

## Syllabus: ECON 2040 – Political Economy of Race, Class, & Gender

**Instructor:** Dr. Sarah Small, Assistant Professor, Department of Economics

**Class meetings:** Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00-3:20pm in GC 2560.

**Email:** [sarah.small@utah.edu](mailto:sarah.small@utah.edu)

**Pre-requisites:** none

**Office location:** Gardner Commons #4029

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:30am-11:20am and by appointment

**Semester:** Fall 2023

### Course Overview:

This course is designed to introduce and engage students in a critical examination of the political economy of race, class, and gender. In the United States, individuals of different ethnic and racial backgrounds often work different jobs, earn different incomes, and hold different levels of wealth. Individuals are clearly concentrated in different kinds of jobs by gender, which suggests different earnings and likelihood of living in poverty. More generally, there are large and growing differences in the social circumstances of the rich and poor, the educated and uneducated, and one's socioeconomic status is affected by one's race, ethnicity, gender, and social class. This course is concerned with the economic analysis and interpretation of these kinds of inequality, with a focus on the U.S. context.

### Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be literate in interpreting the current debates on economic inequalities in their multiple and intersecting dimensions. The course aims to accomplish this goal by examining:

- The concepts of race, gender, and class in historical context.
- The basic indicators of economic well-being and inequality by race, gender, and class in the U.S.
- Policies that have been adopted or are proposed to reduce economic inequalities.

This course is designed for students who have not studied economics before. All you need is an interest in the subject, drive to develop an understanding of these issues, and a commitment to debate and disagree in a courteous manner about some highly controversial topics. You may not agree with everything you encounter in this course. Therefore, your voice/perspective is necessary to the development of critical and candid dialogue in this course.

## Required Materials

There is no required textbook. All required readings on the syllabus are/will be available in electronic form on the course website on Canvas.

## Teaching and Learning Methods

**Canvas:** The course page on Canvas provides access to all course materials. It will have the most up to date information on the course plans, readings, and assignments. Students are responsible for checking Canvas regularly and paying attention to messages from me on Announcements. Be sure you have turned on Canvas notifications in order to receive these messages.

**Teaching Modality:** This is an in-person class. Classes will consist of presentations, small group, and whole class discussion. Class discussions are central to your learning and will take place in person. I will post my slide presentations on Canvas as the topic is covered in class.

**Attendance & Participation:** Since this is an in-person class, these are expected, but not graded. I expect regular attendance in class. If you feel sick however, do not come to class, and do keep me posted. You should attend class regularly if you want a) to learn the material by engaging me and each other, and b) to be better able to show what you have learned on the exams and in papers. At times, brief in-class writing (i.e. response to a question on the reading) will be used to start the conversation.

## Course Expectations

### Instructor Expectations:

- I will respond to emails within 48 hours, not including weekends and holidays. If I do not respond to an email within 48 hours, please email me again.
- I will also be available for individual consultation via virtual or in-person office hours.
- I will provide feedback on the assignments in a timely manner.
- I will follow all official University of Utah policies regarding conduct in the classroom, incompletes, and accommodations. Students' accommodations will met with required documentation.

### Student Expectations:

- If students have any questions, are struggling with course materials, or need further assistance from their instructor, they will take the initiative to contact their instructor via email.
- Students will engage with the course, students, and the instructor in a respectful and professional manner at all times.
- I would like to be referred to with she/her pronouns and you can address me as Professor or Dr. Small or Sarah (but not Mrs or Ms Small, please).
- This class is meant to be participatory, so students should read the assigned material before posting discussions or taking quizzes.

- Behave with honesty and integrity. Academic dishonesty is not acceptable behavior and evidence of cheating will result in failing the class and being reported to the Judicial Affairs Officer.

## Evaluation and Grading

The due dates on quizzes and assignments are intended to help you stay on track in the course. It is your responsibility to turn in each assignment on the required date. All assignments turned in after the scheduled due date will be lowered 10% for each 24 hour period in which they are late. The exceptions that may be considered is due to sickness, university excused function, or circumstances beyond the students' control. The instructor reserves the sole right to determine what grounds constitutes a reasonable excuse for missing or submitting a late work assignment, the right to require the student to submit proper verification of such excuse. **Vacations are not an excuse for missing or submitting a late assignment.** You have *one week* after the due date to contact me regarding a late submission or you will be penalized. If you foresee a problem with meeting a deadline, please reach out to the professor as soon as possible.

Final course grades will follow the grading system below. Final grades will not be rounded up (please do not ask). Requests for regrades of a particular assignment must be made (formally via email) within **1 week** of the grade being posted on Canvas. Instructors and graders reserve the right to regrade the entire assignment, which may result in a higher or lower grade than the initial grade.

