

ECO3o8H1F
The Economics of Life—A Historical Perspective
University of Toronto
Department of Economics
Fall 2010

Professor Gillian Hamilton

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Class time and location:	Wednesday 11-1 UC248

[Course Description and objectives:](#)

This course will focus on demographic economic history. The first objective of the course is to better understanding changes over time in marriage markets, fertility, and mortality. To guide and inform our understanding of these topics, we will apply economic theory and learn how to evaluate empirical evidence. These skills will help you evaluate not only past events, but current ones as well. The second objective is to improve your ability to think critically. The final objective is to improve your written communication skills and your ability to formulate coherent, logical arguments.

Class discussion is an important aspect of the course. I expect you to be prepared for class, and to participate when called upon.

While reading the assigned material is, of course, critical to your success in this class, you must also attend classes! The lectures tend to cover particular (often the difficult) aspects of the readings and include information outside of the readings. You are responsible for this material. The tests reflect the material covered in the lectures, in addition to the material in the readings, hence attendance is a key to success.

[Prerequisites:](#)

Prerequisites are strictly checked and enforced and must be completed before taking a course. By taking this course you acknowledge that you will be removed from the course at anytime if you do not meet all requirements set by the Department of Economics. For further information you can consult the Course Calendar, available on the department web page.

Prerequisites: ECO200Y1/ECO204Y1/ECO206Y1;
ECO220Y1/ECO227Y1/(STA247H1,STA248H1)/(STA250H1,STA255H1)/(STA257H1,STA261H1)

[Web management:](#)

This course is managed by the university's learning management system: Blackboard. You can access it via a link from my web page (listed above) or through <http://portal.utoronto.ca/>. You will need a UTORID in order to access the course page. Information can be found at the portal help page: <http://www.portalinfo.utoronto.ca/>. Click on "Student" and follow the directions. Students that enroll in a course via ROSI will automatically be enrolled in all of their courses that use Blackboard.

The course outline as well as other handouts, links, announcements et cetera will be available through the Portal (Blackboard). Please check it weekly. At times I may also e-mail the class. To that end, you are responsible for ensuring that your UofT email address is set up and properly entered into the ROSI system. You can do that by using the following instructions:

To submit the information to activate your UTORid and password (see above), you will need to click the "Validate" button. Follow the instructions on the subsequent screens to receive your utoronto.ca address. Once you have your UofT email address, go to the ROSI system (www.rosi.utoronto.ca), log in and update the system with your new UofT email address.

[Contacting Me:](#)

Feel free to come and talk to me during office hours or class time. If you would prefer another time, it is best to make an appointment. Please note that I am on the UTM campus on Tuesdays.

[E-mail policy:](#)

I respond to e-mails quite quickly, but I may not be able to respond immediately if you are messaging me on the weekend or in the evening. Please ensure that you consult the course outline & course webpage before submitting your email inquiry!

Please include the course code in the subject of your message (ECO308). It is also helpful to ensure that your userid or the name that appears as the sender is your actual name and not a nickname. These practices will help ensure that your message does not get stuck in my spam filter and subsequently deleted. To this end it is also best to use your UofT account (e.g. utor). If I do not respond within 48 hours please re-send the message or leave a phone message—your original message may not have been received.

[Academic Misconduct:](#)

Students should note that copying, plagiarizing or other forms of academic misconduct **will not be tolerated**. Any student caught engaging in such activities will be subject to academic discipline ranging from a mark of zero on the assignment, test or examination to dismissal

from the university as outlined in the academic handbook. Any student abetting or otherwise assisting in such misconduct will also be subject to academic penalties.

Evaluation:

There will be a test, an essay and a final exam. The midterm test is worth 30 percent, the essay is worth 35 percent and the final exam is worth 35 percent.

(i) Tests and Exam:

The date of the test is October 27 (in-class).

The test and exam will consist of short (and longer) answer essay questions, as well as questions on specific economic (or mathematic) models. In essay answers a number of factors affect your grade: the logic of your answer, readability and coherency. For example, your mark will be lower if you (1) contradict yourself, or (2) if your answer is logically incomplete. Your mark will be higher if your arguments are well presented.

The exam will cover material from the entire term.

Re-Reads:

A test will be accepted for re-reading for only one week following the date the test was returned. A student must have a particular concern with a question, and must state the reason for the concern in writing. For example: "my mark is much lower than I expected" is not an acceptable reason. The marker may choose to re-read and re-mark the entire exam.

