

ECONOMICS 233 – Economics of Gender, Spring 2026

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Class: TuTh 2:30-3:45pm (RLY 105)
Office Hours: Flexible...just ask!
Course website: <http://courses.furman.edu>

WELCOME!

Welcome to *Economics of Gender*! I am excited to have you in this class and to explore the dynamic ways in which gender shapes and is shaped by economic structures and outcomes. This course builds on the foundational models and tools you encountered in ECN 111 and invites you to apply and expand that knowledge in new, thought-provoking ways.

Whether you are here out of curiosity, as part of a major or minor, or because of your broader interests in public policy, gender studies, business, or public health, this course has something for you. My goal is to create a classroom environment where we approach complex topics with respect, open-mindedness, and a genuine willingness to engage with ideas that challenge our assumptions and expand our understanding.

Economics provides powerful tools for understanding the world, and this course will challenge you to consider how those tools can be used to analyze the gendered forces that shape our society and economy. Let's learn together and see how economics can illuminate the gendered choices and constraints we encounter in our own lives and in our world.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Gender is a significant factor in shaping individuals' economic circumstances and outcomes. In this course, we will use both neoclassical and feminist economic theories to analyze how gender norms influence economic structures, policies, and choices.

Topics we'll explore include:

- The division of labor in the home and workplace, including occupational segregation.
- The role of gender in economic growth, development, and globalization.
- Gendered dimensions of family life, including marriage and fertility decisions.

This course emphasizes critical thinking, empirical analysis, and the application of economic theory to understand and address gendered economic disparities. By the end of this course, you will have a deeper understanding of the economic forces that shape gendered outcomes globally and locally, as well as the ability to critically assess and propose policy solutions to these pressing issues.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course explores the intersections of economics and gender, providing you with the tools to analyze how gender interacts with economic structures, policies, and outcomes. By the end of the course, you will be able to:

1. Consider how economic theory is itself gendered
2. Be able to use theory and work with real data to see how gender as a social category (like race, ethnicity, and class) is relevant to the study of the economy
3. Understand gendered differences in economic outcomes in a global context
4. Develop skills to think critically about policy interventions to address issues
5. Develop quantitative and analytical skills
6. Enhance critical thinking and communication

This course is designed to provide a solid foundation in economic theory and empirical tools for all students, whether your goal is to deepen your understanding of gender in economics or to apply these insights to your broader academic and professional interests.

REQUIRED TEXTS

All required readings are posted on Moodle.

PREREQUISITES

ECN-111

If you need a review of any ECN-111 concepts, free online textbooks can be found at [OpenStax](#) and [Core Economics](#).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All activities and assignments that you complete during this course are governed by the Furman University academic integrity policy (www.furman.edu/integrity). Furman University asks all students to abide by the integrity pledge ([found here](#)). You should familiarize yourself with the important definitions and examples of plagiarism found on the University academic integrity website (see above). Trust and respect are vital to the success of collaborative learning endeavors. As such, any and all integrity violations will be taken extremely seriously and will be adjudicated according to Furman's policy 190.6. I expect all students to review Furman's policies on academic integrity. You are responsible for upholding these standards as you complete your homework, write your short papers, and take exams. You should be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. I will report all academic integrity violations to the Associate Academic Dean. In this class, any academic integrity violation results in an F for the course.

GENERATIVE AI

In this course, generative artificial intelligence (GenAI)-based assistance, such as ChatGPT, is treated the same way as collaboration with others: for most assignments you are welcome to talk about your ideas and work with other people, both inside and outside the class, as well as with GenAI-based assistants. GenAI is a subset of AI that utilizes machine learning models to create new, original content, such as images, text, or music, based on patterns and structures learned from existing data. However, as is indicated in the University academic integrity policy, all work you submit must be your own. You should never include in an assignment anything that was not written directly by you without proper citation (including quotation marks and in-line citation for direct quotes). By submitting assignments in this class, you pledge to affirm that they are your own work and you attribute use of any tools or sources, including AI-assisted work. Violations will be considered academic misconduct.

Generative AI use is explicitly prohibited for use in exams.

