

ECON 69a  
The Economics of Race and Gender  
Spring 2008

Sue Lee  
Heller 269  
x6-3974  
Office Hours: TBD  
Email: [suelee@brandeis.edu](mailto:suelee@brandeis.edu)

**OVERVIEW**

This course examines the economic experiences of women, men, and racial and ethnic minorities in the United States. Conventional neoclassical economic analysis along with critiques of the neoclassical framework will be used to assess the causes and consequences of gender and racial differences in wealth, occupations, earnings, labor force participation, social networks, and economic mobility. In addition, special topics including the role of globalization, immigration, and racial and ethnic enclaves will be addressed. Finally, possible policy responses to the persistent racial and gender disparities will be evaluated.

Completion of Economics 2a is a prerequisite for the course.

**COURSEWORK, EXAMS, AND GRADES**

Course material will be covered through assigned readings, lectures, class discussion, and occasional problem sets. There will be in-class exams on **February 13**, **March 19**, and, **April 16**.

The course grade will be determined by performance on the three exams (30% each); class participation (i.e. attendance and contribution to in-class discussion) and occasional problem sets will account for the remaining 10% of the course grade.

If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

You are expected to be familiar with and to follow the University's policies on academic integrity ([www.brandeis.edu/studentlife/sdc/ai](http://www.brandeis.edu/studentlife/sdc/ai)). Instances of alleged dishonesty will be forwarded to the Office of Campus Life for possible referral to the Student Judiciary System. Potential sanctions include failure in the course and suspension from the University.

If you have any questions about expectations, please ask.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

Many of the assigned readings will be drawn from the following two required textbooks.

- (BFW) Francine Blau, Marianne Ferber, and Anne Winkler. The Economics of Women, Men, and Work, 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Prentice Hall, 2006.
- (NC) Jessica Gordon Nembhard and Ngina Chiteji (Eds.), Wealth Accumulation and Communities of Color in the United States – Current Issues, University of Michigan Press, 2007.
- (EHO) Peter Edelman, Harry Holzer, Paul Offner. Reconnecting Disadvantaged Young Men. Urban Institute Press, 2006.

Additional required readings will be posted on the course WebCT page. All changes to the required readings will be announced in class and on the course WebCT page. It is your responsibility to check the WebCT page for the required reading assignments.

## **PRELIMINARY COURSE OUTLINE AND READING LIST**

### **1. Introduction**

"Chapter 1. 'Economics,' She Wrote." In Liberating Economics – Feminist Perspectives on Families, Work, and Globalization, by Drucilla Barker and Susan Feiner. University of Michigan Press, 2004.

Patricia Hill Collins, "That's Not Why I Went to School." In The Disobedient Generation – Social Theorists in the Sixties, edited by Alan Sica and Stephen Turner. University of Chicago Press, 2005.

"Chapter 3. The Personal Cost of the Wage Gap – A Second Class Life." In Getting Even, by Evelyn Murphy. Touchstone, 2005.

Steven Durlauf, "Groups, Social Influences, and Inequality." In Poverty Traps, edited by Samuel Bowles, Steven Durlauf, and Karla Hoff. Russell Sage, 2006.

### **2. Individuals, Families, and Households**

BFW, Chapter 2. Women and Men: Changing Roles in a Changing Economy.

BFW, Chapter 3. The Family as an Economic Unit.

The Invisible Heart, by Nancy Folbre, New York Press, 2001. "Chapter 2 - The Care Penalty."

### **3. The Distribution of Wealth**

NC: Chapter 2 - Estimating the Effect of Race & Ethnicity on Wealth Accumulation & Asset Ownership Patterns.

"Chapter 2: The Cost of Being Black and the Advantage of Being White" from The Hidden Cost of Being African American - How Wealth Perpetuates Inequality by Thomas Shapiro, Oxford University Press, 2004.

"Linking Benefits to Marital Status: Race and Social Security in the US" by Madonna Harrington Meyer, Douglas A. Wolf, and Christine L. Himes. Feminist Economics, 11(2), July 2005, 145-162.

NC, Chapter 4 - Women & Wealth.

Alexis Yamokoski and Lisa Keister, "The Wealth of Single Females: An Exploration into the Asset Accumulation Dynamics of Young Baby Boomers." Feminist Economics, 12(1-2) 2006: 167-197.

Carmen Diana Deere and Cheryl Doss. "The Gender Asset Gap: What Do We Know and Why Does it Matter." Feminist Economics, 12(1-2) 2006: 1-50.