(ii) Essay:

The essay is due November 24.

The essay will incorporate both a theoretic and an empirical component. I will provide a few data sets. You choose one (or find your own) and these data will form the basis for your topic. You have to pose and motivate a research question that can be at least partially addressed with the data provided, carefully review the existing literature on the topic, describe your data and the sample you employ, discuss your findings, which should include a few graphs or tables using the data set, and draw appropriate conclusions. More detailed information on the essay requirements will be circulated in class.

Illness:

Test: If you miss the midterm test, for any reason, you will receive a grade of zero on the test. If, however, you provide me with a University of Toronto medical note (or equivalent)

documenting that you were unable to attend class the day of the test, and I receive that note within one week of missing the test, the weight of the midterm will be transferred to the final exam. (If you are still too sick or contagious a week after the test, please let me know via e-mail).

Essay: Extensions will only be granted in the event of protracted illnesses or other lengthy indisposition that occurs well in advance of the essay or exercise's deadline. Illnesses that crop up the weekend before the due date will not qualify for an extension or reduction in the late penalties. You can make sure you are not affected by a flu or virus caught the weekend before the essay by ensuring that you have a draft ready the week before the assignment is due. If you have a protracted illness or have an on-going issue please inform me well before the due date.

If your essay is ready to be submitted and you fall ill or are recovering from illness, you do not need to come to campus to submit a paper copy of your work – we can use your electronically submitted copy (submitted to turnitin). However, you must contact me via e-mail to make such an arrangement. In this case, please submit your paper as a pdf file.

[Handing in your essays: logistics and late penalties](#)

The essay is due on Wednesday (the day of class), preferably during class, but otherwise prior to the close of the department office. The penalty for lateness is 2 percent per day (weekend included). Late essays will be accepted for 1 week following the due date. Essays received after 1 week will receive a mark of zero. Hence if the essay is received (prior to the office closing) on Thursday, the reduction is 2%; Friday, -4%; Monday, -10%; Tuesday -12% and Wednesday (one week after the due date), -14%. Any later: 100% penalty.

If you do not hand it in to me during class you should hand it in to front reception at the department: Max Gluskin House (150 St. George St.). It should be date-stamped.

[Important dates:](#)

Week	Date	Notes
7	Oct 27	Midterm Test (in class)
11	Nov 24	Essay due

[Required Readings:](#)

Most of the reading material for the course is in the form of journal articles that are available on the web (through the library website; links will be provided on the course e-blackboard). I will also assign roughly one-third of the book A Farewell to Alms: A Brief Economic History of the World by Gregory Clark (Princeton U Press, 2007), which we will discuss toward the end

of term. It can be purchased from the University bookstore or ordered from Chapters or Amazon.

I will use a couple of chapters from Hoffman & Averett. Women and the Economy: Family, Work and Pay. It can be found in the library or you can purchase it (if money is no object – it is expensive)! I cannot place it on reserve due to the small class size.

(o) = optional

Marriage & Divorce

Hoffman and Averett, ch 3

Stevenson, Betsey and Justin Wolfers. “Marriage and Divorce: Changes and their Driving Forces” Journal of Economic Perspectives 21, no. 2 (Spring, 2007): 27-52.

Goldin, Claudia and Larry Katz. “On the Pill: Changing the Course of Women’s Education.” Milken Institute Review vol 3 (2nd quarter, 2001): 12-21.

Goldin, Claudia and Katz, Lawrence F. “Career and Marriage in the Age of the Pill.” American Economic Review 2000 90(2): 461-465.

Akerlof, Yellen and Katz (1996). “An Analysis of Out-of-Wedlock Childbearing in the United States.” Quarterly Journal of Economics, Vol. 111, No. 2 (May, 1996): 277-317.

(o) Landry, Yves, "Gender Imbalance, Les Filles du Roi,", in Bettina Bradbury, ed., Canadian Family History: Selected Readings, (Montreal, 1992), pp.14-32.

(o) Cliche, Marie-Aimée. “Unwed Mothers, Families, and Society during the French Regime.” Histoire sociale/Social History 21, 41 (May 1988): 39-69. In Bettina Bradbury, ed., Canadian Family History: Selected Readings, (Montreal, 1992), pp.33-65.

