

Economics 4110: Economics of the Family*

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1 Description

This course will study modern family economics. The class will develop economic models to study topics such as female labor supply, fertility, marriage and divorce, women's liberation, premarital sex and parental socialization, investment in health, and retirement. This is an advanced undergraduate class. Calculus is an *integral* part of the course. Some elementary probability theory is drawn upon. Students unwilling to learn some of the tools used in modern economic should not take this class.

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Teaching Assistant: TBA.

[Departmental policies regarding courses are here.](#)

*May be subject to change.

2 Grading

The course will be evaluated on the basis of two equally weighted take-home exams. *No* collaboration with *any* person (either in or out of the class) is allowed for the exams. The exams are graded on a mixture of the skills you show in economics and mathematics. A 10% penalty, which is strictly enforced, is assessed for each day an exam is late. The take-home exam schedule is below.

Take-Home Exam Schedule

<i>Handed Out–Tentative</i>	<i>Due–Tentative</i>
Mon, Oct 31st	Mon, Nov 7th–Noon
Wed, Dec 5th	Wed, Dec 12th–Midnight

3 Textbook

Greenwood, Jeremy *Evolving Households: The Imprint of Technology on Life*, MIT Press, 2019.

4 More Working Mothers–Chapter 1

- Measuring the Allocation of Time
- The basic model of labor supply
- A model of married female labor supply
- Calibration
- The Becker-Reid theory of Household Production
- The Rise in Married Female Labor Supply
 - [Introductory Video, “Women’s Liberation: An Economic Perspective”](#)
- The Gender Wage Gap
- Brain and Brawn

Aguiar, Mark and Erik Hurst. (2007) “Measuring Trends in Leisure: The Allocation of Time Over Five Decades.” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 122 (3 August), 969-1006.

Prescott, Edward C. and Graham V. Candler. 2008. “Calibration.” In Steven N. Durlauf and Lawrence E. Blume, eds., *The New Palgrave: A Dictionary of Economics*, Second Edition, (Palgrave Macmillan): Online.

5 **Baby Boom and Baby Bust—Chapter 2**

- Basic Demographic Measures
- The Demographic Transition
- A Model of Fertility
 - Demographic Transition
 - Baby Boom
- World War I in France
- The Choice Over Jobs and Kids
- Malthus

6 **Marriage and Divorce—Chapter 3**

- A Model of Marriage and Divorce
- Analyzing the Decline in Marriage and the Rise in Divorce
- Assortative Mating
- Growing up with a Single Mother
- The Beckerian Theory of Marriage

7 Social Change—Chapter 4

- Women's Liberation
- A Model of Premarital Sex
 - [Introductory Video, "From Shame to Game in One Hundred Years"](#)
- A Model of Parental Socialization
- The Spirit of Capitalism

8 Health and Retirement—Chapter 5

- Better Health
- A Model of Life Expectancy and Health Care Spending
- The Development of New Drugs
- Health Insurance
- A Model of the AIDS/HIV epidemic in Africa
- The Trend in Retirement
- A Model of Retirement
- Old Age Security