HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL

Closing the Global Gender Gap
PED-317Y
ECON 1376

SYLLABUS, Year 2010-11
Fall 2010: Input sessions (select Wednesdays, 4:10-6p.m., one Friday, 2:40-5:30p.m.)
January 10-14, 2011: Workshop
Spring 2011: Closing session (one Wednesday, 4:10-6p.m.) and conference

All classes and review sessions will take place in the WAPPP Cason Seminar Room, which is located on the first floor of the Taubman Building. Please consult the syllabus for exact dates and times of classes.

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COURSE GOALS and PROCEDURES:

Understanding the role of gender in shaping the political, economic and social opportunities available to individuals can help us evaluate whether and how societies may close gender gaps in human capital investments, economic participation and political opportunity. It can also shed light on the substantial variation in the size of the gaps across countries and areas and the role of economic development and management and leadership in closing the gaps.

This course introduces an analytical and empirical framework for evaluating why gender gaps exist and designing policies to close gender gaps. Building on insights from Behavioral Decision Making and Development Economics, it provides a framework to diagnose when and why gender gaps emerge, analyze their consequences, and evaluate to what degree public policy and management can close these gaps.

The course will adopt a micro-perspective and critically evaluate how preferences, psychological biases, social norms and the level of economic development cause outcomes to vary by gender.
Using program evaluation techniques, the course will train students on how to combine analytical frameworks and the judicious use of data to design and test specific interventions.

The format of this course differs from the norm to maximize student learning, interaction with faculty and guest experts, and opportunities to share insights with decision makers in the field. The course is co-taught and conceived as a year-long course with a period of intense training and interaction in January. It runs in conjunction with a weekly seminar on *Gender in Public Policy and Leadership* organized by the Women and Public Policy Program that takes place every Thursday from 11:40-1p.m. We invite you to attend (not mandatory): [http://www.hks.harvard.educenters/wappp/teaching-training/seminar-series](http://www.hks.harvard.educenters/wappp/teaching-training/seminar-series). It will culminate with a spring conference on *Gender in the Developing World* at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, cosponsored by the Women and Public Policy Program, in which the students of this class will participate.

The goal of the course is to enable students to develop their own research and policy questions, examine them over the course of the year and share their insights with a larger audience in the spring. Students are welcome to use this course to further develop material useful for their PAEs, SYPAs or other research/policy papers. Students will receive 1 course credit for this course.

The course will presume statistical knowledge and training in economics. The course is open to graduate and undergraduate students who satisfy prerequisites. Please consult with the instructors, the TF or the CA whether you meet the prerequisites.

Note to PhD-students: This course satisfies the PPOL public management field requirement.

**READINGS:**


This book is available for purchase at the COOP. Several copies will also be kept on reserve at the HKS library. All of the remaining required readings are available online, with links provided either in this syllabus (also posted on course web page) or during class. Most of the background reading material is also available online, with the remainder available on reserve at the HKS library.

**COURSE COMPONENTS AND GRADING:**

Grading will be based on your cumulative point total for the components listed below.

1. **Group reflection project (25% of final grade):** Due on November 10, 2010
2. **Policy proposal (20% of final grade):** Due on January 7, 2011
3. **Final individual paper (45% of final grade):** Due on March 30, 2011
4. **Class participation (10% of final grade):** A sizable portion of material covered in class will not appear in the readings. It is important, therefore, to attend and participate in each class. We expect that everyone will have something to contribute and we expect you to come to class prepared to discuss the readings either by raising questions and comments about the articles or by relating the material to your own experience or current events. We will evaluate your participation based on how well you know the material when called upon, the TF’s records of class participation, and how much effort you put into making the class work, e.g., by building on others’ comments when making a statement or giving constructive feedback on others’ work.
DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

(1) Group reflection project (25% of final grade): Due on November 10, 2010

The group project (up to 3 group members) involves a 10-page paper and a short presentation to the class. The purpose of the project is for you to engage with the material presented as “input” to the course in September and creatively use it to either:

a. Describe and comment on a book that contributes to our understanding of gender gaps in economic opportunity, political opportunity, health and education. You may choose your own book and meet with one of the instructors to discuss whether it is appropriate for the course. Once approved, we will indicate on the course web page that your book is no longer available for other groups. You are welcome to find your own book but a list with possible examples is included below. You will note that the list includes some academic and some popular books. Your job is to write a book review critically discussing the content of the book, how successful it was in making its case (analysis clear, empirical evidence convincing, methodology appropriate, insights interesting?), identify open questions and develop your own ideas of how the book could have been improved or extended.