94%-100%	A
90%-93.9%	A-
87%-89.9%	B+
84%-86.9%	B
80%-83.9%	B-
77%-79.9%	C+
74%-76.9%	C
70%-73.9%	C-
67%-69.9%	D+
64%-66.9%	D
60%-63.9%	D-
0%-59.9%	E

## Assignments

Grade will be distributed among the following assignments. There will be no extra credit assignments.

Graded Assignment	Frequency	Share of total course grade
Reflection Exercises	4 at 5% each	20%
Data exercises	3 at 10% each	30%
Midterm Exams	2 at 10% each	20%

Policy Paper	1	15%
Great Economists group assignment	1	15%

**Reflection Exercises:** There will be four reflection exercises throughout the semester. I will provide a few questions to which students are expected to respond in written form. Reflection exercises often describe personal experiences or impressions, so there is often not a ‘right’ answer, but students engage with the material and provide evidence that they have been learning the material.

**Data exercises:** There will be three data exercises throughout the semester. In these exercises students will collect both qualitative and quantitative data and analyze them according to a given set of questions.

**Midterm exams:** Two midterm exams will cover content discussed up until that point. There will not be a final exam.

**Policy paper:** Students will write a 1,000 word (~3-4-page) paper on one of the policies to be discussed in the later part of the course. I will provide a guideline on Canvas.

**Great Economists group assignment:** Students will do a group presentation in the final weeks of the semester. Namely, each group will provide a ten-minute presentation on a great economist (I will assign these in the middle of the course). The option of doing a solo presentation is not available. I will provide further guidelines later in the course.

Keep a copy of all work created for this course, including work submitted through Canvas.

This syllabus and schedule are meant to serve as an outline and guide for our course. Please note that I may modify it with reasonable notice to you. I may also modify the Course Schedule to accommodate the needs of our class. Any changes will be posted to Canvas under Announcements.

Classes begin	Monday, August 21
Last day to add without a permission code	Friday, August 25
Last day to wait list	Friday, August 25
Last day to add, drop (delete), elect CR/NC, or audit classes	Friday, September 1
Last day to withdraw from classes	Friday, October 20
Last day to reverse CR/NC option	Friday, December 1
Classes end	Thursday, December 7
Reading day	Friday, December 8

<u>Final exam period</u>	Mon.-Fri., Dec. 11-15
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University-wide important dates:

***Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):*** The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, (801) 581-5020. CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

***University Safety Statement:*** The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit [safeu.utah.edu](http://safeu.utah.edu). In cases of domestic violence or the threat of domestic violence (including intimate partner danger in a dating relationship), another source of assistance is the Utah Domestic Violence Coalition, whose phone number is 800-897-5465. (Inclusion of the previous sentence in U of U syllabi was recommended by Washington State University Prof. Jill McCluskey, whose daughter was a U of U student murdered on the U campus in 2018 by a man she had dated.)

***Addressing Sexual Misconduct:*** Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).

***Student Wellness:*** Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc. can interfere with a student's ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness [www.wellness.utah.edu](http://www.wellness.utah.edu); 801-581-7776.

***Academic Honesty/Plagiarism:*** In compliance with strict standards of academic honesty, in your papers you should always cite/reference any words or ideas that are not your own. Sharing of others' essays, uses of pre-written, purchased, or downloaded materials also violates academic honesty, which are grounds for failure or dismissal from the course and from the University. Making a habit of using your own words as much as possible is helpful in guarding against problems in this respect. Whenever in doubt, please ask me.

**Student Names & Personal Pronouns:** Class rosters are provided to me with the student’s legal name as well as “Preferred first name” (if previously entered by you in the student profile section of your CIS account). Do advise me of any mistakes/mispronunciations and any changes in your name or pronouns (and update CIS) so I can help create a learning environment in which you, your name, and your pronoun will be respected.

**Policy on Children in Class:** The University does not have a policy on children in the classroom, but my policy reflects my commitment to student parents. All exclusively breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as necessary. I understand that unforeseen disruptions in childcare can put parents in position of having to miss class to stay home with a child. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class in order to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable. I ask that all students work with me to create a welcoming environment that is respectful of all forms of diversity, including diversity in parenting status. In all cases where babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your child requires special attention or is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their needs are met. While I maintain the same high expectations for all students in my classes regardless of parenting status, I am happy to problem-solve with you in a way that supports your school-parenting balance.

