

# **Econ1225-WI: Economics of Gender**

Merrimack College Spring 2016

Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30 - 10:45 AM

Instructor: Zoe Sherman

E-mail: [shermanz@merrimack.edu](mailto:shermanz@merrimack.edu)

Phone: (978) 837 5445

Office Location: Cushing 103D

Office Hours: Wednesday 8:45 - 11:45AM  
and by appointment

## **Course Description**

This course is an exploration of the interplay between gender roles and economic roles in the U.S. Although women's and men's paid labor force participation rates are now closer to one another than ever before, a gendered division of labor still characterizes a great deal of both paid work and unpaid work. (As a friend of mine who works in the entertainment industry puts it, "All hiring is essentially casting.") However, the gendered division of labor is not given by nature; it differs across cultures and across time. We will draw on theoretical tools drawn from gender studies, economics, and sociology to analyze a selection of historical and contemporary case studies – and use case studies both to illustrate our theories and to test the limits of our theories. Our case studies, drawn from U.S. labor history and social history, range from the 1830s (when factory work was done by women and girls while office clerical work was done by men) to the present. To delve into the contemporary gendered economic landscape of the U.S. we will look at the current state of the gendered division of paid and unpaid labor, assess pay and poverty gaps, and consider what economic theory has to say about the causes of and possible policy prescriptions for differences in economic opportunities and outcomes.

## **Learning Goals**

### **Course Goals**

- Knowledge and understanding – By the end of the semester you will recognize the interplay between economic roles and gender roles. You will be familiar with several key concepts from both feminist theory and economic theory.
- Skills –You will practice the skill of critical reading, identifying and questioning authors' underlying assumptions and the structure of their arguments. You will practice writing logically organized, rigorous verbal arguments that make use of theoretical concepts and empirical evidence. We will make use of both qualitative and quantitative evidence. You will practice interpreting data to tell an economic story.
- Ultimately, learning is a creative act. You will develop the ability to construct your own economic views, views that will be in accordance with your personal values and experience while also rooted in rigorous theory and the careful use of empirical evidence. This is an ongoing project – you need not leave class in May with a well-articulated philosophy, but you should leave with the basis to continue thinking seriously about important questions.

## **Learning Goals for the Cultural Diversity Requirement**

This requirement seeks to:

- Increase students' awareness of and ability to think critically about differences connected to race, gender, physical ability, social class, ethnicity, sexuality, economic status, nationality, and religion found in various Western and non-Western cultures.
- Develop students' understanding of how such differences intersect with the operation and effects of inequality and power in a variety of cultural contexts.
- Develop students' ability to work, collaborate, and communicate effectively and responsibly in diverse groups and environments.

## **Learning Goals for the Social Sciences Requirement**

- Students should understand the relationship between the individual and society from multiple perspectives.
- Students should be able to apply scientific methods to the study of human behavior and social structures.
- Students should be able to evaluate evidence pertaining to human behavior and social structures.

## **General Liberal Studies Core Learning Goals**

- ***Effective Communication:*** The ability to read, write, speak, and listen clearly, purposefully, and appropriately in a range of rhetorical situations.
- ***Critical Thinking:*** The ability to locate, analyze, integrate, synthesize, and evaluate complex information effectively.
- ***Reflective Thinking:*** The ability to articulate how, why, and to what purpose one has learned; the ability to learn from one's own experience and to cultivate and direct one's own intellectual, creative, personal and spiritual growth.
- ***Ethical Understanding, Reasoning, and Responsibility:*** The ability to make decisions guided by a moral and ethical framework, to understand the societal implications and consequences of those decisions, and to accept responsibility for one's self and for one's own actions.
- ***Cultural Understanding and Respect for Diversity:*** The ability to apply a global perspective to understand, respect, and appreciate the rich diversity of human cultures, experiences and ideas, and the ability to work and communicate effectively in diverse cultures, groups and environments.

