

## **ECON 138: The Economics of Discrimination**

All times are in PST. I reserve the right to make any changes to the syllabus as the quarter progresses. You are responsible for checking Canvas regularly for updates and announcements.

**Course content overview:** This course will investigate differences in economic outcomes by race, gender, sexual orientation, and other personal characteristics. We will study economic theories of discrimination, empirical work testing those theories, and policies aimed at alleviating group-level differences in economic outcomes. This course is also designed to teach students how to discuss controversial topics in a respectful, informed, and inclusive manner. Thanks to Professors Kate Antonovics and Prashant Bharadwaj for the original design of this course.

### **Teaching Staff:**

Instructor: Professor Alyssa Brown

- Office hour: Wednesdays 4:00pm-5:00pm, <https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/93358871318>
- Email: [aab005@ucsd.edu](mailto:aab005@ucsd.edu)
- *About Professor Brown:* I'm a 5<sup>th</sup> year PhD candidate in the Department of Economics. My research focuses on topics related to discrimination within public institutions, children's issues, and food insecurity. This is my first time teaching Econ 138 as an instructor, but I have taught this class as a TA four times (twice as Head TA) and was an instructor previously for Econ 5. Prior to coming to UCSD, I graduated from the College of William and Mary with a double major in economics and math. I love teaching economics, and I am so excited to provide a "liberal arts"-style class for you this quarter.

Teaching Assistant: Tara Sullivan

- Office hour: Mondays 9:00am-10:00am in Weeks 2-10, <https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/96939370203>
- Please do not email Tara; direct all private concerns to Professor Brown!

Class time: Tuesdays/Thursdays 3:30pm-4:50pm

- <https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/95794473334>
- Zoom link opens at 3:20pm and closes at 5:00pm to allow for quick questions before and after lecture

## **Course elements:**

Course element	Percent
Writing assignments 3 writing assignments - Due January 22 (15%), February 12 (15%), and March 5 (15%) - Open Wednesday at 5 PM - Due Friday at 5 PM	45%
Quizzes (9 quizzes, best of 8, 5% each) Quizzes posted on Mondays at 12pm PST, due Tuesdays at 12pm PST, during Weeks 2-10.	40%
Final exam: 15-minute oral final exam given during finals week. I will schedule your oral exam during Week 4.	15%

**Lecture:** Lectures will consist of about one hour of traditional lecture, and then 20 minutes of class discussion. Lecture will present theory/evidence and go over the papers on your reading list. The class discussion will be about a short reading or video that you must complete prior to lecture (the starred resources in your reading list). I'll post these discussion questions on the discussion board at least 24 hours prior to lecture; you're encouraged to discuss them on the discussion board with your peers, and then I will ask for volunteers in class to answer them.

**Discussion Board:** We have a discussion board for you to ask and answer questions related to course content. Please use this discussion board rather than emailing me unless you need to discuss a private matter. I will answer questions on the discussion board and via email within 24 hours.

**In-class Participation:** UCSD policy is that instructors are not allowed to give participation credit during the COVID-19 crisis. However, you will have a much easier time with the oral final exam if you participate in class. You can participate in-class by raising your hand on Zoom or asking questions on chat. If you cannot attend class, please be an active participant on the discussion board.

**Quizzes:** There will be weekly timed quizzes in Weeks 2-10 based on the lecture, readings, and in-class discussions from the previous week. Once you start a quiz you will only have an hour to do it. You cannot take quizzes multiple times. Quizzes will be a mix of multiple choice and free response. Quizzes are designed to make sure you are keeping up with the material for the week.

**Written Assignments:** Writing extensions ask you to apply class content to readings and topics that we haven't directly covered in class. All written assignments must be submitted via Canvas. Students agree that by taking this course all required papers will be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the terms of use agreement posted on the Turnitin.com site.

You will be given 48 hours to complete each writing assignment. PLEASE ALLOW EXTRA TIME FOR THE FIRST SUBMISSION. We do not accept email submissions.

If you need an extension on a writing assignment because of a family/health crisis, please email me ASAP. It's much easier for me to give you an extension when you let me know prior to the deadline.

**Final Exam:** The final exam will be a 15-minute oral exam scheduled during finals week. The oral exam will be similar in style to discussions we have in class; I'll ask you a few questions and you'll respond using evidence and economic reasoning from the quarter. This exam should be much easier than a written final for students who attend class and participate. If you cannot attend lecture, I strongly recommend asking and answering questions on the discussion board so you can practice "speaking" intelligently about economics. You will need to have your video and microphone on during this oral exam, and I will record our meeting.