It is your responsibility to assess the validity and applicability of any GenAI output that is submitted. You bear the final responsibility. You should be aware that all GenAI tools can make up incorrect facts and fake citations and might confidently reassert factual errors, that code generation models have a tendency to produce inaccurate outputs, and that image generation models can occasionally come up with highly offensive products. You will be responsible for any inaccurate, biased, offensive, or otherwise unethical content you submit regardless of whether it originally comes from you or a GenAI tool. Please also note that different classes at Furman may implement different GenAI policies, and it is your responsibility to conform to expectations for each course.

AI Use and Disclosure

I want to be transparent with you about how I use generative AI. I use AI tools to review my syllabus for clarity, brainstorm examples for class, or think of different ways to explain concepts. What I will never use AI for is grading your assignments.

In this course, if you use AI to help with your work (for example, to generate ideas, get feedback on drafts, or check clarity), you must include a brief AI disclosure statement in your paper. In this statement, describe how you used AI (e.g., “I used ChatGPT to suggest examples, then revised them myself,” or “I asked Claude to act as a peer reviewer for clarity”). This helps ensure transparency and makes clear what parts of the work are yours.

I see AI as a tool that you may need to learn to use thoughtfully and responsibly in your future career. While free tools exist, paid tools often differ in quality and reliability. I personally use BoodleBox because it provides access to multiple paid models (like Claude, Gemini, and ChatGPT), though the free version limits the number of daily premium searches.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Grades will be based on the following

Perusall	15%
Problem Sets	10%
Class Participation	10%
Country Project:	35%
In-class exams (at midterm and final)	30%

(1) Perusall Annotations (15%)

Every Monday by noon you will post annotations to that week’s reading on Perusall (linked through Moodle). Annotations after that point will not count towards your grade. The minimum number of annotations is four per reading.

The annotations should be in the form of questions raised by what you read, your thoughts and reactions to the reading, things you learned (perhaps surprisingly), things you doubt, connections to your personal experiences, connections to current issues, and so on. Great annotations open up the conversation, give examples, and share resources. By using Perusall, we are using social annotations which are meant to start the conversation and seed discussion in class for that week.

To give you some ideas for different types of annotations you might consider making:

- Questions about the reading. Is something not clear? Does something make you want to learn more about something in particular?
- Connections you see to other things we’ve talked about in class. *Be specific!*
- Connections you see to other classes you’ve taken. *Be specific!*
- Things you find interesting or surprising. Note: do not just say things are interesting/surprising...you need to articulate *why* they are interesting/surprising to you.
- Do you strongly agree with something? Disagree? Why?

See separate Perusall handout on Moodle for [more detail on Perusall](#) and [grading of annotations](#).

For each reading, I will try have associated questions to think about before class that week that will be posted on Moodle. Thinking about these prompts before class will help seed discussion for the week.

(2) Problem Sets (10%)

There will be four assignments that have you explore the topics we covered in class in more depth. This type of assignment may contain questions that vary from traditional problem set questions to data exercises to short essays to reflections. If you turn an assignment in on time, the minimum grade you will earn is a 60.

Late problem sets will incur a 5% penalty per day late, up to a maximum of 7 days. After 7 days, assignments will not be accepted.

(3) Class Participation (10%)

Students are expected to attend class in-person unless there is an excused reason (for example, documented health issue or representing Furman at an official event). Students are expected to play an active role in learning. This includes showing up on time, being prepared, participating in class discussions, paying attention to the instructor and your peers, and respecting the opinions, needs, and rights of others. I anticipate that you give any pre-class reading your fullest attention so that when you enter class you are ready to engage in a thoughtful discussion. Your participation and preparedness are critical to individual and class success as meaningful class discussions are influenced by your inquiry, experience and insight.

