

## **Economics 382: Economics of Work, Marriage and the Family**

**Fall 2009**

*Professor:* Dr. Shoshana Grossbard

*Office:* Nasatir Hall 329

*Meeting:* TuTh 9:30 to 10:45

Prerequisite: Econ 101 or 102 at SDSU, or its equivalent

Contact with Instructor: via Email: [shosh@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:shosh@mail.sdsu.edu); Office hours: Tu Th 9:00 to 9:30 and 10:45 to 12:15 at Nasatir Hall Room 329; you can call me during my office hours at 619 594 5468. I do my best to speak clearly, to compensate for my slight accent. On the plus side, I know a few languages other than English. Come visit and help me practice my French, Dutch, Hebrew, and Spanish!! I am also learning German and Italian. More about me at <http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/faculty/sgs/>

**This Course:** 1. Is in the spirit of freakonomics (<http://www.freakonomics.com/blog/>): it addresses out-of-the ordinary applications of economic analysis.

2. Explores important questions, including: why do people marry or live together? ; why do women have kids without living with a partner?; What are the optimal ways of combining work and family?

3. Offers new insights on popular culture, including songs and ads.

4. Studies the economics of dating markets

5. Uses microeconomic tools (including optimization by consumers and labor market analysis) and, to a limited degree, statistical and demographic tools. For a refresher on microeconomics, see your old textbook or

[http://gottheil.swlearning.com/gottheil5e/micro/gottheil5e\\_micro.html](http://gottheil.swlearning.com/gottheil5e/micro/gottheil5e_micro.html), especially Chapter 3.

6. Includes an international perspective

7. Includes discussion on timely policy issues such as gay marriage, parental leaves, or the government's role in promoting gender equality.

### **Main ways of Getting Information:**

- Lectures
- Blackboard (Bb): When you officially enroll in this class at SDSU, you are automatically enrolled in the class Blackboard website. **To login**, use the same information you use to access WebLine. Your **username** is your Student ID (no dashes) and your **password** is your University PIN. If you don't know your Student ID number or wish to change your University PIN, please contact SDSU e-services at <http://www.sdsu.edu/e-services/>. PIN changes will be recognized by Blackboard within 24 hours.
- Readings (see Topics and readings at the end of this handout)

### **Assessment and Grading**

Grades for the course are based on one assignment, one group presentation, and 3 quizzes, of which one is take-home quiz. An optional quiz, based on materials taught after quiz 1, will be administered on the last day of class, which you may take to make up for a missed quiz or

to drop your lowest quiz grade. I will only substitute your old grade for the new if you have improved your score.

The presentation will deal with topics VI and VII (see Topics and Readings). It will consist of powerpoint slides to be prepared by group members. Prior to presentation, groups need to give professor a brief report that includes the text of the slides, some background and sources, and attributes credit to each member who worked on a particular slide. More instructions to follow.

Your grade in the course is determined as follows:

Powerpoint Presentation	20 %
Take-Home	10 %
Three quizzes (20% each)	60 %
Assignment	10 %

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Class participation is the only way to earn extra credit. Class participation is based both on attendance and active and informed participation in class discussions.

*Any request for grade change, whether related to an exam or assignment, will have to be submitted to me in writing, clearly indicating the question and the rationale/argument behind your request.*

*A tentative schedule follows. I will try to go by this schedule to the best of my ability.*

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CALENDAR ECON 382 F2009

With Professor Grossbard

**September**

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Sept 1 Tu Introduction to the course

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3 Th Refresher in economic principles

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**Week 2**

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8 Tu Applying principles to the economics of marriage etc

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10 Th

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**Week 3**

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15 Tu **Quizz 1** about all materials covered so far/ furlough for professor; TA will proctor exam. Bring green scantron form

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17 Th Reading 2 by Badgett et al and R3 on marriage and children

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Week 4

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22 Tu Chapter 3 in MAE On divorce

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24 Th The model Chapter 1 in MAE

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Week 5

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29 Tu Model, continued

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**October**

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1 Th Preparation for take-home quiz that covers mostly materials since first quiz/exam; exam is distributed

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Week 6

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6 Tu **Take home quiz due** / Assignment 1 is distributed and explained

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8 Th Furlough/ no class / Read R4 on skin shade and marriage

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Week 7 Segment III on Love and Money

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13 Tu **Assignment 1** is due

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15 Th

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Week 8 Segment IV on the Economics of Household Chores

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Tu **Quiz 2** on materials taught since take-home exam/ class taught after quiz

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22 Th

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Week 9 Segment V on Households and Labor Force

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27 Tu

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29 Th

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**November**

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Week 10

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3 Tu Conclusions on time use and marriage markets

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5 Th Preparation for presentations due at end of semester. Topic: family policies. Instructions are given in class. Review in preparation for quiz.