**Administrative issues:**

1. If you have a documented disability and desire accommodation, please register with the Office for Students with Disabilities. They will contact me directly with all the information I need to make this a fair classroom.
2. UCSD has automated waitlists. If you have any questions regarding adding the class, please contact the undergraduate advisors in Economics.

**Cheating: If you normally rely on tutoring services or forms of cheating to excel in your coursework, please do not take this class.** You will not find these services useful and I will fail you if I find evidence of cheating. I expect you to work hard and earn a grade that's fair to you and your peers.

Students are expected to do their own work, as outlined in the UCSD Policy on Integrity of Scholarship. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Academic Integrity Coordinator. In addition to the penalties imposed by the Academic Integrity Review Board, we also reserve the right to fail students found guilty of academic misconduct.

The following are a few examples of academic dishonesty in this class:

- Having someone else complete an assignment for you or give you answers to specific questions (including the Econ Tutor or other tutoring services).
- Having someone else take your exam for you.

- Lying about having taken an exam or completed an assignment.
- Copying sentences from a website without citing it and using quotations.

You are expected to know and understand UCSD rules regarding plagiarism. Please visit this website and go through all the scenarios: <https://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/faq/index.html>

If you have a question about whether something might be considered as plagiarism, please ask me.

### **Class Schedule and Readings:**

Readings and videos with a \* must be done before lecture and will be discussed during the in-class discussion. I encourage you to do all other readings prior to lecture as well. All readings are posted on Canvas. You are only responsible for the introductions and conclusions of journal articles; the exact pages are listed in the paper citation.

January 5: Class Introduction / Econometrics Catch-Up

- Syllabus
- Egap, “10 things to know about reading a regression table”: topics 1-4
- Evans, “How to interpret regression coefficients”

January 7: How Economists Think About Discrimination

- \* “Can we Reduce Inequality by Moving People to Better Neighborhoods?” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O72aDX-rmmI>
- Daly et al. “Disappointing Facts about the Black-White Wage Gap” FRBSF Economic Letters
- Chetty et al. Race and Economic Opportunity in the United States – Executive Summary

January 12: Oaxaca Decomposition / Profit Maximization Review

- \* Exercise 1 – try to fill out missing boxes before class using Econ 1 knowledge!
- “Measuring Discrimination Oaxaca decomp” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NQaA8OAlCag>
- “Maximizing Profit Practice” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQvtnjWZoig>

January 14: Preference-Based Discrimination: Theory

- \* “Housing Segregation and Redlining in America: A Short History” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5FBJyqfoLM>
- Murphy, Kevin. “How Gary Becker Saw the Scourge of Discrimination.” Chicago Booth Review, University of Chicago, 15 June 2015.

January 19: Preference-Based Discrimination: Evidence

- \* Thompson, “School Desegregation and Black Teacher Employment.” NBER Working Paper No. 25990, June 2019. Read pages 1-3, 26-28.

- Holzer and Ihlanfeldt, "Customer Discrimination and Employment Outcomes for Minority Workers." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* Vol. 113, No. 3 (Aug., 1998). Read pages 835-837, 862-863.
- Charles and Guryan, "Prejudice and Wages: An Empirical Assessment of Becker's *The Economics of Discrimination*." *Journal of Political Economy*, 2008, vol. 116, no. 5. Read pages 773-777, 804-805.

#### January 21: Statistical Discrimination I

- \* "Exposing Housing Discrimination", <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rP7WBi9g8Dk>
- Moro, Andrea. "Statistical Discrimination." *The New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

#### January 26: Statistical Discrimination II

- \* Bryson and Chevalier, "Is there a taste for discrimination?" *VoxEU*, August 2014.
- Bohren et al, "The Dynamics of Discrimination: Theory and Evidence." *American Economic Review* 2019, 109(10). Read pages 3395-3400, 3426-3427.

#### January 28: Race and Employment: Observational Studies

- \* "The Bell Curve Controversy" [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=De\\_PIQ3RsHU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=De_PIQ3RsHU)
- Neal and Johnson. "The Role of Premarket Factors in Black-White Wage Differences." *The Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 104, no. 5, 1996. Read pages 869-871, 891-892.
- Fryer et al. "Racial Disparities in Job Finding and Offered Wages." *Journal of Law and Economics*, University of Chicago Press, vol. 56(3). Read pages 633-637, 666-670.

#### February 2: Race and Employment: Audit Studies

- \* Lopez, "Study: anti-Black Hiring Discrimination is as prevalent today as it was in 1989." *Vox*, September 2017.
- Ayres and Siegelman, "Race and Gender Discrimination in Bargaining for a New Car". *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 85, No. 3. (Jun., 1995). Read pages 304-306, 319.
- Bertrand and Mullainathan, "Are Emily and Greg More Employable Than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination." *American Economic Review*, Vol. 94 No. 4, 2004. Read pages 991-993, 1011.