Examples of books to review:

b. Describe and comment on the research of an expert whose work contributes to our understanding of gender gaps in economic opportunity, political opportunity, health and education. You may choose your own expert and meet with one of the instructors to discuss whether the person is appropriate for the course. Once approved, we will indicate on the course web page that your expert is no longer available for other groups. You are welcome to find your own expert, choose a speaker in the Thursday seminar on gender or an author of any of the readings in this syllabus. Your job is to present an overview of the expert’s contribution to the field, possibly including an interview with the person (e.g.,
when the person is on campus for the Thursday seminar), background information on the person, how they think about their contribution to the field, how they go about doing research, policy, consulting, etc., identify open questions and develop your own ideas of how the person’s research agenda could be improved or extended. (A list of seminar speakers will be available during our first class meeting)

(2) Policy proposal (20% of final grade): Due on January 7 2011
The policy proposal involves an individual paper (max. 5 pages) describing the policy motivation for your final paper and outlining the research strategy for evaluation, and a presentation to a group of peers and one of the instructors for intense discussion and feedback on Friday, January 21. Instructions on how to write a policy proposal will be handed out in the fall, a review section will provide guidelines and individual meetings with the instructors are required.

(3) Final individual paper (45% of final grade): Due on March 30, 2011
Instructions on the final paper will be handed out in the fall.

ONLINE RESOURCES AND PROCEDURES:

To facilitate communication outside of class time, we will use our course website and the associated software. The site includes important course documents as well as announcements and other useful information. For example, all homework assignments will be posted on this site. It is critical, therefore, that you use this resource. We will assume that you read any announcements we post there. We will not necessarily repeat announcements in class.

COURSE POLICIES:

Religious observance: If you cannot attend a particular class because of religious reasons, please arrange with instructor ahead of time so we can make alternate plans for covering the material.

Disability: The teaching team is committed to making the class accessible for all students. Any student needing academic adjustments or accommodations because of a documented disability is requested to present his/her letter from the Accessible Education Office (AEO) and speak with the professor as soon as possible. Failure to do so may result in our inability to respond in a timely manner. All discussions will remain confidential, although AEO may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation.

Academic integrity and professionalism: Needless to say, we expect full academic integrity from students in this course. At a minimum, this means no cheating on exams and homework. All work handed in must be your own. Substantial paraphrasing or borrowing of ideas without appropriate citation can be construed as plagiarism, so be sure that you understand what constitutes a breach of academic integrity. We encourage you to study together and to discuss your papers, but the entire final product must be your own.

Feedback from you: We enthusiastically welcome input from students. For example, if you particularly like (or dislike) a reading, please let us know. We welcome you to meet with us in office hours or to contact us via email or phone. Finally, we encourage you to contribute topic-relevant comments and questions during class time or post them on the course website (Discussion section).

Attendance and participation: Because the lectures will cover material that is not contained in the readings, class attendance is essential. Repeated late arrivals to class, or talking while the instructor or other students are speaking, are disrespectful to the instructor and other class members. Please be punctual and do not talk in class while others are speaking.

Cell phones and other devices: Before each class session begins, please turn off ALL cell phones. Voice recorders are allowed with prior approval from the instructor.
Laptop policy: Before each class session begins, please turn off your wireless access, internet browser, instant message program, and email program. There should be no internet use during class time. If you have any questions about how to disable the access on your machine, please ask the Teaching Fellow.
CLASS SCHEDULE

Section I: Conceptual Framework and Techniques (Fall term)

SESSION 1  Input 1: A Framework for analyzing gender gaps

Wednesday, Sept. 15 (4:10-6pm)  Why gender gaps matter and the role of policy and management

This class introduces a conceptual framework for understanding the relationship between gender inequality and societal development and discusses implications for policy.

Readings for class:


Background material:


Goldin, Claudia (2006). The Quiet Revolution That Transformed Women's Employment, Education, and
SESSION 2  Input 2: How to intervene and evaluate impact

Friday, Sept. 17 (2:40-4pm)

Program evaluation: Understanding Impacts

This class offers a technique for how to evaluate the impact of a given intervention that allows the researcher to understand to what degree the intervention was causal for the changes observed.

Readings for class:


Background material:


SESSION 3 Input 3: Behavioral foundations of interventions

Friday, Sept. 17 (4:10-5:30pm) Behavioral Decision Making

This class offers a behavioral lens on what interventions we theoretically expect to impact behavior, building on insights from behavioral economics and decision making.

Readings for class:


Background material:


PRACTICE PERIOD Applying insights

Wednesday, Sept. 22 Group meetings with Professor Pande (R 318, times TBD)

Thursday, Sept. 23 Group meetings with Professor Pande (R 318, times TBD)

Friday, Sept. 24 Review with Sara Nadel: Program Evaluation (4:10 – 5:40pm, WAPPP Conference Room)
Friday, Oct.1  
Review with Sara Nadel: Behavioral Decision Making (4:10 – 5:40pm, WAPPP Conference Room)

Friday, Oct.15  
Review with Sara Nadel: Writing the group reflection paper (4:10 – 5:40pm, WAPPP Conference Room)

