

McGill University  
Department of Economics

## ECON350: Gender and Economics Winter 2024

### Instructor Contact Information:

Prof. Sonia Laszlo  
LEA526, Telephone: 398-2102  
e-mail: [sonia.laszlo@mcgill.ca](mailto:sonia.laszlo@mcgill.ca) (Please see my e-mail policy below)

**Prerequisites:** ECON 230D1/D2.

**Course Description:** An examination of the theoretical and empirical issues of gender and economics. Emphasis is placed on gender in the context of household economics, labour economics, development economics and a critical assessment of economic policies in these spheres. Gender norms (for example, traditional gender roles, dowries, son preferences) will be explored in how they interact with economics. Material is drawn from Canada, OECD and the Global South to address debates, policies and examples around gender equality and gender gaps.

### Course Evaluations:

Reading Quizzes (5/8) = 10% (2% each) (see schedule below)

Midterm = 40% (February 20<sup>th</sup>)

Students who miss the midterm for valid medical reasons (medical note not required) will have the opportunity to write the make-up exam, scheduled for February 29<sup>th</sup>.

Final exam = 50% (Date TBA)

There will be a supplemental examination which will be worth 100% of your final grade.

Exam format: Combination of True/False/Uncertain and explain why, as well as short essay questions evaluating your understanding of the assigned readings and course materials. Final exam is cumulative.

**Reading Quizzes (Submit only 5, 2% each, total 10% - to be submitted via MyCourses Due at 5pm):** Quizzes will be a set of questions related to an assigned paper (indicated with “+” in the reading list and schedule), to be completed *before we discuss the paper in class*. These will be available for 48 hours before the due date. The objective of this evaluation format is to encourage you to do the readings in advance of class and to help call your attention to some of the key contributions of the paper and how they relate to the lecture material. Some of these papers are technical – you are not responsible for the technical detail (e.g. econometric methods, formal economic modeling), unless we discuss the technical aspects in class. You do not have to do all 8 – we will only count your 5 highest marks (so effectively, you only need to submit 5)

<b>Reading Quiz</b>	<b>Paper (see reading list for details)</b>	<b>Due date</b>
<b>1</b>	+ Eckhoff Andresen and Nix (2022)	Jan 17 <sup>th</sup>
<b>2</b>	+ Alesina et al. (2013)	Jan 24 <sup>th</sup>
<b>3</b>	+ Eckel and Grossman (2008)	Jan 29 <sup>th</sup>
<b>4</b>	+ Anderson (2007)	Feb 12 <sup>th</sup>
<b>5</b>	+ Goldin and Katz (2002)	Feb 26 <sup>th</sup>
<b>6</b>	+ Talamas Marcos (2023)	Mar 11 <sup>th</sup>
<b>7</b>	+ Beaman et al. (2011)	Mar 18 <sup>th</sup>
<b>8</b>	+ Bursztyn et al. (2019)	Apr 3 <sup>rd</sup>

**Instructional Methods:** Class lectures will be held in person and will not be recorded. It is designed in such a way that it is imperative to read the assigned readings on schedule. We will build on the pre-requisites for the course.

**Learning Outcomes:** By the end of this semester, you will be able to:

- Apply microeconomic fundamentals to the study of gender in economics
- Understand why economic outcomes are different between women and men
- Understand the effects of policies aiming to redress the gender gaps in the global economy

**PRELIMINARY COURSE CALENDAR AND OUTLINE:**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Required Readings</b>
Welcome	Jan 4	
Introduction	Jan 9 Jan 11	Goldin (2007), Sen (1990) Kabeer (1999)
1. Labour market: Theory, Gender gaps, Discrimination, Social norms	Jan 16 Jan 18 Jan 23 Jan 25	+Eckhoff Andresen and Nix (2022)  +Alesina et al. (2013)
2. Decision making: Preferences, Decision-making & agency, Intrahousehold models	Jan 30 Feb 1 Feb 6	+Eckel and Grossman (2008)  Eswaran (Chp 3, 2022)
3. Marriage and the Family: Theory, Institutions and norms Evidence	Feb 8 Feb 13 Feb 15	+Anderson, S. (2007)
<b>MIDTERM</b>	Feb 20	
4. Fertility and health	Feb 22 Feb 27	Eswaran (Chp 8, 2022) +Goldin and Katz (2002)
<b>Make-up MIDTERM</b>	Feb 29	Midterm Take-Up
<b>MARCH BREAK</b>	Mar 5, 9	
5. Policies 1 – Balancing work & care	Mar 12 Mar 14	+Talamas Marcos (2023)
Policies 2 – Gender equity & rights	Mar 19 Mar 21	+Beaman et al. (2012)
Policies 3 – Microfinance	Mar 26 Mar 28	Eswaran (Chp 5, 2022)
Policies 4 – Social protection & Norm shifting	Apr 2 Apr 4	+Bursztyn et al. (2019)
Review	Apr 9	