## **Merrimack College Pedagogical Values**

This course is offered in support of the academic mission and goals of Merrimack College

- Learning shapes our lives and actions; it is not just a mental exercise. *What you learn in this course can inform your understanding of the gender roles that you and those around you play and the economic contributions that you and those around you make.*

- Learning is an active dialectic/discussion-based pursuit of understanding, not the passive receipt of knowledge. *You will spend class time framing and asking questions of your classmates and of me and answering difficult questions posed by your classmates and by me.*
- Because we learn in interaction with others, community is a locus of learning. *We meet in the classroom to pursue the shared goal of learning together.*
- Good habits can act as building blocks for learning. *I will set high standards and also provide a structure and support for developing the academic skill set you will need to meet those standards – and many of those skills can apply in other classes and other settings.*

(adapted from <http://www.merrimack.edu/academics/approach/augustinian-pedagogy.php>)

### **What You Will Do in Pursuit of Those Goals**

*Before class:* To prepare for each class meeting, do the assigned reading (or listening or viewing). Required books are available for purchase in the bookstore and will also be on reserve in the library.

All readings that are not in the required books will be available through Blackboard. Practice the skill of active reading. Use the following questions to guide your reading and submit your answers on Blackboard by 8:00AM on the day the reading will be discussed in class. Reading notes are graded pass/fail and you must attend class to earn credit.

- What key terms or concepts are contained in the reading? How are they defined?
- What factual claims (answers to who, what, where, and when questions) did the author make?
- What empirical evidence did the author supply? From what source?
- What causal claims (answers to how and why questions) did the author make?
- Was there anything you did not understand? Write down a clarifying question – a question whose answer you would expect to help you figure out the point you did not understand.

It may take some experimentation to find the note-taking technique that works best for you. (I use sticky notes to mark the passages that seemed most important as I was reading. After I finish reading I go back through the marked passages and write down a direct quote or a summary of the passage, including a page number citation. You can try that method, but you might find a different technique that you prefer.)

- During each two-week period you will submit a response paper in response to one of the assigned readings. Your paper should be approximately 400 words and you will post it on Blackboard by 5:00PM the day before we will discuss that reading in class. Consult the response paper prompts on Blackboard for more precise instructions. On days when you submit a response paper, you need not submit your active reading notes.

One of the benefits of a “writing intensive” course at Merrimack is that we have a writing fellow supporting the class. This semester our writing fellow is Ashley Morin. At least twice during the semester, you should consult with her on your response paper. My feedback on your work will focus on the economic analysis; her support will focus on writing technique.

For this 4-credit course you can expect to devote approximately eight to ten hours

of study per week on average over the course of the semester. Two and a half hours are spent in class. Out-of-class work will require a typical student to spend an additional five to eight hours of effort per week on average outside of class.

*Preparation is an integral part of the course. Attending class unprepared will count as half of an absence.*

*During class:* In one form or another, you should expect to be actively engaged in wrestling with economic issues and analytical techniques during class time. It is in the wrestling that learning occurs. We will build on your before-class preparation to reach a deep understanding of the readings by discussing your active reading notes and working our way up to a critical assessment of what we have read by considering:

- What did you consider the most and/or least persuasive evidence or argument?
- How do today's readings relate to other books or articles we have read? Did they agree with each other or contradict one another?

I will do my best to align both the out-of-class work and the use of class time with the current best understanding of how we learn. We vary considerably in our learning styles, so each class meeting will make use of several different modes of instruction. No one will find every use of class time equally well-matched to their individual preference, but no one should find every use of class time equally ill-suited, either.

My goal is to make the classroom environment a safe and encouraging place for you to participate. To succeed, I will also need your commitment to this goal. Your participation makes an important contribution to your classmates' learning as well as to your own and is a course requirement. However, in recognition of the variety of learning styles, I will provide opportunities for many forms of participation.

Your attendance is important. By enrolling in this course you are not only making a commitment to the course content, to me, and to yourself; you are also making a commitment to your classmates. As a reflection of the value of your presence, your final grade in the course will be impacted by absences, regardless of your performance in other aspects of the course. The attendance policy is as follows:

· *Upon the third absence a student's professionalism and participation grade is lowered by 5 points out of 100 (e.g. from 85 to 80)*

· *Upon each additional absence the professionalism and participation grade is lowered by an additional 10 points...*

· *... until the sixth absence. Upon the sixth absence, the professionalism and participation grade is 0.*

*Except in very rare circumstances, there are no excused absences.*

*After class:* I highly recommend that you take a few minutes to review your notes within a day after each class.

