

Rutgers University
Department of Women's and Gender Studies

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Statistics for Feminists
Fall 2006, FS 109
Thursdays, periods 2 and 3

Professor Yana Rodgers
Office: RJC 214
Office Hours: T, Th 9:30-11:00am
or by appointment.

Course Description: Getting to the policy discussion table is one of the objectives pursued by feminist scholars and advocates. However, some participants in this process have remarked that “you cannot get to the policy discussion table until you have proven that you can crunch the numbers.” This comment highlights the importance of using quantitative methods in order to rank feminist objectives among the leading priorities of policy making bodies. This course provides students with additional opportunities to engage in policy making discourse and broaden their scholarship by offering an introduction to quantitative methods.

The course seeks to develop your skills as a consumer and a producer of quantitative feminist research, with more emphasis on the consumer aspects. The course requirements are designed with this objective in mind. Upon completion of the course you will be a more informed and critical reader of academic work, news accounts, and policy materials that present statistical evidence. You will also be able to conduct and present elementary statistical analyses on your own.

Our class meetings will emphasize how empirical methods are used to assemble, describe, and draw inferences from bodies of data. Emphasis is on basic but serviceable methods of statistical analysis for information drawn from surveys. The course includes exercises in the analysis of survey data.

Our coverage of statistical analysis starts simple and gets gradually more involved. We study graphical approaches to the display of data, descriptive statistics for making statements about a body of data, and inferential statistics for generalizing beyond a body of data to some larger population of interest. We will touch on topics such as the purpose of quantitative feminist research and the logic involved in pursuing this kind of research. Because we are covering many topics involving the use of statistics in feminist research, we will not delve into any particular topic in great detail.

Evaluation: Your comfort with and abilities in statistical analysis will improve with timely practice and repetition. For this reason the course requires problem sets. Some problems involve modest amounts of calculation, while others require that you learn how to analyze data using the spreadsheet package Excel. In some problem sets you will be asked to write short summaries and interpretations of findings you have obtained. The problem sets are complemented by several PowerPoint presentations and written papers in which you practice the formulation of hypotheses, the description of data and methods, and the presentation of quantitative evidence in tables and graphs.

Grades are determined by class participation (15%), two in-class presentations (25%), three problem sets (25%), and two medium-length papers of 5-6 pages each (35%).

Class Participation: You will earn points toward class participation for each class period in which you demonstrate that you have read the material and can make sensible remarks.

In-Class Presentations: In groups of two, you will make two 20-minute presentations. You and your partner will prepare a powerpoint presentation for the class that presents the arguments and evidence from an article on the syllabus.

Papers: The papers focus on literature reviews and analysis with descriptive statistics.

Class Format and Special Events: The class format is a combination of lecture by the professor, class discussion, student presentations, and in-class small group work. Each class meeting will have at least one short break. Some classes may also be comprised of guest lectures and video clips.

Required Books: The course has two required books that are available at the student co-op.

* Bennett, J., W. Briggs, and Mario Triola. 2003. *Statistical Reasoning for Everyday Life*. 2nd Edition. Boston: Addison Wesley.

* Studenmund. 2006. *Using Econometrics: A Practical Guide*. 5th Edition. Boston: Addison Wesley.

Class Schedule, Topics, and Reading Assignments: All articles are available electronically through the Rutgers Libraries. Instructions for linking to articles will be given in class.

Class 1: Introduction; Feminist Methodological Contributions

Barker, Drucilla. 2005. "Beyond Women and Economics: Rereading 'Women's Work,'" *Signs* 30 (4): 2189-2210.

Tickner, J. Ann. 2005. "Gendering a Discipline: Some Feminist Methodological Contributions to International Relations," *Signs* 30 (4): 2173-2189.

Bristor, Julia, and Eileen Fischer. 1993. "Feminist Thought: Implications for Consumer Research," *Journal of Consumer Research* 19 (4): 518-538.

Class 2: Feminist Data and Methods

Berik, Gunseli. 1997. "The Need for Crossing the Method Boundaries in Economics Research," *Feminist Economics* 3 (2): 121-125.

Van Staveren, Irene. 1997. "Focus Groups: Contributing to a Gender-Aware Methodology," *Feminist Economics* 3 (2): 131-135.

Esim, Simel. 1997. "Can Feminist Methodology Reduce Power Hierarchies in Research Settings?" *Feminist Economics* 3 (2): 137-139.