**Group reflection paper due on November 10 (submit electronic copy to course web page)**

**SESSION 4      A First Take at Diagnosis, Analysis and Remedy**

**Wednesday, Nov. 17 (4:10-6pm)**  
Learning from group projects

**Friday, November 19**  
Review with Sara Nadel: Developing a policy proposal (4:10 – 5:40pm, WAPPP Conference Room)

**Wednesday, December 1**  
Individual meetings with Professor Bohnet (T 110-A, times TBD)

**Thursday, December 2**  
Individual meetings with Professor Bohnet (T 110-A, times TBD)

**SECTION II: Interventions to Close Gender Gaps (January Term)**

Breakfast study groups: 8:30-9:30a.m.  
Class meetings: 9:30a.m. to 12:30p.m. and 1:30p.m. to 4:30p.m.  
TF Office hours: M-TH, 4:30-5:30p.m.

**Policy proposal due January 7 (submit electronic copy to course web page)**

**SESSION 5      Framing Policy: Investments in Human Capital**

We start our week-long workshop by first focusing on the gender gap in investments in human capital. Why are boys preferred to girls and how does this affect their health and education? If parents and society value boys more highly than girls, what can be done about this? We discuss the role of incentives, information, norms and bounded awareness.

**Monday, January 10 (morning)**  
Missing women

**Readings for class:**

[http://www.econ.brown.edu/fac/Nancy_Qian/Papers/missswomen_qjefinal_all.pdf](http://www.econ.brown.edu/fac/Nancy_Qian/Papers/missswomen_qjefinal_all.pdf)

Background material:

http://www.nber.org/papers/w16021.pdf?new_window=1


SESSION 6  Designing Strategy: Investments in Human Capital

Monday, Jan. 10 (afternoon)  Information and incentives
Exercise: Information

Readings for class:

Carter Racing Case Study (to be distributed in class)

http://faculty.chicagobooth.edu/emily.oster/papers/twomens.pdf

Background material:

http://cbees.utdallas.edu/~crosonr/research/[56].pdf
SESSION 7  Framing Policy: Economic Opportunity and the Household

On our second day, we examine the relationship between the gender gap in economic participation and intra-household decision making. How are resources within a household allocated and how can households commit to smarter financial decisions? We discuss the role of negotiation, bounded willpower, control and commitment.

Tuesday, Jan. 11 (morning)

Household models: How incomplete contracting leads to gender differences

Readings for class:


Background material:


**SESSION 8  Designing Strategy: Economic Opportunity and the Household**

Tuesday, Jan. 11 (afternoon)  
Negotiation, bounded willpower and commitment  

*Negotiation simulation*

**Readings for class:**

Negotiation Simulation (to be distributed in class)

[http://www.hbs.edu/research/pdf/08-095.pdf](http://www.hbs.edu/research/pdf/08-095.pdf)

Background material:


[http://karlan.yale.edu/p/SEED.pdf](http://karlan.yale.edu/p/SEED.pdf)

[http://www.haas.berkeley.edu/faculty/pdf/Kray__Thompson_ROB.pdf](http://www.haas.berkeley.edu/faculty/pdf/Kray__Thompson_ROB.pdf)

**SESSION 9  Framing Policy: Economic Opportunity and Entrepreneurship**

The third day focuses on entrepreneurship and economic participation, examining the impact of training on women’s economic success. The role of gender differences in preferences, such as, e.g., in willingness to take risk and compete, will be discussed and related to organizational contexts where women are underrepresented in senior management positions.
Entrepreneurship

Readings for class:


http://www.nber.org/papers/w16018.pdf?new_window=1

Background material:


SESSION 10 Designing Strategy: Economic Opportunity and Entrepreneurship

Risk taking, competition and performance

Exercise on competition (visit to lab)

Readings for class:


Background material:
SESSION 11  Framing Policy: Political Opportunity

On the fourth day, we look at the gender gap in political participation and examine how changes in the gender balance in political representation affect decision making, policies and implicit biases and stereotypes.

Thursday, Jan. 13 (morning)  Discrimination

Readings for class:


Background material:

http://www.economics.harvard.edu/faculty/mullainathan/files/ImpDisc.pdf

Beaman, Lori, Esther Duflo, Rohini Pande and Petia Topalova (2010), “Political Reservation and Substantive Representation”


**SESSION 12  Designing Strategy: Political Opportunity**

Thursday, Jan. 13 (afternoon)  Managing Diversity

*Exercises on implicit biases and gender equality nudges*

**Readings for class:**


**Background material:**


**SESSION 13** Proposal presentations

Friday, Jan. 14 (all day)  
Presentation and discussion of policy proposals

**SECTION III: Your Intervention (Spring Term)**

**SESSION 14** Diagnosis, Analysis and Remedy

Wednesday, Feb. 16 (4:10-6p.m.)  
Preparation for conference

**SESSION 15** Conference on Gender in the Developing World

Thursday and Friday, March 3 and 4

*Final policy paper due on March 30 (submit electronic copy to course web page)*