### **Assessing your learning progress**

I will provide frequent opportunities for you to get feedback from me on your work in the course on both graded and ungraded assessments and assignments. I will also provide regular opportunities for you to give me anonymous feedback using a format called the critical incident questionnaire (CIQ). The CIQ asks the same six broad questions each time:

- At what moment in class since the last CIQ did you feel most engaged with what was happening?
- At what moment in class since the last CIQ were you most distanced from what was happening?
- What action that anyone (teacher or student) took this week did you find most affirming or helpful?
- What action that anyone took this week did you find most puzzling or confusing?
- What about the class this week surprised you the most? (This could be something about the content we learned, something about your reaction, something someone else did in class... anything.)
- What questions do you have for me about our use of course time or my expectations for your work?

I will summarize the results of each CIQ for you and I will use the feedback to inform my preparation for upcoming classes.

Some of the feedback you get from me on your work which will enter into the calculation of a final grade and some of which will not. The tasks on which you will get feedback and the expectations for your work in each category are explained below.

**Final Paper:** Your final paper will be a semester-long project developed in stages. At least twice during the semester you should meet with our writing fellow Ashley Morin. We will also spend some time in class workshopping your projects as they progress. See the assignment description on Blackboard for more details.

**Professionalism and participation:** No matter the explicit content of your college courses, part of what you will learn is how to successfully participate in a professional setting. The social norms of the classroom may be distinct from the norms you follow in other settings. Professionalism includes preparing for class by completing all of the listed tasks before you arrive, arriving on time, giving your full attention to the class while it is in session, remaining in the room for the whole class period, and remaining on task while participating in class activities. Professionalism requires self-awareness about your actions and your contributions to the class; complementing my feedback on your professionalism and participation, you will also be asked to assess yourself periodically.

Honesty is also an important component of professionalism; please refer to the Merrimack College Academic Integrity Code, which is available on the Provost's webpage at [http://www.merrimack.edu/about/offices\\_services/office-of-the-provost/academic-integrity-code.php](http://www.merrimack.edu/about/offices_services/office-of-the-provost/academic-integrity-code.php). Any violation of the academic integrity code will result at a minimum in a requirement that you redo the assignment for at most 70% credit and a ten-point reduction in your professionalism and participation grade. Severe violations may result in a grade of zero for the assignment and/or the professionalism and participation grade, or a failing grade for the course.

Participation takes many forms. You do not have to be a confident, eloquent conversationalist to make a valuable contribution to the class. Below are some of the ways you will be able to participate in class.

**Do the reading and come to class with your reading notes or response paper:**

I expect you to come to class with reading notes every time we meet. Be prepared to answer some of the reading response questions listed above. If asked, you may

read directly from your notes or paraphrase, whichever feels more comfortable. Sometimes I will ask for volunteers; other times I will ask to hear from you even if you have not volunteered. Regular submission of reading notes and reading response papers ON TIME is the most objective and hence the biggest contributor to the professionalism and participation grade.

**Be attentive:** Demonstrate your attention to your classmates and to me with body language and facial expression. Your cell phone should be switched off and placed out of sight – not only out of my sight, but also out of yours.

**Do the in-class writing exercises:** During some of our class meetings, I will ask you to spend some time reflecting on and writing in response to a question related to our reading or discussion. Sometimes I will collect and read each of them individually. Sometimes I will ask you to read from them to a small group or to the whole class.

**Contribute to class conversations:** We will use a variety of more and less structured conversations to explore the topics we study in this class. I expect you to stay on topic during the time devoted to conversation. In more structured activities, you may have an assigned conversational role. Even when you are not pre-assigned a role, keep in mind a variety of possible conversational moves you may make, including the following:

- Introduce a topic of conversation by posing a problem, question, or theme.
- Summarize the conversation thus far. What are the dominant themes and shared concerns? What themes have we passed over that might be a good focus for the next discussion?
- Keep a record of helpful resources, tips, suggestions that participants contribute during conversation. Share the list out loud and/or in writing at the end.
- Offer an illustrative example from the assigned reading or from your experience. Or, offer a counterexample from the assigned reading or from your experience.
- Ask a previous speaker a clarifying question or ask a previous speaker to offer evidence in support of a claim.
- Synthesize: Identify a connection (or contradiction) between what two previous speakers have said.
- If you notice an emerging consensus, play devil's advocate and argue an opposing viewpoint (it need not be your own viewpoint).
- Listen for unacknowledged bias emerging in the conversation. Alert us to issues of race, class, gender, culture, and power that are implicit in our discussion but have not yet been voiced directly. (This is critical thinking – uncovering and questioning starting assumptions – with a particular focus on social identity.)
- Post a speed limit when it seems appropriate – ask for a minute of silence to give everyone some time to think.

