Department of Economics
ECON 2217 (GWST 2217): Women and the Economy
Fall 2026 Course Syllabus

Dalhousie University operates in the unceded territories of the Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqey, and Peskotomuhkati Peoples. These sovereign nations hold inherent rights as the original peoples of these lands, and we each carry collective obligations under the Peace and Friendship Treaties. Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, recognizes and affirms Aboriginal and Treaty rights in Canada.

We recognize that African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose histories, legacies, and contributions have enriched the part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years.

Mondays and Wednesdays 14:35-15:55, Studley MCCAIN ARTS&SS 2170

Instructor: Prof. Mevlude Akbulut-Yuksel, Dalhousie University, Department of Economics
Office: 6220 University Avenue, second floor (B21)
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Lectures: Mondays and Wednesdays 14:35-15:55, Studley MCCAIN ARTS&SS 2170
Office hours: Wednesdays 11:30-13:00. Meetings at other times should be arranged in advance via e-mail and will take place in Zoom or in-person.

Course Description: This course is a second year reading course on the economics of gender. We will seek answers to questions such as: Why are men paid more than women? Why do men and women work in different occupations? What explains the rise in labour force participation of women in the post-World War II era? Why are there now more women than men enrolled in colleges and still women are underrepresented in the top management positions? Do families make decisions as one economic unit or do different members bargain with one another? Are there physiological differences between men and women which explain differences in behaviour? What are the implications of family-friendly public policies? We will apply economic models of comparative advantage and specialization, labour supply and labour demand, consumer choice, human capital, and discrimination to explore the answers to these questions. While economic theory will frame our discussion, the course will examine historical trends and empirical studies that attempt to answer these questions with data.

Course Prerequisites: Economics 1101, 1102

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes:

- Students will attain, through lectures, weekly readings and quizzes and assignment, the knowledge of the foundation of economics of gender.
- Students will be able to critically assess and analyze the scholarly articles through weekly readings.
- Students will relate the academic articles taught in the class to the experiences of generations of women in their families through interviewing them and writing a paper critically analyzing these interviews in relation to the class material.

Course Materials: Our *course will not use a textbook, but the following books may be of interest to you:*

- Blau, Francine D., and Winkler Anne E. 2021. *The Economics of Women, Men, and Work, (9th Edition)*, Oxford University Press. **[BFW]**

- Goldin, Claudia. 2021. *Career and Family: Women's Century-Long Journey toward Equity*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Course Assessment:

1. Midterm: 25% (Wednesday, October 28, 2026, in-person during the class time, 14:35-15:55)
2. Final: 40% (during Final Week, date to be announced)
3. Quizzes: 20% (4 Quizzes, each worth 5%, September 23 (Quiz #1), October 7 (Quiz #2), November 23 (Quiz #3), December 8 (Quiz #4) during the class time, duration of the quizzes will be 25 minutes)
4. Assignment: 15% (December 9, 2026, 23:59 AST)

Exams: Exams will draw heavily from lecture notes. The final exam will be comprehensive. **Students who are unable to write the final exam must notify me by email before the exam begins. Depending on the circumstances, an alternative date may be arranged.**

NECESSARY ATTENDANCE DATES FOR THE EXAMS:

- **Mid-term:** Wednesday, October 28, 2026, between 14:35 and 15:55 in Studley MCCAIN ARTS&SS 2170
- **Final Exam:** The date, time and place of the final exam will be determined by the Registrar's Office.

Quizzes: Almost every other week, you will be delivered an in-class quiz on readings covered in the previous classes. Quizzes are aimed to increase the class attendance as well as participation in classroom discussions. There will be 4 quizzes in total. Each quiz will worth 5% of your final grade. Quizzes will be around 20-25 minutes long. ***No make-ups will be given if you miss a quiz***.