NC, Chapter 9 - Banking and Wealth Accumulation in the Asian American Community.

NC, Chapter 10 - Wealth Creation in Latino Communities.

**EXAM 1, February 13.**

**4. Recent Trends in Occupations and Earnings**

BFW, Chapter 4. The Allocation of Time Between the Household and the Market.

BFW, Chapter 8. Recent Developments in the Labor Market - Their Impact on Women and Men.

Joyce Jacobsen, "Recent Trends in US Earnings Inequality by Gender." Journal of Income Distribution, Fall-Winter 2003-2004, 12 (3-4): 36-55.

Darrick Hamilton, "The Racial Composition of American Jobs." In The State of Black America, edited by George Curry. The National Urban League, 2006.

BFW, Chapter 5. Differences in Occupations and Earnings - Overview.

Lisa Belkin, "The Opt-Out Revolution." The New York Times, October 26, 2003.

Heather Boushey, Are Women Opting Out? Debunking the Myth. Center for Economic and Policy Research, 2005.

**5. Explaining Differences in Occupations and Earnings**

BFW, Chapter 6. Differences in Occupations and Earnings – The Human Capital Model.

BFW, Chapter 7. Differences in Occupations and Earnings - The Role of Labor Market Discrimination.

Joyce Jacobsen, "Occupational Sex Segregation and the Tipping Phenomenon: The Contrary Case of Court Reporting." Working Paper, August 2005.

**6. Social Networks and Economic Mobility**

"Chapter 2 - The Characteristics of Disconnected Young Men." From Reconnecting Disadvantaged Young Men, by Peter Edelman, Harry Holzer, and Paul Offner. Urban Institute Press, 2006.

"Chapter 2 - What Jobs Are There and Where are They?" From What Employers Want - Job Prospects for Less Educated Workers, by Harry J. Holzer.

"College Completion Gaps Between Blacks and Whites: What Accounts for Regional Differences," by Yolanda K. Kodrzycki. New England Economic Review, First Quarter 2004.

"Chapter 3 - Racial Stigma." In The Anatomy of Racial Inequality, by Glenn Loury. Harvard University Press, 2002.

Luis M. Falcon and Edwin Melendez, "Racial and Ethnic Differences in Job Searching in Urban Centers." In Urban Inequality – Evidence from Four Cities, edited by Alice O'Connor, Chris Tilly, and Lawrence Bobo. Russell Sage, 2001.

Nelson Lim, Who has More Soft Skills. Rand Working Paper DRU-2012, 2002.

EHO, Chapter 1. Reconnecting Disadvantaged Young Men.

EHO, Chapter 2. The Characteristics of Disconnected Young Men.

**EXAM 2, March 19.**

**7. Immigration and Racial and Ethnic Enclaves**

The Role of Immigrants in the US Labor Market. Congressional Budget Office, November 2005.

Harry J. Holzer. "The Economic Impacts of Immigration." Testimony to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, US House of Representatives. November 16, 2005.

Alejandro Portes, "Economic Sociology and the Sociology of Immigration: A Conceptual Overview." In The Economic Sociology of Immigration. Essays on Networks, Ethnicity, and Entrepreneurship, edited by Alejandro Portes. Russell Sage, 1995.

Tarry Hum, "A Protected Niche? Immigrant Ethnic Economies and Labor Market Segmentation." In Prismatic Metropolis – Inequality in Los Angeles, by Lawrence D. Bobo, Melvin L. Oliver, James H. Johnson Jr., and Abel Valenzuela, Jr. Russell Sage, 2000.

**8. Policy Responses**

EHO, Chapter 3. Education and Training Policies.

EHO, Chapter 4. Building Community Youth Systems.

EHO, Chapter 5. Improving Financial Incentives for Low-Wage Work.

EHO, Chapter 6. Reconnecting Noncustodial Parents and Ex-Offenders.

BFW, Chapter 9. Changing Work Roles and the Family.

Nancy Folbre, "Eliminating Economic Penalties on Caregivers." In Unfinished Work – Building Equality and Democracy in an Era of Working Families, by Jody Heymann and Christopher Beem. New Press, 2005.

Harry Holzer and David Neumark. "Affirmative Action: What Do We Know?" University of Michigan NPC Working Paper 2006-03, January 2006.

NC, Chapter 12. Wealth, Civic Engagement, and Democratic Practices.

**EXAM 3, April 16.**