You will receive two grades for class participation, one at midterm and one at the end of the course. You will have an opportunity to reflect on your class participation at each point to demonstrate and document how you think you have done before I assign a grade. Class participation has multiple components as seen by the following rubric:

Category	What it assesses	Met	Partially met	Not met
Respect and Engagement	Evaluates your attitude and behavior in the classroom, focusing on creating a constructive and respectful environment.	Consistently respectful, engages actively without dominating, encourages others, and challenges ideas respectfully to foster collaboration.	Generally respectful and engaged but may occasionally dominate, disengage, or struggle to respond constructively to challenges.	Often disengaged, disrespectful, or argumentative. Behavior disrupts or discourages others from contributing.
Preparation and Contribution	Assesses the depth and quality of your contributions, measuring preparation, understanding of material, and discussion advancement.	Demonstrates thorough preparation through well-reasoned, evidence-based arguments that deepen discussion, analyze ideas, or introduce new perspectives.	Contributions show preparation but may rely on surface-level understanding, lack evidence, or occasionally misunderstand key ideas.	Contributions lack preparation, are unsupported opinions, or misunderstand key points. Little familiarity with material.
Listening and Collaboration	Evaluates how well you engage with others' ideas, including active listening, thoughtful responses, and building on discussions.	Actively listens and engages by building on, clarifying, or responding thoughtfully. Frequently connects earlier comments to advance discussion.	Generally listens but may occasionally miss or repeat points. Contributions don't consistently connect to the discussion flow.	Frequently inattentive or disengaged. Repeated comments, non sequiturs, or failure to build on others' ideas.

(4) Country Project (35%)

You will be working on a country project that involves the application of topics we cover in class to a country other than the United States. Information on the structure of this project can be found in the [separate document for the country project](#).

(5) Exams (30%)

Two exams will be given and each will be worth 15% of your total grade. One will occur at midterm (Thursday, February 26th) and one will happen during finals period (Friday, May 1st at 3:30pm). They will be open-note exams. You may use any printed materials, including readings, class notes, problem sets, and other course handouts. However, access to online resources or devices during the exam is not permitted.

Grade Categories (from the *Furman University Catalog*):

Grade	Description
A	Excellent. The mark of highest distinction earned by those students whose work represents the best that can be expected of a student at Furman.
B	Good. The mark of distinction earned by those students whose work represents a high degree of achievement in meeting the characteristic demands of the course.
C	Satisfactory. The mark earned by those students who have attained such familiarity with the content of the course and such ability to apply this knowledge as may be expected of a student who gives to the course a reasonable amount of time, effort, and attention.
D	Marginal. The lowest passing grade representing inferior work. It indicates that the student would be seriously handicapped in attempting subsequent courses for which this work is a prerequisite.
F	Failure. The mark indicates unconditional failure. No credit earned.

Grades will be determined by the following scale: A (93-100), A- (90-92), B+ (88-89), B (83-87), B- (80-82), C+ (78-79), C (73-77), C- (70-72), D+ (68-69), D (63-67), D- (60-62), F (0-59).

Late Assignments:

Please refer to the late assignment policy that may be listed for each individual assignment type.

If a student misses an assignment due compelling circumstances beyond the student's control as communicated to me by the Associate Academic Dean, late assignments will be permitted and new due dates will be assigned accordingly. If you have an anticipated absence (required extra-curricular activity, official representative of Furman), you are responsible for turning in assignments on schedule.

Makeup Exam Policy:

If you have an anticipated absence (required extra-curricular activity, official representative of Furman), you must talk to me in advance so we can make alternate arrangements. If you don't talk to me until after the missed exam, you will receive a zero for that exam. If a student misses an exam due to serious illness or other compelling circumstance beyond the student's control as communicated to me by Furman, an alternate makeup exam date will be agreed upon.

Final Exam Schedule Changes:

Any changes in the schedule of the final examination for a course must have the approval of the Associate Academic Dean. You can email academic.deans@furman.edu to complete a request form, except in the following two cases (in which case just talk to me)

- Students with approved SOAR accommodations for extended time on exams that have two final exams on the same day.
- Students with approved University sponsored events that are scheduled over the exam time.

Meet with me (also known as “Office Hours”)

I don't hold fixed office hours, but I am very glad to meet with you! The easiest way is to email me or talk to me after class so we can find a time that works. We can meet either in person or on Zoom. When setting up a meeting, think about which format works best for your schedule and for the kind of conversation you'd like to have.

Students often meet with me to ask questions about class material or assignments, debrief after exams (review solutions, talk about strategies for next time, and reflect on what went well or what to improve), get feedback on ideas for papers, or connect economics to their interests, career goals, or current events. If you're not sure how to get started, a simple email like “Hi Dr. Hennessey, could we set up a time to go over [paper idea / exam debrief / lecture notes]?” works perfectly.