Assignment: During this course, there will be one assignment which will worth 15% of your final grade. **Late assignments will be marked down by 20 percent per day.** Any exception requires a legitimate reason listed in the Dalhousie University Calendar under section 16.8 of "Academic Regulations." Each assignment should be submitted individually, and no student collaboration is allowed. You are expected to submit your assignment through Turnitin in the Brightspace.

Assignment Due Date: Wednesday, December 9, 2026, 23:59 AST (submission via Brightspace)

Conversion of numerical grades to final letter grades follows the Dalhousie Grade Scale

A+ (90-100)	B+ (77-79)	C+ (65-69)	D (50-54)
A (85-89)	B (73-76)	C (60-64)	F (0-49)
A- (80-84)	B- (70-72)	C- (55-59)	

Email Policy: I will do my best to respond to e-mail within 24 hours on a weekday, 48 hours on a weekend. Students are encouraged to join weekly online or in-person office hours for face-to-face discussions and live engagement. Students are also highly encouraged to explore the Brightspace posting board and to answer questions posed on it.

Use of Generative AI/LLM Tools: Generative AI and large language models (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude) may be used only for the assignment in this course, subject to the following conditions:

- AI tools may be used for literature summarization (e.g., help understanding a dense journal article), organizing interview notes, brainstorming, and editing support (grammar, clarity, structure).
- The interview data, its interpretation, and your final written argument must reflect your own understanding of the course material. AI can help with the mechanics above, but the connections you draw between your interview and the economic concepts from class must be your own thinking. Submitting AI-generated analysis, interpretation, or argument as your own, without disclosure and without having critically reviewed and reworked it yourself, is not permitted.
- AI-assisted work must be disclosed: attach a brief AI-use statement to your assignment noting what tools were used and for what purpose.
- Interview content is personal and sometimes sensitive. Do not paste full transcripts, names, or other identifying details about family members into AI tools. If you use AI to help organize or summarize interview notes, anonymize the material first.
- AI tools may not be used for quizzes or the midterm/final exam, which are closed-book, in-person assessments.
- Final responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of all submitted work rests with the student.

General Readings: There is no Canadian textbook for Women and the Economy class, so we will use series of required readings from journals, StatCan reports and newspaper articles. Most of the readings are available on-line and will be provided in Brightspace. Many of the readings that are printed in Economics journals such as the American Economic Review, Quarterly Journal of Economics and Journal of Economic Perspectives, which are available through **JSTOR** (journal archive), and the Killam Library. You can also google the journal articles from the Dal system to access them. These journal articles will be also posted in Brightspace.

COURSE OUTLINE:

I. Introduction/Overview of Women's Progress over the 20th and 21st Centuries

What are the issues in economics of gender?

Review of economic concepts, supply, demand, labour supply and labour demand

Goldin, Claudia. 2006. "The Quiet Revolution That Transformed Women's Employment, Education, and Family," *American Economic Review*, 96 (2): 1-21.

Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report.

Bertrand Marianne. 2020. "Gender in 21st Century." AEA Richard T. Ely Lecture

[BFW] Chapters 1 and 2.

II. Economics of Marriage, Family and Gender Roles

Specialization and exchange: comparative advantage

Marriage, family structure and children's outcomes

Household bargaining models

Family planning technologies

"Study Finds More Reason to get and Stay Married" NYT article published Jan 2015.

Kearney, Melissa. 2023. The Two-Parent Privilege: How Americans Stopped Getting Married and Started Falling Behind. University of Chicago Press.

Goldin, Claudia and Lawrence F. Katz. 2002. "The Power of the Pill: Oral Contraceptives and Women's Career and Marriage Decisions." *Journal of Political Economy,* 110 (4): 730-770.

Myers, Caitlin Knowles. 2017. "The Power of Abortion Policy: Re-examining the Effects of Young Women's Access to Reproductive Control." *Journal of Political Economy*, 125 (6): 2178-2224.

