends  
BFW, Ch. 4

Jan. 26-30

Continue Labor Force Participation  
Valuation of unpaid household work  
BFW, Ch. 4

Feb. 2-6

Gender Wage Gaps: Occupational differences, labor market discrimination, human capital model  
BFW, Ch. 5-8; selected articles from the *Journal of Economic Perspectives*.

**Choose Research Topics from list provided**

Feb. 9-13

**Mon. Feb. 9 written analysis of ONE scholarly article to be used in your research paper due**  
Continue with Gender Wage Gaps

Feb. 16-20

**Mon. Feb. 16 Outline and preliminary bibliography for Research Paper Due**  
Continue with Gender Wage Gaps

Feb. 23-27

Differential Impact of Public Policies  
BFW, Ch. 10

Mar. 2-6

Continue with Public Policies  
International Comparison  
BFW, Ch. 11

**Fri. Mar. 6 Midterm Exam**

Mar. 9-13 **No Classes Spring Break**

Mar 16-20

Continue with public policies and international comparison  
Women's History Month Panel Presentation

Mar. 23-27

Gender and Modelling Household Decisionmaking  
Readings: BFW, Ch. 3

Mar. 30-Apr. 3

Continue Gender and Modelling Household Decisionmaking  
**Wed. Apr. 1 First Due Date for Research Paper**

Apr. 6-10

Economic Modelling of Marriage and Fertility  
BFW, Ch. 9  
Economics of Prostitution (readings to be announced)

Apr. 13-17

Current Events Presentations  
Service Learning Project Presentations and Reports

Apr. 20-24

**Fri. Apr. 24 Final Due Date for Research Paper**  
Choice of topics (readings to be announced):

Economic analysis of abortion; engagement/wedding ring markets; gender and advertising  
What is Feminist Economics?

**[See appendix for discussion questions on gender and advertising topic from Spring 2009]**

Apr. 27-May 1: Recap, Discussion, and Review

**Final Exam Due Fri. May 8 at noon**

**Foundational Studies Ways of Knowing and Learning Objectives  
Course Learning Objective-FS Map**

Course Learning Objectives	Ways of Knowing						FS LO	S&A LO	IUDE LO
	SBS	QL	E&SR	Hist	H&W				
improve analytical skills in order to apply economic theory to gender-related issues	X	X	X				1,2,3	1,5	1
develop their abilities to apply economic theory using words, mathematical expressions, and graphs	X	X					1,2,3	1,5	1
develop their abilities to clearly articulate different perspectives on gender-related issues	X	X	X	X	X		1,2,3,7,8	1,5	1
learn to apply material from this course to situations in the news and in their own lives	X	X	X	X	X		1,2,3,7,8	1,5	1
demonstrate oral communication skills through discussions, interviews, and presentations							1,2,3,10	1	1,2,3
improve written communication skills through research and written analysis							1,2,3,10	1,5	1,2,3
improve library research skills, particularly finding articles through library computer databases							1,2,3	1,2	1
learn to interpret results from empirical statistical models	X	X					1,2,3	1,2,5	1
learn where to obtain relevant economic statistics and how to interpret them							1,2,3	1,2	1

**Foundational Studies Ways of Knowing and Learning Objectives  
Chapter-FS Map**

Chapter	Ways of Knowing					FS LO	S&A LO	IUDE LO
	SBS	QL	E&SR	Hist	H&W			
Ch. 1 Introduction to Economics and Textbook	X		X			1,2,3,5	1	1
Ch. 2 Women and Men: Changing Roles in a Changing Economy	X		X	X		1,2,3	1	1
Ch. 3 The Family as an Economic Unit	X	X	X	X		1,2,3	1,2	1
Ch. 4 The Allocation of Time between the Household and the Labor Market	X	X	X	X		1,2,3,8	1	1
Ch. 5 Differences in Occupations and Earnings: Overview	X	X	X	X		1,2,3,6	1	1
Ch. 6 Differences in Occupations and Earnings: The Human Capital Model	X	X	X	X		1,2,3,6	1	1
Ch. 7 Differences in Occupations and Earnings: the Role of Labor Market Discrimination	X	X	X	X		1,2,3,6,8	1	1
Ch. 8 Recent Developments in the Labor Market	X	X	X	X		1,2,3,8	1	1
Ch. 9 Changing Work Roles and the Family	X		X	X	X	1,2,3,6,8	1	1
Ch. 10 Policies Affecting Paid Work and the Family	X	X	X	X	X	1,2,3,6,8,9	1	1
Ch. 11 Gender Differences in Other Countries	X	X	X	X		1,2,3,6,7,8	1	1

**Foundational Studies Ways of Knowing and Learning Objectives  
Assessment-FS Map**

Assessment	FS LO	S&A LO	IUDE LO
Midterm Exam	1,2,3,10	1,5	
Take Home Exam	1,2,3,6,7,8,10	1,5	1
Problem Sets	1,2,3,6,7,8,10	1,2,3,4,5	1
Panel Discussion	1,3,10	1,	1
Research Paper	1,2,3,6,7,8,10	1,2,3,4,5	1,2,3
Current Events Participation and reflective essay	1,2,3,5,6,7,8,1 0	1,2,3,5	1
Service-Learning Project	1,3,10	1,3,5,7,8,9	1,2