Student Resources:

Many excellent, additional resources and services, including writing, speech, and technology consultations, are provided at Furman. Please take advantage of these services.

- The [Writing and Media Lab](#) is available to support students with writing and multimedia projects. Students may schedule individual appointments with consultants.
- The [Center for Academic Success](#) employs professional staff who work with students to assist with executive functioning skills, test-taking strategies, study strategies and other academic success-related skills. Students can directly access resources on the website at any time.
- Library Support is provided by a dedicated team of librarians who can assist locating documents, information, and resources for your course or research projects. For more information about how to utilize these resources, visit the [Library website](#).
- Empowering and equipping students to manage their mental health and academic success, the Trone Center for Mental Fitness's stepped care model offers an array of evidence-based services. The resources listed below are free, confidential and accessible to all enrolled students. Go to the [Trone Center for Mental Fitness Website for details](#).
- The [Office for Spiritual Life](#) provides individual confidential counseling for students in person and online.
- Whether you are still exploring career paths or looking to land that first position after Furman, the [Malone Center](#) has resources to help you in each step of your career journey.

Accommodation Requests

It is my goal to fully include everyone in our classroom. The Student Office for Accessibility Resources (SOAR) is committed to helping qualified students with disabilities achieve their academic goals by providing reasonable academic accommodations under appropriate circumstances. If you have a disability and anticipate the need for an accommodation in order to participate in this class, please register with the Student Office for Accessibility Resources. They will assist you in getting the resources you may need to participate fully in this class. You can contact the SOAR office at 864.294.2320 or at soar@furman.edu. You can find additional information and request academic accommodations at the [SOAR webpage](#).

Name/Pronoun Use:

I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate/preferred name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Classroom Technology:

ITS and Help Desk: If you have technical problems with Moodle, or if you have any other computer issue that is preventing your access to course materials and sessions, please contact the ITS Service Center by calling 294-3277 or by emailing service.center@furman.edu.

Devices such as phones, laptops, tablets, iPads, etc., should only be used if their use is immediately relevant to a specific task related to what we are doing in class. In other words, *if you aren't using it to perform a task specifically related to what we are doing in class at that very moment, please put it away.*

Course Notifications:

Announcements related to the class will be communicated via email. Changes made to assignments and deadlines will also be updated in Moodle.

Nondiscrimination Policy and Sexual Misconduct:

Furman University is committed to providing programs, activities and an educational and work environment free from unlawful Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment. In furtherance of this commitment, Furman encourages all members of the community to report any Discrimination or Discriminatory Harassment promptly, so it can be addressed.

The University's Non-Harassment and Non-Discrimination [website](#) and [policy](#) sets forth available resources, describes prohibited conduct, and establishes procedures for responding to complaints of Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation.

The University's Sexual Misconduct Policy identifies prohibited Sexual Misconduct, establishes grievance procedures for addressing Sexual Misconduct, describes supportive measures and sets forth available resources. For information about Title IX, measures Furman takes to prevent Sexual Misconduct, [reporting options](#), and supportive measures and resources visit [Furman's Title IX page](#).

Consent to Use Student Materials

Your work in this class may be used for future research purposes and will be kept confidential. Use of your materials is completely voluntary. You have the right to choose not to allow the use of your materials for future research. Please know that if you choose not to have your materials used, your grade will not be affected in any manner. There are no anticipated risks to you, beyond those encountered in everyday life. All records will be maintained securely on Box. The results of any research using these materials may be published but will not include your name or any identifiable references to you. If you choose to allow me to use your materials this semester, you have the right to opt out at any time by notifying me. You have the opportunity to ask questions about your materials or any related research at any time.

If you DO NOT wish for your materials to be used in future research, please complete and return [this form](#) either in print or digital form to me before the end of the course. If you do not return this form, you give consent for me to use your materials for future research.

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THIS COURSE

“Learning results from what the student does and thinks, and only from what the student does and thinks. The teacher can advance learning only by influencing what the student does to learn.” – Herb Simon.

