

ECON 460:
Women, Work, and the World Economy from 5,000 BC to the Present

Department of Economics
Williams College
Fall 2022
(syllabus revised September 11, 2022)

1 Contact Information and Course Logistics

1.1 Professor: Dr. Pamela Jakiela

Email: pj5@williams.edu

1.2 Course Meetings

Mondays, Wednesdays from 8:30 to 9:45 AM in 141 Schapiro

Everyone attending class meetings in person must wear a mask (N95, KN94, or surgical). Please do not attend class if you are experiencing cold/flu/covid symptoms.

1.3 Course Websites

<https://pjakiela.github.io/ECON460/>

Most course materials are available on the public website for the course: that is where I will post assignments, reading guides, class meeting and assignment schedules, and other course information.

<https://www.gradescope.com/courses/439200>

All assignments will be posted on and submitted through gradescope. You'll receive an email inviting you to join the course, and that will allow you to set up a gradescope account linked to your Williams email address.

<https://glow.williams.edu/courses/3493728>

I use glow to post course materials that cannot be shared publicly – specifically, a pdf of the course reading packet and the link for joining office hours via zoom. The syllabus is also posted on glow for your reference.

1.4 Office Hours

My office hours are on Fridays from 2:00 to 4:00 PM. Office hours are hybrid: you can come to my office (339 Schapiro) or you can join via zoom (the link is on glow). *If you attend office hours in person, you must be wearing a mask (N95, KN94, or surgical). Please do not attend in-person office hours if you are experiencing any cold/flu/covid symptoms.*

If you have a course that conflicts with my scheduled office hours, you can email me to set up an appointment for an alternate time. I am unable to meet in the evening or on weekends.

I will not be holding office hours on September 30, November 4, or December 2.

1.5 Communication

Email is the best way to contact me (pj5@williams.edu). I will try to respond to course-related emails within two working days of receipt.¹ I am sometimes overwhelmed by the volume of email I receive; if I have not responded to you within two working days, please feel free to send me an email reminder.

1.6 Health Protocols

1. Wear a (N95, KN94, or surgical) mask in class and in office hours.
2. Do not come to class or attend in-person office hours if you are ill (with covid or anything else beyond a mild sniffle). If you test positive for covid, follow campus guidelines in determining when to return to class.
3. Office hours will be accessible via zoom. A link to access the zoom room for office hours will be posted on glow.
4. We may be forced to switch to remote instruction or cancel classes if I test positive for covid or if I am forced to stay home to care for a child who tests positive for covid. Any changes to course modality will be communicated over email.

2 Course Description

2.1 From the Course Catalog

Now and throughout history, views of the appropriate role for women in society have varied tremendously across cultures and communities: are women autonomous productive agents, are they men's property, or do they fall somewhere in between? In this course, we explore the causes and consequences of women's position in society for growth and economic development, analyzing women's economic roles in historical and cultural perspective. Students will become more critical readers of current economic literature, and will apply their skills in conducting empirical research.

2.2 What Is ECON 460 About and How Does It Work?

ECON 460 is a senior seminar for economics majors. As such, it involves "a significant research and writing component" (see the economics department website for more information about senior seminars in economics). It is a survey course, which means that we

¹So, if you send me an email on Tuesday at noon, I will try to respond by the end of the day on Thursday. I do not check my email on weekends. If you send me an email on Friday afternoon, I will respond to it by the end of the day on Tuesday.

will study a broad range of topics that are related to the economics of gender and women's participation in the economy. We will read papers in economic history, labor economics, development, behavioral economics; and we will also read work by anthropologists, biologists, historians, and scholars in gender and women's studies (as well as economists, of course).

I have two main objectives for the course:

1. To get you familiar with, and excited about, the literature on the economics of gender, broadly defined; and
2. To build your research skills in empirical microeconomics.

All of the assignments in the course are built with these objectives in mind.

We will read **a lot**. You should expect to spend at least 8-10 hours reading each week (particularly in the first half of the course). One of the main goals of the course is to familiarize you with the literature on the economics of gender; there is no way to do this without asking you to read the literature.

We will also be working to build your empirical research and data analysis skills. In the first half of the course, you will complete a series of semi-structured empirical assignments analyzing several different data sets. You will also complete an empirical research project of your own devising over the course of the semester. In the first few weeks of the term, we will have three Methods Mondays where we review and expand our data and research skills.

2.3 Who Should Take ECON 460?

ECON 460 is appropriate for junior and seniors majoring in economics who have completed ECON 251 and ECON 255. At least one additional elective with a data analysis component is strongly recommended as preparation for the course. The course is time-intensive, and students are expected to be able to keep up with a heavy load of reading and to conduct data analysis using Stata or R.