**Notes:** 1. Topics might spill over from one week to the next if necessary.  
2. I maintain discretion regarding changes in this outline. Any changes will be discussed in class and/or announced on MyCourses.  
+ for reading quiz

**Key dates:**

- Jan 16<sup>th</sup>: Add Drop deadline

**DETAILED (PRELIMINARY) READING LIST:**

**Recommended textbook:** There is no required textbook, but I will be following Mukesh Eswaran's [Why Gender Matters in Economics](#) Princeton University Press 2022. It is available as an [e-book](#) at the library. I will also be drawing from Francine Blau and Anne E. Winkler's [The Economics of Women, Men, and Work](#) OUP (2022), which is on order, though an older edition (Blau, Ferber, and Winkler 1998 3<sup>rd</sup> edition) will be placed on reserve.

**Complementary resources (placed on 3-hour reserve at the library):** While this course requires you to have completed ECON230, you may find the following resources useful as references.

**Micro-economics:** Any intermediate micro-economics textbook. Where necessary, I will draw from the textbook used in your ECON230 course:

Varian, H. 2010. [Intermediate Microeconomics: A Modern Approach](#) 8<sup>th</sup> edition (or more recent versions)

**Gender and Economics:**

Blau, F.D., M.A. Ferber, and A.E. Winkler. 1998. *The Economics of Women, Men, and Work* 3rd ed. Prentice Hall (note: there is a newer edition on the market, but the library does not yet have it)

Goldin, C. 1990. *Understanding the Gender Gap: An Economic History of American Women* Oxford University Press

Jacobsen, J. 2007. *The Economics of Gender*. Blackwell Publishers.

**Labour Economics:**

Benjamin, D., M. Gunderson, T. Lemieux, C. Riddell, and T. Schirle. 2021. *Labour Market Economics* 9<sup>th</sup> edition.

The reading list below indicates required readings, followed by recommendations for further reading. These are all available either through the McGill Library (so you will need Remote Access if off campus) or freely available online. The reading list below will provide hyperlinks to the articles but in the event the link is broken, a quick browser search of the article title and author should yield what you are looking for. A more complete bibliography with optional readings for interested readers will be provided during lectures. + indicates assigned for reading quiz.

**Welcome/Introduction****Required**

Goldin, C., 2006. "[The Richard T. Ely Lecture: The Quiet Revolution That Transformed Women's Employment, Education, and Family](#)" *American Economic Review* Vol. 96(2): 1-21.

Kabeer, N., 1999. "[Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment](#)" *Development and Change* Vol. 30(2): 435-464

Sen, A. 1990. "[More than 100 Million Women are Missing.](#)" *The New York Review of Books*, 37(20).

**Recommended**

Jayachandran, Seema. 2015. "[The Roots of Gender Inequality in Developing Countries](#)" *Annual Review of Economics* Vol. 7: 63-88.

Lowes, S. 2020. "[Kinship Structure & Women: Evidence from Economics.](#)" *Dædalus* Vol. 145(1): 119-1433

Varian, Hal. 2010. [Intermediate Microeconomics: A Modern Approach](#) (Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 28, 29, 32)

**Topic 1 – Gender and the Labour Market****Lecture 1 (Theory)****Recommended:**

Blau and Winkler (Chapter 6, 2022) or Blau, Ferber, and Winkler (Chapter 4, 1998) or Varian (Chapter 9, 2010), or any labour economics textbook chapter on labour supply (labour-leisure model)

**Lecture 2 (Gender Gap)****Required:**

<sup>+</sup>Eckhoff Andresen, M. and Nix, 2022. "[What Causes the Child Penalty? Evidence from Adopting and Same-Sex Couples.](#)" *Journal of Labor Economics* Vol. 40: 971-1004

Recommended:

