The Economics of Gender

PhD Course EC38017 at Stockholm University, Fall 2025/Q2

This course provides an overview of core themes in gender economics, focusing on the origins of gender disparities and the evaluation of policies aimed at reducing inequality. Multiple instructors present current findings from their areas of expertise, highlighting the latest developments in gender-focused economic research. The course emphasizes empirical analysis over formal mathematical modeling and includes a community-building component for students and faculty with shared interests in gender economics.

The course is structured as three two-day meetings and one final workshop. Passing the course requires participating in person in at least two of the meetings.

Lecture times and rooms in Södra huset.

Date	Room	Morning session 10:00-12:00	Afternoon session 13:00-15:00
4/11	D247	Gender inequalities—A primer	Discrimination in theory and practice
5/11	D315	Gender gaps in performance evaluations	Sexual harassment
18/11	D320	How to write a term paper	Parenthood and the labor market
19/11	F299	Fertility- Past and Present	LGBTQ Economics
2/12	D215	Inequalities in the manosphere	Gender quotas
3/12	D247	Gender equality in sickness and health	Personal safety as a research frontier
16/12	TBD	13:00-16:00	Workshop

Exam and grading

For the exam, students have the options of writing a term paper or completing three referee reports. The term paper should resemble a research proposal or pre-analysis plan, outlining the significance of the research question, relevant literature, testable hypotheses, and proposed methods. Term papers will be presented and discussed at a final workshop. Students opting for referee reports will present one of these reports instead. Detailed instructions and deadlines will appear in the specific folders under Resources in Athena and submitted on that platform.

We evaluate your coursework on a three-point scale that determines the final grade as Fail (0 or 1 point), Pass (2 points), or Pass with Distinction (3 points). One point is awarded for submitting study questions for at least eight lectures. The term paper is graded as Fail (0 points), Pass (1 point) or Pass with Distinction (2 points). The three referee reports are graded together as Fail (0 points) or Pass (1 point).

Study questions

The study questions help students prepare for class by inviting reflection about the course readings and, in some cases, as preparation for the participation component of the lecture. The list of question is posted in Study Questions folder under Resources, as well as in specific assignment folders for each lecture. Students submit answers on Athena.

Deadlines:
Study questions for lecture 1—4 by October 3, 10:00
Study questions for lecture 5—8 by October 17, 10:00
Study questions for lecture 9—12 by December 1, 10:00

Instructors

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Reading list

Lecture 1. Gender inequalities—A primer

"Gender pay gap 2023" Swedish National Mediation Office 2025. https://www.mi.se/publikationer/gender-pay-gap-2023/

Olivetti, C., Pan, J., & Petrongolo, B. (2024). The evolution of gender in the labor market. In Handbook of labor economics (Vol. 5, pp. 619-677). Elsevier.

Lecture 2. Discrimination in theory and practice

Lundberg, S. (2022). Gender Economics and the Meaning of Discrimination. AEA Papers and Proceedings 112, 588–91.

Neumark, D. (2018). Experimental Research on Labor Market Discrimination. Journal of Economic Literature 56(3), 799–866.

Small, M. L. and Pager, D. (2020). Sociological Perspectives on Racial Discrimination. The Journal of Economic Perspectives 34(2), 49–67.

Lecture 3. Gender gaps in performance evaluations

Benson, A., Li, D., & Shue, K. (2024). "Potential" and the gender promotion gap. SSRN.https://ssrn.com/abstract=4747175

Mengel, F., Sauermann, J., & Zölitz, U. (2019). Gender bias in teaching evaluations. JEEA, 17(2), 535-566.

Sarsons, H., Gërxhani, K., Reuben, E., & Schram, A. (2021). Gender differences in recognition for group work. JPE, 129(1), 101-147.

Lecture 4. Sexual harassment

Cortina, L. M., & Areguin, M. A. (2021). Sexual harassment in the workplace. Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, 8(1), 285-309.

Folke, O., & Rickne, J. (2022). Sexual harassment and gender inequality in the labor market. QJE, 137(4), 2163-2212.

Folke, O., Vesman, R. & Rickne, J. (2025). Sexual harassment and women's academic careers. Unpublished manuscript (uploaded on Athena).

Lecture 5. How to write a term paper

Alesina & Giuliano (2010) "The power of the family" Journal of Economic Growth.

Alesina & Giuliano (2011) "Family ties and political participation" JEEA.

Fernandez (2007) "Women, Work, and Culture" JEEA.