Olmstead, Jennifer. 1997. "Telling Palestinian Women's Economic Stories," *Feminist Economics* 3 (2): 141-151.

Class 3: Advantages and Disadvantages of Statistical Analyses in Feminist Research

Bennett, Briggs, Triola: Chapter 1.

World Bank. *Engendering Development: Through Gender Equality in Rights, Resources, and Voice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001). Summary Chapter.

Chen, M., J. Sebstad, and L. O'Connell. 1999. "Counting the Invisible Workforce: The Case of Homebased Workers," *World Development* 27 (3): 603-10.

Class 4: Navigating Measurement Issues in Published Statistics about Women, Work, and Pay

Bennett, Briggs, Triola: Chapter 2.

Stark, Agneta, *et al.* 2005. "Gender and Aging: Cross National Contrasts," *Feminist Economics* 11(2): 163-197.

Class 5: Using Descriptive Statistics to Send Effective Messages about Women's Status

Bennett, Briggs, Triola: Chapter 3.

"Gender and Racial Differences in Vocational Education: An International Perspective," *International Journal of Manpower* 27 (4), July 2006, 308-320 (with Teresa Boyer).

Class 6: Understanding Statistical Terms in Reports and Articles Relevant to the Feminist Agenda

Bennett, Briggs, Triola: Chapters 4,5.

Alm, James, M.V. Lee Badgett, and Leslie Whittington. 2001. "Wedding Bell Blues: The Income Tax Consequences of Legalizing Same Sex Marriage," *National Tax Journal* 53 (2): 201-214.

Class 7: Making Quantitative Arguments in Feminist Policy Dialogues: Correlation and Causality

Bennett, Briggs, Triola: Chapters 6, 7.

Glover, Judith. 2001. "Targeting Women: Policy Issues Relating to Women's Representation in Professional Scientific Employment," *Policy Studies* 22 (2): 69-82.

Class 8: What Data can Feminists Use to Prove Their Point? Samples and Populations

Bennett, Briggs, Triola: Chapter 8.

Jacobsen, Joyce, and Andrew Newman. 1997. "What Data Do Economists Use? The Case of Labor Economics and Industrial Relations," *Feminist Economics* 3 (2): 127 - 130.

Class 9: Hypothesis Testing in the Examination of Feminist Perspectives

Bennett, Briggs, Triola: Chapter 9.

Folbre, Nancy, et al. 2005. By What Measure? Family Time Devoted to Children in the U.S.” *Demography* 42 (2): 373-390.

Class 10: Regression Analysis in Research on Women: Why Learn About this Powerful Tool?

Studendum: Chapters 1 and 2.

Berik, Gunseli. 2000. “Mature Export-Led Growth and Gender Wage Inequality in Taiwan,” *Feminist Economics* 6 (3): 1

Class 11: Get a Seat at the Policy Table: Pointers to Understanding Regression Analysis

Studendum: Chapter 3.

Badgett, M.V. Lee. 1995. “The Wage Effects of Sexual Orientation Discrimination,” *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 48 (4): 726-739.

Folbre, Nancy, and M.V. Lee Badgett. 2003. “Job Gendering: Occupational Choice and the Marriage Market,” *Industrial Relations* 42 (2): 270-298.

Class 12: Joining the Policy Debates: Understanding Hypothesis Testing in Regression Analysis

Studendum: Chapters 4, 5.

Eaton, Susan. 2003. If You Can Use Them: Flexibility Policies, Organizational Commitment, and Perceived Performance,” *Industrial Relations* 42 (2): 145-167.

Class 13: Other Econometric Issues in Policy Dialogues and Feminist Research

Studendum: Chapter 11.

Darity, William, and Patrick Mason. 1998. “Evidence on Discrimination in Employment: Codes of Color, Codes of Gender,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 12 (2): 63-90.

Bertrand, Marianne, and Sendhil Mullainathan. 2004. “Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination,” *American Economic Review* 94 (4): 991-1013.

Class 14: Overview of Statistical Methods in Feminist Research: Directions for Future Research

MacDonald, Martha. 1995. “Feminist Economics: From Theory to Research,” *Canadian Journal of Economics* 28 (1): 159-176.

Nelson, Julie. 1995. “Feminism and Economics” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 9 (2): 131-148.