- Blau and Winkler (Chapter 8, 2022) or Blau, Ferber, and Winkler (Chapter 6, 1998) or Jacobsen (Chapter 7, 1998)
- Kleven, H., C. Landais, J. Posch, A. Steinhauer, and J. Zweimüller. 2019. "[Child Penalties Across Countries: Evidence and Explanations](#)" *American Economic Review – Papers and Proceedings* Vol. 109: 122-1226

**Lecture 3 (Labour Market Discrimination)**Recommended:

- Blau, F. and L. Kahn. 2017. "[The Gender Wage Gap: Extent, Trends and Explanations](#)" *Journal of Economic Literature* Vol. 55(3): 789-865
- Eswaran, M. 2022. "[Chapter 4: Are Women Discriminated Against in the Labour Market?](#)"
- Newmark, D., R. Bank, and K. van Nort. 1996. "[Sex Discrimination in Restaurant Hiring: An Audit Study](#)" *Quarterly Journal of Economics* Vol. 111(3): 915-941

**Lecture 4 (Social Norms)**Required:

- <sup>+</sup>Alesina, A., P. Giuliano, N. Nunn. 2013. "[On the Origins of Gender Roles: Women and the Plough](#)" *Quarterly Journal of Economics* Vol. 128 (2): 469-530

Recommended:

- Fernández, R. 2013. "[Cultural Change as Learning: The Evolution of Female Labor Force Participation over a Century](#)" *American Economic Review* Vol 103(1): 472-500
- Fortin, N. 2005. "[Gender Role Attitudes and the Labour Market Outcomes of Women across OECD Countries](#)" *Oxford Review of Economic Policy* Vol, 21(3): 416-438

**Topic 2 – Decision Making****Lecture 1 (Preferences)**Required

- <sup>+</sup>Eckel, C. and P. Grossman. 2008. "[Differences in Economic Decisions of Men and Women: Experimental Evidence](#)" *Chapter 57 in Handbook of Experimental Economics Vol. 1.*

Recommended:

- Bertrand, M. 2011. "[New Perspectives on Gender](#)" *Chapter 17 in Handbook of Labour Economics*
- Eckel, C. and P. Grossman. 2008b. "[Forecasting risk attitudes: An experimental study using actual and forecast gamble choices](#)" *Journal of Economic Behaviour and Organization* Vol. 68(1)
- Eswaran, M. 2022. "[Chapter 2: Do Women and Men Behave Differently in Economic Situations?](#)"

**Lecture 2 (Decision Making and Agency)**Recommended:

- Donald, A., G. Koolwal, J. Annan, K. Falb, and M. Goldstein. 2020. "[Measuring Women's Agency](#)" *Feminist Economics* Vol. 26 (3): 200-226.
- Laszlo, S., K. Grantham, E. Oskay, and T. Zhang. 2020. "[Grappling with the challenges of measuring women's economic empowerment in intrahousehold settings](#)" *World Development* Vol. 132: 104959

**Lecture 3 (Intrahousehold Models)**Required

- Eswaran, M. 2022. "[Chapter 3: What Determines the Balance of Power in a Household?](#)"

## Topic 3 – Marriage and the Family

### Lecture 1 (Theory)

#### Recommended

Blau and Winkler (Chapter 3, 2022) or Blau, Ferber, and Winkler (Chapter 3, 1998)

### Lecture 2 (Institutions)

#### Required

<sup>+</sup>Anderson, S. 2007. “[The Economics of Dowry and Bride Price](#)” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* Vol. 21 (4): 151-174.

#### Recommended

Blau and Winkler (Chapter 13, 2022) or Blau, Ferber, and Winkler (Chapter 9, 1998)  
Eswaran, M. 2022. “[Chapter 7: How do Women Fare in the Institution of Marriage?](#)”

### Lecture 3 (Evidence)

#### Recommended

Blau and Winkler (Chapter 4, 2022)  
Folbre, N., and J. Nelson. 2000. “[For Love or Money – Or Both?](#)” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* Vol. 14(4): 123-140

## Topic 4 – Fertility and Health

#### Required

Eswaran, M. 2022. “[Chapter 8: Are Women the Causes and Victims of Fertility Decline?](#)”  
<sup>+</sup>Goldin, C. and L. Katz, 2002. “[The Power of the Pill: Oral Contraceptives and Women’s Career and Marriage Decisions](#)” *Journal of Political Economy* Vol. 110(4): 730-770

#### Recommended

Rosenblum, D. 2013. “[The effect of fertility decisions on excess female mortality in India](#)” *Journal of Population Economics* Vol. 26: 147-180