Course Schedule:

Week	Topic	Content to Read/Watch	Graded Assignment
Week 1: August 21-26	Introduction to the course and defining gender, race, and class		
Week 2: August 27- September 2	Economic approaches	Optional videos: 1. <u>Class Struggle is a Fundamental Core of Capitalism</u> by Richard Wolff 2. <u>What is Feminist Economics?</u> With Diana Strassmann 3. <u>Stratification Theory Tackles the Racial Blindspots of Orthodox Economics</u> (Interview with Darrick Hamilton)	Reflection Exercise 1: Due September 2 by 11:59pm MT
Week 3: September 3-9	History and Institutions	Required Reading: 1. Bergmann, B. R. (1981). The economic risks of being a housewife. <i>The American Economic Review</i> , 71(2), 81-86.  Optional Reading and Videos:	Reflection Exercise 2: Due September 9 by 11:59pm MT

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Institutions, Power, and Inequality in The Economy</u> by CORE</li> <li>2. Ananthaswamy, Anil, and Kate Douglas. "The Origins of Sexism: How Men Came to Rule 12,000 Years Ago." <i>New Scientist</i>, 18 Apr. 2018</li> <li>3. <a href="#">From Here to Equality</a> with Darity and Mullen</li> </ol>	
Week 4: September 10-16	Review and Midterm Exam		In-class exam September 14
Week 5: September 17-23	Measuring Inequality I: Labor Markets and Occupational Segregation	<p>Required Reading:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Occupational Segregation in America</u> by CAP</li> </ol> <p>Optional Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Native Americans and Jobs: The Challenge and the Promise</u> by Algernon Austin</li> <li>2. Eleanor Krause and Isabel Sawhill. 2017. "What we know and don't know about declining labor force participation: A review." Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.</li> <li>3. Shulman, S. (1996). The political economy of labor market discrimination: A classroom-friendly presentation of the theory. <i>The Review of Black Political Economy</i>, 24(4), 47-64.</li> </ol>	
Week 6: September 24- September 30	Measuring Inequality II: Wage Gaps	<p>Optional Reading and Video:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Vagins, Deborah. (2018) <i>The Simple Truth About the Gender Pay Gap (Fall 2018 Edition)</i>. AAUW.</li> <li>2. <a href="#">Explained: Why Women are Paid Less</a></li> </ol>	Data exercise 1: Due September 30
Week 7: October 1-7	Measuring Inequality III: Time	<p>Optional readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hess, C., Ahmed, T., &amp; Hayes, J. (2020). Providing unpaid household and care work in the United States: Uncovering inequality. <i>Inst. Women's Policy Res</i>, 26(4).</li> <li>2. Ferrant, Gaëlle, Luca Maria Pesando, and Keiko Nowacka.</li> </ol>	Data Exercise 2: Due October 7 by 11:59pm MT

		"Unpaid Care Work: The missing link in the analysis of gender gaps in labour outcomes." <i>Issues paper</i> (2014).	
Week 8: October 8-14	FALL BREAK		FALL BREAK
Week 9: October 15-21	Measuring Inequality IV: Wealth Gap	Required video: 1. <u>Explain: Racial Wealth Gap</u>  Optional reading: 1. <u>Gender Wealth Gaps in the US</u> by Hernandez Kent 2. <u>Data from a Native CDFI yield new insights on wealth gap in Indian Country</u> by Feir, Moreno, and Vogel	
Week 10: October 22-28	Measuring Inequality V: Education and Health	Required reading: 1. <u>Boys left behind: Education gender gaps across the US</u> by Richard Reeves and Ember Smith 2. <u>Key Data on Health and Healthcare by Race and Ethnicity</u> by Hill, Ndugga, and Artiga  Optional reading and video:. 1. <u>Deaths of Despair and the Future of Capitalism</u> with Anne Case and Angus Deaton	Reflection Exercise 3: Due October 28
Week 11: October 29- November 4	Review and Exam		In-Class Exam, November 2
Week 12: November 6-12	Policy Solutions: Minimum Wage, Family Leave, Childcare	Required reading OR video (pick one): 1. Casey, Judi, and Karen Corday. "Parental leave policies in 21 countries: Assessing generosity and gender equality." (2008). 2. <u>Maternity Leave and Why the United States is the Only Developed Nation Without It</u>  Optional reading: 1. <u>Why minimum wages are a critical tool for achieving racial justice in the US labor market</u> by	Reflection Exercise 4: Due November 12 by 11:59pm MT



		Derenoncourt, Montialoux, and Bahn	
Week 13: November 13-19	Policy Solutions: Unions, Reparations, Baby Bond	Optional videos and readings: 1. <u>How Baby Bonds could help close the racial wealth gap</u> by Darrick Hamilton 2. <u>A blueprint for reparations in the US</u> by William Darity 3. <u>Unions Help Increase Wealth for All and Close Racial Wealth Gaps</u> by Glass, Madland, and Weller	Data Exercise 3: Due November 18 by 11:59pm MT
Week 14: November 20-26	In-class preparation for Great Economists assignment		
Week 15: November 27- December 3	Great Economist Presentations		Presentations all week
Week 16: December 4-10	Great Economist Presentations and catching up		Discussant Comments on Another Group: Due December 7 by 11:59pm MT
Final exam week: December 11-17	Policy Paper Due		Policy Paper due by December 12