Textbook Chapter	Explanation of Chapter Topic
Ch. 1 Introduction to Economics and Textbook	Scope of book and introduction to terminology used.
Ch. 2 Women and Men: Changing Roles in a Changing Economy	Brief discussion of “nature vs. nurture” in gender differences. Long view of historical changes in women’s roles in the economy. Introduction to changes in the United States over time.
Ch. 3 The Family as an Economic Unit	Much of economics focuses on individual choice, ignoring decisions that are made by family units. This chapter explicitly examines the way families allocate resources and make decisions.
Ch. 4 The Allocation of Time between the Household and the Labor Market	Labor economists frame individual's decisions about working outside the home as a choice between labor and leisure. This chapter recognizes that not all time spent outside of paid work is adequately captured by the term "leisure" -- household activities are multi-faceted and include housework and child care. The increase in women in the work force over time has been striking – these trends are examined in more detail in this chapter.
Ch. 5 Differences in Occupations and Earnings: Overview	Changes in occupations and earnings over time by gender.
Ch. 6 Differences in Occupations and Earnings: The Human Capital Model	The human capital model emphasizes the importance of factors such as education and experience in determining productivity in the work force and therefore influencing the salary and wages received.
Ch. 7 Differences in Occupations and Earnings: the Role of Labor Market Discrimination	Women and men still receive different pay, e.g. a gender wage gap still exists, even when controlling for differences in education and experience. This chapter examines to what extent discrimination exists, and what means economists use to disentangle the potential of discrimination from other explanations of the gender wage gap. Students are introduced to regression analysis in this chapter.
Ch. 8 Recent Developments in the Labor Market	This chapter examines how the most recent decades compare and contrast with previous ones in terms of changing occupations, work roles, and gender wage gaps.
Ch. 9 Changing Work Roles and the Family	This chapter turns the question around, and instead of asking what changes lead to increased work outside of the home for women, asks what these changes have meant for families and children.
Ch. 10 Policies Affecting Paid Work and the Family	This chapter examines "Family-friendly" policies in the workplace as well as anti-poverty programs and how they affect low income families.
Ch. 11 Gender Differences in Other Countries	This chapter gives a more in-depth comparison of the United States with other countries.

## Appendix

Econ 353  
Library Research Sessions  
Jan. 30, 2009/Feb. 2, 2009

Name:

List Proposed Paper Topic:

### Research Paper Process and Due Dates:

**Mon. Feb. 2** decide on paper topic

**Mon. Feb. 9** written analysis of ONE scholarly article (on paper topic) due

**Mon. Feb. 16** Outline and preliminary bibliography for Research Paper due

**Wed. Apr. 1** Early Due Date Research Paper

**Fri. Apr. 24** Final Due Date Research Paper

### Library research:

1. Find at least two relevant and interesting current events articles using Lexis-Nexis or Proquest or other library databases (NOT google or other web search). One article should be local (or at least Indiana) the other may be general. Find at least one article from the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times* or *The Economist*. Submit copy of your search (key words/results/refinements).

2. Find a relevant scholarly article (peer-reviewed) from an economics journal.

Article citation:

3. When you have found an interesting and relevant scholarly article do the following to expand your literature review:

A. Use the Social Science Citation Index to find another article that cites that article.

B. Use the Social Science Citation Index to find another article by the same author(s).

C. Look at the references in your chosen article. Chose one that looks particularly interesting and find it.

D. In each of the previous cases find out how you would get full-text access to that article. If it is not accessible here at ISU, order it by interlibrary loan.

Some Suggested Economics Journals:

*Journal of Economic Perspectives*

*Journal of Family and Economic Issues*

*Journal of Feminist Economics*

*Journal of Human Resources*

*Journal of Labor Economics*

Econ 353

Dr. Debra Israel

Topic: Gender and Advertising

Friday April 24, 2009

Reflections on gender and advertising and the film *Killing Us Softly 3: Advertising's Image of Women* with Jean Kilbourne, 2000

1. How would you approach the issue of gender and advertising from the perspective of gender and economics? Who do ads aim at? Does this reflect actual purchasing patterns and/or the source of income in the household?
2. What type of ads are geared towards women?
3. What type of ads are geared towards men?
4. Think about a particular ad. Analyze it from a gender perspective. What product is being sold? How are images and/or voices of men or women being used in the ad? Is the ad aiming at men/women/boys/girls or a combination?
5. To what extent are you influenced by advertising? Do you think that advertising changes our consumption patterns by influencing what we think we really need, or is its main function to provide useful information about products that you might want to buy?
6. To what extent does advertising simply reflect gender stereotypes in our culture versus actually shaping or reinforcing gender stereotypes?
7. What traits does Jean Kilbourne see as emphasized for women in advertising?
8. Given Jean Kilbourne's thesis of the impact on girls/women of the sexually exploitation, unrealistic body images, and passivity reflected in advertising, how might you expect this to influence females in their educational and career choices?