## Topic 5 – Policies

### Policies 1 – Balancing work and care

#### Required

<sup>+</sup> Talamas Marcos, M.-A. 2023. “[Grandmothers and the gender gap in the Mexican labor market.](#)” *Journal of Development Economics* Vol. 162: 103013

#### Recommended:

Blau, F. and A. Winkler. (chp 16, 2022) or Blau, Ferber, and Winkler (Chapter 10, 1998)  
Clark, S., C. Kabiru, S. Laszlo, and S. Muthuri. 2019. “[The Impact of Childcare on Poor Urban Women’s Economic Empowerment in Africa](#)” *Demography* Vol. 56(4): 1247-1272  
Goldin, C. 2022. “[Understanding the Impact of COVID-19 on Women](#)” *NBER Working Paper #29974*

### Policies 2 – Gender Equity and Rights

#### Required

<sup>+</sup> Beaman L, Chattopadhyay R, Duflo E, Pande R, Topalova P. 2012. “[Female leadership raises aspirations and educational attainment for girls: a policy experiment in India.](#)” *Science* Vol. 335:582–86

#### Recommended:

Eswaran, M. 2022. “[Chapter 10: Why did Women Gain Suffrage, and What are its Economic Effects?](#)”  
Goldin, C. 2023. “[Why Women Won](#)” *NBER Working paper #31762*

**Policies 3 – Microfinance**Required

Eswaran, M. 2022. “[Chapter 5: How Do Credit Markets Affect the Well-being of Women?](#)”

Recommended:

Anderson, S. and J.M. Beland. 2002. “[The Economics of Roscas and Intrahousehold Resource Allocation](#)” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* Vol 117(3): 963-995.

**Policies 4 – Social Protection and Norm-Shifting**Required

<sup>+</sup> Bursztyn, L., A. Gonzalez, D. Yanagizawa-Drott. 2020. “[Misperceived Social Norms: Women Working Outside the Home in Saudi Arabia](#)” *American Economic Review* Vol. 110 (10): 2997-3029

Recommended:

Dhar, D., T. Jain and S. Jayachandran. 2022. “[Reshaping Adolescents' Gender Attitudes: Evidence from a School-Based Experiment in India](#)” *American Economic Review* Vol 112 (3): 899-927

**Economics Librarian:** Should you have any questions about accessing any of these materials, you should contact the Economics Librarian, Michael David Miller:

- Email: [michael.david.miller@mcgill.ca](mailto:michael.david.miller@mcgill.ca)

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### COURSE SPECIFIC POLICIES:

**Instructor and TA e-mail policy:** Short e-mails that can be answered by a yes or a no are more likely to be answered quickly. Long e-mails or e-mails requiring long responses may or may not be answered. If your question is long or requires a complex answer, please go to see the TA or the professor during office hours.

**Re-read policy:** We understand that mistakes occasionally happen. We do our very best to ensure fair grading and to minimize errors. Nevertheless, if you disagree with the grade you have received in your assessment, you may opt to have it re-read. To request a re-read, you must submit to me (the instructor, not the TA) your assessment with a written justification for the re-read. I will then re-read and reassess the grade. Your grade may go up, down, or stay the same. This written request for re-read must be submitted **within 7 days of receiving the grade**.

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- **Academic Integrity:** “McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#).” (Approved by Senate on 29 January 2003) (See McGill’s [guide to academic honesty](#) for more information.)  
*« L’université McGill attache une haute importance à l’honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l’on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l’étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires. » (Énoncé approuvé par le Sénat le 29 janvier 2003) (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le guide pour l’honnêteté académique de McGill.)*
- **A Note about the final exam:** According to Senate regulations, instructors are not permitted to make special arrangements for final exams. Please consult the Calendar, section 4.7.2.1, General University Information and Regulations at [www.mcgill.ca](http://www.mcgill.ca).
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- **Language of Instruction:** “In accord with McGill University’s [Charter of Student Rights](#), students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French written work that is to be graded. This does not apply

to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.” (Approved by Senate on 21 January 2009)

« Conformément à [la Charte des droits de l'étudiant](#) de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté, sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue. » (Énoncé approuvé par le Sénat le 21 janvier 2009)

- As the instructor of this course, I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and/or the Office of [Student Accessibility and Achievement](#).
- Additional policies governing academic issues which affect students can be found in the [McGill Charter of Students' Rights](#)

**In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.**