Bertrand, Marianne, Emir Kamenica, and Jessica Pan. 2015. "Gender Identity and Relative Income Within Households", *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 130 (2): 571–614.

III. Labour Supply Decision, Public Policy and Working Women

Time use data: hours of market work, housework, and leisure

Working mothers and children's outcomes/Women's wellbeing

Public policy and short-term and long-term impacts

[BFW] Chapter 6.

Benjamin, Dwayne, Morley Gunderson, Thomas Lemieux, Craig Riddell, Tammy Schirle. 2021. *Market Economics. 9th Edition.* Chapter 2 "Labour Supply: Individual Attachment to the Labour Market." (Available in Economics office or Killam library reserve).

Kleven, Henrik, Camille Landais, Gabriel Leite-Mariante. 2025. "The Child Penalty Atlas." *Review of Economic Studies*, 92(5): 3174-3207.

Sencer Karademir, Jean-William Laliberté and Stefan Staubli. *Forthcoming.* "The Multigenerational Impact of Children and Childcare Policies, *Journal of Labor Economics*.

Albanesi, Stefania, Olivetti, Claudia, and Barbara Petrongolo. 2023. Families, markets and policy. *Handbook of the Economics of the Family,* (S. Lundberg and A. Voena editors), 1(5): 255-317.

Yaya Diallo, Fabian Lange, Laetitia Renée. 2024. "Can Paternity Leave Reduce the Gender Earnings Gap?", IZA DP No. 17624.

Baker, Michael, Jonathan Gruber and Kevin Milligan. 2008. "Universal Childcare, Maternal Labor Supply and Family Well-Being." *Journal of Political Economy*, 116(4): 709-745.

Baker, Michael, Jonathan Gruber, and Kevin Milligan. 2019. "The Long-Run Impacts of a Universal Childcare Program." *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, 11 (3): 1-26.

IV. Gender Differences in Occupations and Earnings and Potential Explanations

Trends in the Gender Earnings Gap and Occupational Segregation

Human Capital Model

On-the-Job-Training

Labour Market Discrimination

Alternative Explanations and Recent Developments
[BFW] Chapters 7-12.

Benjamin, Dwayne, Morley Gunderson, Thomas Lemieux, Craig Riddell, Tammy Schirle. 2021. *Labour Market Economics. 9th Edition.* Chapter 12 "Economics of Discrimination." (Available in Economics office or Killam library reserve).

Bonikowska, Aneta, Marie Drolet, and Nicole Fortin. 2019. "Earnings Inequality and the Gender Pay Gap in Canada: The Role of Women's Under-representation among Top Earners." *Economic Insights*, Statistics Canada.

Bertrand, Marianne, Claudia Goldin, and Lawrence F. Katz. 2010. "Dynamics of the Gender Gap for Young Professionals in the Financial and Corporate Sectors", *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 2(3): 228–255.

Bertrand, Marianne, Sandra Black, Sissel Jensen and Adriana Lleras-Muney. 2019. "Breaking the Glass Ceiling? The Effect of Board Quotas on Female Labour Market Outcomes in Norway." *Review of Economic Studies,* 86(1): 191-239.

Niederle, Muriel, and Lise Vesterlund. 2007. "Do Women Shy Away from Competition? Do Men Compete Too Much?", *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 122 (3): 1067–1101.

Buser, T., M. Niederle, and H. Oosterbeek. 2014. "Gender, Competitiveness, and Career Choices." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 129(3): 1409-1447.

Roussille, Nina. 2024. "The Role of the Ask Gap in Gender Pay Inequality." *Quarterly Journal of Economics,* 139(3): 1557-1610.

Flinn, Christopher, Petra E. Todd, and Weilong Zhang. 2025. "Labor Market Returns to Personality: A Job Search Approach to Understanding Gender Gaps." *Journal of Political Economy*, 133(4): 1169-1234.

Goldin, Claudia. 2014. "A Grand Gender Convergence: It's Last Chapter." AEA Presidential Address