**Complete the CIQs thoughtfully:** (See above.) I won't know which survey form is whose, but thoughtful feedback on the CIQs will make an important contribution to making this a successful class.

**Communicate with me individually:** You can visit my office hours unannounced or make an appointment.

Required books:

Some of these we will read in their entirety. For others, we will be reading large enough sections of these books that I cannot make either paper or electronic copies of the necessary chapters and still be within the bounds of “fair use” allowed by copyright law. Therefore, you will need to either purchase these or read them on print reserve in the library. (Or, if you plan ahead, you may be able to borrow library copies.)

***Unlevel Playing Fields*** by Randy Albelda and Robert Drago

**Publisher:** Dollars & Sense; 4th edition (August 1, 2013)

**ISBN-10:** 1939402050 **ISBN-13:** 978-1939402059

***Lyddie*** by Katherine Patterson

**Publisher:** Puffin (September 23, 2004)

**ISBN-10:** 0142402540 **ISBN-13:** 978-0142402542

***The Murder of Helen Jewett*** by Patricia Cline Cohen

**Publisher:** Vintage; 1st Thus. edition (June 29, 1999)

**ISBN-10:** 0679740759 **ISBN-13:** 978-0679740759

***The Second Shift: Working Families and the Revolution at Home*** by Arlie Hochschild and Anne Machung

**Publisher:** Penguin Books; Revised edition (January 31, 2012)

**ISBN-10:** 0143120336 **ISBN-13:** 978-0143120339

## Grading

Response papers, final paper, and panel presentations will be graded according to the rubrics given with the assignment details. The expectations for professionalism and participation are explained above.

proportion of grade	work
40	five response papers (8 points each)
30	final paper
10	presentation and panel participation
20	professionalism and participation

## Anticipated Course Schedule – Check Blackboard for updates/revisions

Date:	Topic:	To be done before class:	
Jan 21	Introduction		
Jan 26	Women and girls as the first factory workers in the Industrial Revolution in the United States	<b>Read:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the syllabus</li> <li>• Paterson, <i>Lyddie</i> (especially the depiction of factory work and boarding house life in Chapters 7 - 20)</li> <li>• sample response paper—use this as</li> </ul>	

		the basis for your active reading notes	
Jan 28	Some gender theory – gender performance, intersectionality	<p><b>Read:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nancy Naples, “Gender and Intersectionality,” especially pp.196-198, 202-210</li> <li>• Joy Ladin, “The Covenant of Gender” <a href="http://www.onbeing.org/blog/breaking-the-gender-covenant/5711">http://www.onbeing.org/blog/breaking-the-gender-covenant/5711</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Listen:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://blogs.wgbh.org/innovation-hub/2014/6/6/think-youre-not-biased-think-again/">http://blogs.wgbh.org/innovation-hub/2014/6/6/think-youre-not-biased-think-again/</a></li> </ul>	Submit one response paper during these two weeks
Feb 2	When female gender performance <i>is</i> a job: prostitution in 1830s New York City	<p><b>Read:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cohen, <i>The Murder of Helen Jewett</i> Chapters 4 “New York’s Sex Trade” and 6 “The Brothel Business”</li> </ul>	
Feb 4	Prostitution today – gender performances of buyers and sellers	<p><b>Read:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phillip Martin, “Human Trafficking” series from WGBH news <a href="http://wgbhnews.org/underground-trade-boston-bangkok">http://wgbhnews.org/underground-trade-boston-bangkok</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Episode 3 “The Business of Trafficking”</li> <li>○ Episode 6 “Trading in Shame”</li> <li>○ “Pretty Woman vs. The Real World”</li> <li>○ choose two or three more episodes from the series</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
Feb 9	Race, gender, and an overview of today’s labor market	<p><b>Read:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Randy Albelda and Robert Drago, <i>Unlevel Playing Fields</i>, Chapters 1 and 2</li> </ul>	
Feb 11	Economic theories part 1 – Neoclassical economics	<p><b>Read:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Randy Albelda and Robert Drago, <i>Unlevel Playing Fields</i>, Chapter 3</li> <li>• at least three of your classmates’ response papers</li> </ul>	Submit one response paper during these two weeks
Feb 18		<p><b>Read:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Unlevel Playing Fields</i>, Ch 4</li> </ul>	
Feb 23		<p><b>Read:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Unlevel Playing Fields</i>, Ch 5</li> </ul>	