Marriage and Property Rights

Geddes, Rick & Dean Lueck. “The Gains from Self-Ownership and the Expansion of Women’s Rights.” American Economic Review 92, no.4 (Sept 2002): 1079-92.

Hamilton, G. “Property Rights and Transaction Costs in Marriage.” Journal of Economic History, 59, no.1 (1999): 68-103.

Combs, M.B. “Cui Bono? The 1870 British Married Women’s Property Act, Bargaining Power, and the Distribution of Resources within Marriage.” Feminist Economics 12 (1-2), 2006, 51-83.

(o) Khan, B. Zorina. "Married Women's Property Laws and Female Commercial Activity: Evidence from United States Patent Records, 1790-1895." Journal of Economic History 1996 56(2): 356-388

Fertility: Transition and Boom/Bust

Hoffman and Averett, ch 5.

David and Sundstrom. "Old-Age Security Motives, Labor Markets, and Farm Family Fertility in Antebellum America." Explorations in Economic History 25 no.2, (1988): 64-97.

Clark, Gregory and Neil Cummins. "The Origins of Modern Growth: Fertility and Human Capital in England, 1500-1914" Working Paper, 2009.

(o) Haines, Michael and J David Hacker. "Antebellum Fertility Decline in the United States: New Evidence and Reconsideration." NBER Working Paper #12571, October 2006.

(o) Greenwood, Sheshadri and Vandenbroucke "Baby Boom and Baby Bust." American Economic Review (March, 2005): 183-207

(o) Clark, Gregory & Gillian Hamilton. "Survival of the Richest: The Malthusian Method in England, 1585 – 1638." Journal of Economic History , 66, no.3 (2006): 707-736.

Mortality

Troesken, Werner. "The Limits of Jim Crow: Race and the Provision of Water and Sewerage Services in American Cities, 1880-1925." Journal of Economic History 62, no. 3 (Sept., 2002): 734-772.

Haines, Michael R.; Craig, Lee A.; and Weiss, Thomas. "The Short and the Dead: Nutrition, Mortality, and the "Antebellum Puzzle" in the United States." Journal of Economic History 2003 63(2): 382-413.

Wrap up

Weil, David. Economic Growth, 2nd edition. chapter 4: "Population and Economic Growth".

Clark, Gregory. A Farewell to Alms: A Brief Economic History of the World, 2007. Chs. 1-6.

Plagiarism

[the following note on plagiarism was adapted from a document that is appended to course outlines in Political Science at UTM]

Plagiarism is an academic offence with a severe penalty.

It is essential that you understand what plagiarism is and that you do not commit it. In essence, it is the theft of the thoughts or words of others, without giving proper credit. You must put others' words in quotation marks and cite your source(s). You must give citations when using others' ideas, even if those ideas are paraphrased in your own words. Plagiarism is unacceptable.

The University of Toronto provides a process that faculty members must initiate when they suspect a case of plagiarism. In the Economics Department, suspected evidence of plagiarism must be reported to the Chair. A faculty member may not mark an assignment or assess a penalty if he or she finds evidence of plagiarism – the matter must be reported. The Chair, or Dean, will assess the penalty.

The following are some examples of plagiarism:

1. Submitting as your own an assignment written by someone else.
2. Quoting an author without indicating the source of the words.
3. Using words, sentences, or paragraphs written by someone else and failing to place quotation marks around the material and reference the source and author. **Using either quotation marks or reference alone is not sufficient. Both must be used!**
4. Adapting an author's ideas or theme and using it as your own without referencing the original source.
5. Seeking assistance from a friend or family member in respect to work you claim as your own.

If you are not sure whether you have committed plagiarism, it is better to ask a faculty member than risk discovery and face an academic penalty.

Plagiarism is **cheating**. It is considered a **serious offence** against intellectual honesty and intellectual property. Penalties for an undergraduate can be **severe**. At a minimum, a student is likely to receive a zero for the assignment or test in question. A further penalty is often assessed, such as a further reduction from the course mark and placing a permanent notation of the incident on an academic record.

Note that arguing that you did not realize the infraction was plagiarism is not an excuse. If you plagiarized – knowingly or not, you will be penalized. It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand plagiarism and avoid it.

Some website listed below on avoiding plagiarism:

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>

Other Advisory Material available at: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/home>