This course invites you to examine the dynamic relationship between gender and economics, a field that blends theory, empirical analysis, and societal relevance. To fully benefit from this experience, consider the following strategies:

- 1. Be Prepared and Present:** Engaging class discussions start with preparation. Complete the readings and consider the posted discussion prompts on Moodle before class. Approach each session with curiosity and a willingness to connect the material to your prior knowledge and personal interests.
- 2. Engage Actively:** Take ownership of your learning by asking questions, sharing insights, and respectfully challenging ideas during class. Thoughtful engagement not only deepens your understanding but also contributes to a vibrant learning community.
- 3. Develop a Habit of Reflection:** After each class, take a moment to reflect on what you’ve learned. Identify key takeaways, clarify lingering questions, and consider connections to broader economic and societal issues. Use these reflections to guide your participation in Perusall annotations and prepare for assessments.
- 4. Collaborate Thoughtfully:** Collaboration enhances learning. Whether it’s through group projects, discussing readings, or reviewing assignments together, engaging with your peers can provide fresh perspectives and deepen your comprehension. Practice active listening and constructive dialogue to maximize these interactions.
- 5. Approach the Country Project with Purpose:** This major assignment is an opportunity to apply course concepts to real-world contexts. Start early, set milestones, and seek feedback throughout the process. Treat this as a chance to showcase your analytical and communication skills, whether for academic growth or future career opportunities.
- 6. Seek Support and Resources:** Make use of meeting with me or others from class to discuss challenging concepts or explore topics of interest in greater depth. Utilize campus resources like the Writing and Media Lab, library services, and peer study groups to strengthen your work.
- 7. Embrace a Growth Mindset:** Learning is iterative. Be patient with challenging material, view mistakes as learning opportunities, and celebrate progress. Your effort and persistence are key to developing the skills and insights that will serve you well beyond this course.

COURSE SCHEDULE (Any important changes will be announced in class)

	New Date	Topic	Required Reading/Assignments (out of class)
Week 1	1/13 1/15	Introduction to the Economics of Gender	Oxford Handbook - Biology and the Labor Market
Week 2	1/20 1/22	Do Men and Women Behave Differently?	Oxford Handbook - Historical Perspectives on Gender Choose countries in class
Week 3	1/27 1/29	Economics of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity	Lee Badgett et al — LGBTQ Economics, Project: Country Proposal Problem Set #1 Due
Week 4	2/3 2/5	Gender and Education	Claudia Goldin et al - The Homecoming of American College Women
Week 5	2/10 2/12	Measuring the Unmeasured Economy No Class - Bicentennial Convocation	Nancy Folbre and Julie Nelson - For Love or Money or Both? Project: Intial Research Reflection
Week 6	2/17 2/19	Growth and Development Project: Topic Group Workshop	Esther Duflo - Women Empowerment and Economic Development Problem Set #2 Due
Week 7	2/24 2/26	Debrief Cross-Country Discussion and Review for Exam I Exam #1	
Week 8	3/3 3/5	No class - Spring Break	
Week 9	3/10 3/12	Family Structure - Marriage and Partnership Project: Comparative Framing and Gender-Relevant History	Betsy Stevenson and Justin Wolfers - Marriage and Divorce
Week 10	3/17 3/19	Family Structure - Fertility Project: Country Diagnostic Briefing and Global Roundtable	Oxford Handbook - Fertility Issues
Week 11	3/24 3/26	Household Decision Making Project: Policy in Context	Shelly Lundberg and Robert Pollak - Bargaining and Distribution in Marriage
Week 12	3/31 4/2	Labor Economics - Gender Pay Gap	William Darity and Patrick Mason - Evidence on discrimination in employment Problem Set #3 Due
Week 13	4/7 4/9	Labor Economics - Caring Labor	Paula England et al - Wages of Virtue
Week 14	4/14 4/16	Gender and the Law	Michele Tertilt et al - The Economics of Women's Rights Project: Final individual report
Week 15	4/21 4/23	Gender, Poverty, and Policy Project: Final group presentations	Albeda - Low Wage mothers on the edge in the US
Week 16	4/28	Project: Final group presentations	Problem Set #4 Due
Final	5/1	Exam #2: During Final exam period 3:30-6pm	