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Week 11

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10 Tu FURLOUGH  
Students study for quiz 3

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11 We 'Veterans Day' campus closed

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12 Th QUIZ 3 / Lecture in Preparation for presentations

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Week 12

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17 Tu presentations start

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19 Th 2d day of presentations

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Week 13

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24 Tu 3d day of presentations

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26 Th Thanksgiving day

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Fr Thanksgiving Holiday

## December

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Week 14

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1 Tu fourth day of presentations

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3 Th Fifth day of presentations

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Week 15

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8 Tu Concluding lecture by the professor

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10 Th Optional Quiz 4 about materials taught after quiz 1 and what professor said in class since the start of students' presentations

## TOPICS AND READINGS

Note: many of the readings are out of *Marriage and the Economy* (MAE) edited by Shoshana Grossbard-Shechtman, Cambridge U Press, 2003. The other readings are collected in a Reader available at Calcoply or can be downloaded from the web.

### **I. Introduction to the Course**

### **II. Marriage, Cohabitation, and Divorce**

R1. Betsey Stevenson and Justin Wolfers, "Marriage and divorce: changes and their driving forces" *J of Economic Perspectives*, Spring 2007, pp 27-52.

Chapters 1 (by Grossbard) and 3 (by Lehrer) in MAE (*Marriage and the Economy*)

R2. MV Lee Badgett, Gary Gates and Natalya Maisel, "Registered domestic partnerships among gay men and lesbians: the role of economic factors." *Review of Economics of the Household*, December 2008, forthcoming

R3. Article by Donna St George on marriage and parenthood, *NY Times*.

R4. Hamilton, Darrick, Arthur H. Goldsmith and William A. Darity Jr. 2009. “Shedding “Light” on Marriage: The Influence of Skin Shade on Marriage for Black Females.” *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, forthcoming.

### **III. Economics of Love and Money**

Chapter 5 in MAE by Woolley

R5. Selected readings on material benefits and electronic dating

“[Do women value marriage more? The effect of obesity on cohabitation and marriage in the USA](#)” by [Sankar Mukhopadhyay](#), Review of Economics of the Household, [Volume 6, Number 2 / June, 2008](#)

[Intrahousehold allocation of financial resources: evidence from South Korean individual bank accounts](#) by [Jungmin Lee](#) and [Mark L. Pockock](#), Review of Economics of the Household, [Volume 5, Number 1 / March, 2007](#)

### **IV. Household Chores**

Chapter 9 (by Hersch) in MAE

R6 Almudena Sevilla Sanz “Divison of Household Labor and Household Formation.” *J of Population Economics*, forthcoming

Leisure/work debate on



<http://freakonomics.blogs.nytimes.com/2007/06/11/another-economist-heard-from-in-the-leisurework-debate/> and article by Dubner and Levitt that this responded to.

R7. Shoshana Grossbard, J Ignacio Gimenez and J Alberto Molina. “Household Chores and Racial Discrimination”, Paper prepared for presentation at the Annual Meetings of the European Economics Society, Barcelona, August 2009.

## V. Work in the Labor Force



[Labour force participation of women and « marriage market » in the USA \(English\)](#)

Chapter 10 (by Grossbard and Neuman) in MAE

## **VI. Children as Economic Agents**

Shelly Lundberg, Jennifer L. Romich and Kwok Ping Tsang “Decision-making by children.” Review of Economics of the Household, Vol 7, March 2009.

<http://www.springerlink.com/content/618610672t3ml3r5/?p=953665ef5c504e1ba1796a4c9a344920&pi=38>

[Leaving Home in Europe: The Role of Parents’ and Children’s Incomes](#) by [David le Blanc](#) and [François-Charles Wolff](#), Review of Economics of the Household, [Volume 4, Number 1 / March, 2006](#)

## **VII. Family Policies**

Chapter 4 by (Whittington and Alm) in MAE

[PERSPECTIVE ARTICLE: The impact of Nordic countries’ family friendly policies on employment, wages, and children](#) by [Nabanita Datta Gupta](#), [Nina Smith](#) and [Mette Verner](#), Review of Economics of the Household, [Volume 6, Number 1 / March, 2008](#)