Fernández & Fogli (2009) "Culture: An Empirical Investigation of Beliefs, Work, and Fertility." AEJ Macro.

Lecture 6. Parenthood and the labor market

Adams, A., Jensen, M. F., & Petrongolo, B. (2024). Birth Timing and Spacing: Implications for Parental Leave Dynamics and Child Penalties. IZA-Institute of Labor Economics.

Groes, F., Houštecká, A., Iorio, D., & Santaeulalia-Llopis, R. (2024). The Unequal Battle Against Infertility: Theory and Evidence from IVF Success and Drop-out.

Lundborg, P., Plug, E., & Rasmussen, A. W. (2024). Is there really a child penalty in the long run? New evidence from IVF treatments (No. 16959). IZA Discussion Papers.

Lecture 7. Fertility - Past and present

C. Goldin, L. Katz (2002) "The Power of the Pill: Oral Contraceptives and Women's Career and Marriage Decisions" JPE, 2002.

C. Myers (2017) "Power of the Pill or Power of Abortion? Re-examining the Effects of Young Women's Access to Reproductive Control" JPE, 2017.

K. Ragan (2025) "The Power of The Pill: Evidence from Oral Contraceptive Sales", The Economic Journal.

K. Ragan (2025) "Empowerment or Immiseration? The Pill and a Century of Unwed Childbearing", Unpublished Manuscript. (To be presented in class)

E. Spolaore, R. Wacziarg "Fertility and Modernity" The Economic Journal, pp. 1–38.

Lecture 8. LGBTQ Economics

Badgett, M. L., Carpenter, C. S., & Sansone, D. (2021). LGBTQ economics. Journal of Economic Perspectives, 35(2), 141-170.

Badgett, M. L., Carpenter, C. S., Lee, M. J., & Sansone, D. (2024). A review of the economics of sexual orientation and gender identity. Journal of Economic Literature, 62(3), 948-994.

Lecture 9. Inequalities in the 'manosphere'

Autor, D., Dorn, D., & Hanson, G. (2019). When Work Disappears: Manufacturing Decline and the Falling Marriage Market Value of Young Men. American Economic Review: Insights, 1(2), 161–178.

Cappelen, A. W., Falch, R., & Tungodden, B. (2025). Experimental Evidence on the Acceptance of Males Falling Behind. Journal of the European Economic Association.

Case, A., & Deaton, A. (2022). The Great Divide: Education, Despair, and Death. Annual Review of Economics 14:1-21.

Lecture 10. Gender quotas

Besley, Timothy, Olle Folke, Torsten Persson, and Johanna Rickne. 2017. "Gender Quotas and the Crisis of the Mediocre Man: Theory and Evidence from Sweden." American Economic Review, 107 (8): 2204-42.

Deschamps, Pierre. "Gender quotas in hiring committees: A boon or a bane for women?" Management Science 70.11 (2024): 7486-7505.

Bertrand, Marianne, Sandra E. Black, Sissel Jensen, and Adriana Lleras-Muney. "Breaking the glass ceiling? The effect of board quotas on female labour market outcomes in Norway." The Review of Economic Studies 86, no. 1 (2018): 191-239.

Lecture 11. Gender equality in sickness and in health

Currie, Janet, and Esme Zwiers. 2023. "Medication of Postpartum Depression and Maternal Outcomes". Journal of Human Resources 60 (2). DOI: 10.3368/jhr.1021-11986R

Conti, Gabriella and Ginja, Rita and Persson, Petra and Willage, Barton. "The Menopause "Penalty"" (March 2025). NBER Working Paper No. w33621. DOI 10.3386/w33621

Nekoei, Arash and Sigurdsson, Jósef and Wehr, Dominik. "The Economic Burden of Burnout" (June, 2025). Available at Burnout.pdf

Lecture 12. Personal safety as a research frontier

Guillaume Chapelle, Pierre Deschamps, Dylan Glover, Xavier Lambin, Morgane Laouénan . "Safety first: Gender differences in Screening on Online Platforms", Working Paper

Adams-Prassl, Abi, Kristiina Huttunen, Emily Nix, and Ning Zhang. "Violence against women at work." The Quarterly Journal of Economics 139, no. 2 (2024): 937-991. "Violence against women at work." The Quarterly Journal of Economics 139.2 (2024): 937-991.

Buchmann, Nina, Carl Meyer, and Colin D. Sullivan. Paternalistic discrimination. Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research (SIEPR), 2024.

Course organizers—please contact us if you have any questions!

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