Feb 25	Economic theories part 2 – Political economy	<b>Read:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Unlevel Playing Fields</i>, Ch 6</li> </ul>	
Mar 1		<b>Read:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Unlevel Playing Fields</i>, Ch 7</li> </ul>	Submit one response paper during these two weeks
Mar 3		<b>Read:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Unlevel Playing Fields</i>, Ch 8</li> </ul>	
Mar 8	Gender in the Southern slave economy – intersectionality	<b>Read:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walter Johnson, <i>Soul by Soul</i>, Chapter 3 “Making a World Out of Slaves”</li> <li>• Sojourner Truth, “Speech at Akron Women’s Rights Convention, June 1851” Chapter 43 in Sklar, <i>Women’s Rights Emerges Within the Anti-Slavery Movement, 1830-1870</i></li> </ul>	
Mar 10	Women negotiating the end of the southern slave economy	<b>Read:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drew Gilpin Faust, <i>Mothers of Invention</i>, Chapter 4 “We Must Go to Work, Too”</li> <li>• Tera Hunter, <i>To ‘Joy My Freedom</i>, Chapter 2</li> </ul>	
Mar 15	The domestic sphere: Home production in the nineteenth century	<b>Read:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jeanne Boydston, <i>Home and Work</i>, Chapter 6 “The Political Economy of Housework”</li> <li>• Nancy Folbre, <i>Greed, Lust, and Gender</i>, Chapter 17 “The Unproductive Housewife”</li> </ul>	Submit one response paper during these two weeks
Mar 29	The domestic sphere today: the workplace in your own home	<b>Read:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arlie Hochschild, <i>The Second Shift</i></li> </ul>	
Mar 31	The domestic sphere today: the workplace in someone else’s home	<b>Read:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Julia Wrigley, <i>Other People’s Children</i>, Chapter 2 “Choosing Difference”</li> </ul>	
Apr 5	Office boys and urban growth	<b>Read:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Saval, <i>Cubed: A Secret History of the Workplace</i>, Chapter 1 “The Clerking Class”</li> <li>• Cohen, <i>The Murder of Helen Jewett</i> Chapter 11 “Adolescent Clerks”</li> </ul>	
Apr 7	Feminization of office work	<b>Read:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Margery Davies, <i>Woman’s Place is at the Typewriter</i>, Chapter 4</li> </ul>	Submit one response

		“Women Enter the Office” and Chapter 5 “The Ideological Debate”	paper during these two and a half weeks
Apr 12	The affective labor of the Pullman Porters	<b>Read:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Larry Tye, <i>Rising from the Rails</i>, Chapter 3 “My Name Isn’t George”</li> </ul>	
Apr 14	A century after the Lowell mill girls: race and gender in the 20 <sup>th</sup> Century factory	<b>Read:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Branch, <i>Opportunity Denied</i>, Introduction and Chapter 4 “Existing on the Industrial Fringe: Black Women in the Factory”</li> </ul>	
Apr 19	The gendered rhetoric of Civil Rights and economic opportunity	<b>Read:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Estes, <i>I Am a Man!</i>, Chapter 6 “Memphis Sanitation Workers Strike”</li> </ul>	
Apr 21	Working for pin money	<b>Read:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Erin Hatton, <i>The Temp Economy</i>, Chapter 1 “The Making of the Kelly Girl”</li> </ul>	
Apr 26	flex time		
Apr 28	Panel 1	<b><i>If you are presenting on Panel 3 or 4, read two of the papers that will be presented today</i></b>	Submit your paper at least 48 hours before your panel
May 3	Panel 2	<b><i>If you are presenting on Panel 1 or 4, read two of the papers that will be presented today</i></b>	
May 5	Panel 3	<b><i>If you are presenting on Panel 1 or 2, read two of the papers that will be presented today</i></b>	
May 12 (during finals week)	Panel 4	<b><i>If you are presenting on Panel 2 or 3, read two of the papers that will be presented today</i></b> You may also submit final paper revisions	