3 Tentative Class Schedule and Important Dates

Student presentations will take place on October 12, November 30, December 5, and December 7. *If you have a foreseeable conflict with any of those dates, you should not take the course.*

Dates	Description
9/12	Introductions, Overview of the Course
9/14	Gender Norms among Non-Human Primates
9/19	Methods Monday: Data Management
9/21	Lessons from Ancient DNA
9/26	Methods Monday: Research Designs
9/28	The Cow and the Plow
10/3	Methods Monday: Reviewing the Literature
10/5	Women in Ancient Civilizations
10/10	Reading Period (NO CLASS)
10/12	Mini-Presentations on Ancient Civilizations
10/17	Women in Early Modern Europe
10/19	Research Group Meetings (NO CLASS)
10/24, 10/26	Missing Women and Investments in Girls
10/31, 11/2	Girls' Education and Women's Employment
11/7, 11/9	Labor Force Implications of Reproductive Choices
11/14, 11/16	Behavioral Economics of Women's Work
11/21	Women in the Economics Profession
11/23	Thanksgiving (NO CLASS)
11/28	Last Minute Presentation Meetings (NO CLASS)
11/30	Student Presentations
12/5	Student Presentations
12/7	Student Presentations

4 Readings

4.1 Course Reading Packet

Course reading packets and copies of *Who We Are and How We Got Here* will be passed out on the first day of class. The reading packet is the first of two; the second will be distributed late in the semester.

5 Assignments and Grading

Grades are calculated as follows:

Readings Response Assignments	20 points
Data Analysis Assignments	20 points
Class Participation	10 points
Mini-Presentation	3 points
Getting to Know You Survey	1 point
Research Project: Statement of Research Question	2 points
Research Project: Annotated Bibliography	4 points
Research Project: Proposal	5 points
Research Project: Class Presentation	10 points
Research Project: Final Paper	25 points

5.1 Readings Response Assignments

For each of the required readings, you will complete a reading response assignment that must be submitted before class (deadlines available on the course website and on gradescope). You will be asked to answer a series of (primarily factual) questions about the reading.

5.2 Data Analysis Assignments

You will complete three data analysis assignments in Stata or R. In each of these activities, you will analyze a data set (or multiple data sets). These are not problem sets: as you will see, they will require you to engage with the data sets creatively, and originality will factor into your assignment grades. While you can discuss the assignments with other students in the class, you should work independently and your submissions must represent your own independent work.

5.3 Class Participation

Active, constructive participation in class discussions is a critical part of the course. On each day of class discussion, I will be assigning you a score on a scale of 0 to 10, as follows:

- 10: Genuinely insightful, original contributions to class discussion, demonstrating a thorough understanding of the readings
- 9: Thoughtfully engaging in class discussion

- 8: Present in class and making some reasonable comments
- 7: Present in class, but no meaningful contribution to class discussion
- 6: Physically present but mentally elsewhere
- 0: Not present

I do not expect students to have perfect attendance: if you need to miss class once or twice during the semester, you do not need to seek approval from me in advance (though you are welcome to alert me if you wish). At the end of the semester, I will drop your two lowest class participation scores. If you expect to miss more than two classes, or you encounter challenges (such as illness) that prevent you from attending class consistently, you should discuss these issues with me in office hours or over email. Regular absences will result in a loss of class participation credit unless they are discussed with and approved by me in a timely manner.

5.4 Mini-Presentation

On October 12, you will make a short group presentation on the status of women in an ancient civilization of your choice. This assignment is intended to help you hone your literature review and presentation skills.

5.5 Getting-to-Know-You Survey

After the first class meeting, you will be invited to take a brief survey (through a google form) to provide me with more information about you.

5.6 Research Project

Over the course of the semester, you will complete a group research project, together with up to two other students, on a topic of your choice (related to the economics of gender).

5.7 Late Assignments

Unless otherwise stated, all (unexcused) late assignments will be penalized: the maximum grade will be lowered by 10 percent for every day late for the first five days (including weekends). Assignments can only be submitted more than five days late with permission from the instructor.

6 Honor Code

This is a writing-intensive course. Your written assignments – including your presentation slides, your reading response submissions, and your data analysis assignments – should reflect your own work (or the work of the members of your group, where appropriate). We will discuss appropriate citation practices in class, and you should contact me if you are ever unsure of how to cite someone else’s work. To avoid violating the honor code, any material written or prepared by someone else must be identified as such and cited appropriately.

7 Tutoring through the Peer Academic Support Network

As a Williams student, you can use the free tutoring services provided by the Peer Academic Support Network. Step-by-step instructions for finding and scheduling tutoring sessions are on the Peer Academic Support Network webpage: <https://www.williams.edu/peer-academic-support/>.

8 Health and Accessibility Resources

Students with disabilities or disabling conditions who experience barriers in this course are encouraged to contact me to discuss options for access and full course participation. The Office of Accessible Education is also available to facilitate the removal of barriers and to ensure access and reasonable accommodations. Students with documented disabilities or disabling conditions of any kind who may need accommodations for this course or who have questions about appropriate resources are encouraged to contact the Office of Accessible Education at oaestaff@williams.edu.

9 Classroom Culture

The Williams community embraces diversity of age, background, beliefs, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, and other visible and non visible categories. I welcome all students in this course and expect that all students contribute to a respectful, welcoming and inclusive environment. If you have any concerns about classroom climate, please come to me to share your concern.

10 Concluding Remarks

Congratulations on making it to the end of the syllabus. Do professors enjoy writing syllabi? Not really. Do students enjoy reading them? Probably not. Hopefully, this document will provide us with a shared set of expectations for the semester, making the course more constructive and enjoyable for everyone. Also, if you send me an email containing a picture of a koala before September 12 (subject line: ECON 460 KOALA), you will earn a point of extra credit.