#### February 4: Police Use of Force: Evidence

- \* California's new police use-of-force law, explained: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DeI5PPdW\\_vM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DeI5PPdW_vM)
- Fryer, "An Empirical Analysis of Racial Differences in Police Use of Force." *Journal of Political Economy*, 2019, vol. 127, no. 3. Read pages 1210-1216, 1258-1259.

- Hoekstra and Sloan, “Does Race Matter for Police Use of Force? Evidence from 911 Calls.” NBER Working Paper 26774, February 2020. Read pages 1-8, 29-31.
- Ang, “Effects of Police Shootings on Inner-City Students.” Quarterly Journal of Economics forthcoming, June 2020. Read pages 1-6, 32-33.
- Kearney et al, “10 Economic Facts about Crime and Incarceration in the United States.” The Hamilton Project, May 2014. Skim through the article and ensure you understand each fact.

#### February 9: Racial Profiling: Evidence

- \* “San Diego Law Enforcement Searches Blacks More, Finds Contraband on Them Less.” Voice of San Diego, December 2019.
- Antonovics and Knight. 2009. “A New Look at Racial Profiling: Evidence from the Boston Police Department”. Review of Economics and Statistics 91:1. Read pages 163, 177.
- Goncalves and Mello, “A Few Bad Apples? Racial Bias in Policing.” Conditionally accepted at American Economic Review, June 2020. Read pages 1-5, 31-32.
- “Smoking-gun evidence emerges for racial bias in American courts.” The Economist, January 2020.

#### February 11: Racial Profiling, Crime, and Incarceration: Policy Solutions

- \* Doleac, “Do body-worn cameras improve police behavior?” Brookings, 2017.
- Agan and Starr, “Ban the Box, Criminal Records, and Racial Discrimination: A Field Experiment.” The Quarterly Journal of Economics (2018). Read pages 191-197, 229-231.
- “Machine bias.” ProPublica, 2016.

#### February 16: Health Disparities

- \* “Racially-biased medical algorithm prioritizes white patients over Black patients”. PBS, 2019.
- Alsan and Wanamaker, “Tuskegee and the Health of Black Men.” The Quarterly Journal of Economics (2018). Read pages 407-413, 450-451.
- Cook et al, “The Mortality Consequences of Distinctively Black Names.” NBER Working Paper No. 21625, October 2015. Read pages 1-3, 13-14.

#### February 18: Concordance in Medical Treatment

- \* “A doctor’s memoir shows race matters in the hospital room.”  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TJa3\\_FoLdw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TJa3_FoLdw)
- “Does physician diversity matter for health outcomes?”  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rnboQY1Dy8I>
- “More Racial Diversity Among Physicians Would Lead to Better Health Among Black Men, Research Shows.” Stanford Health Policy, 2018.

#### February 23: Affirmative Action: Theory and Overview

- \* “White Students’ Unfair Advantage in Admissions.” NYT Opinions, 2017.

- Arcidiacono and Lovenheim, “Affirmative Action and the Quality-Fit Trade-off.” *Journal of Economic Literature* 2016, 54(1). Read pages 3-7, 46-47.
- Loury, “How to Mend Affirmative Action.” *The Public Interest*, 1997.

#### February 25: Affirmative Action: At UC

- \* Prop 16 failed in California. Why? And what’s next?” UCLA Newsroom.
- Antonovics and Backes. 2014. “The effect of banning affirmative action on college admissions policies and student quality.” *Journal of Human Resources* 49 (2). Read pages 295-296, 321-322.
- Bleemer, “Affirmative Action, Mismatch, and Economic Mobility after California’s Proposition 209.” Working paper, 2020. Read pages 1-6, 31-32.

#### March 2: LGB Discrimination

- \* “Why Supreme Court’s LGBTQ employment discrimination ruling marks a ‘milestone’.” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fxh\\_epZ3d6o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fxh_epZ3d6o)
- Aksoy et al, “Sexual orientation and earnings: How being in a partnership matters.” *VoxEU*, 2017.
- Burn and Martell, “Gender Typicality and Sexual Minority Labor Market Differentials.” University of Liverpool Management School Working Paper in Economics #202018, June 2020. Read pages 1-2, 27-29.
- Tilcsik, “Pride and Prejudice: Employment Discrimination against Openly Gay Men in the United States.” *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 117, No. 2 (September 2011). Read pages 586-588.

#### March 4: Gender Wage Gap: Theory and Overview

- \* “Gender Discrimination in the Labor Market: Cecilia Rouse.” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3NwiVsF3o>
- “A stunning chart shows the true cause of the gender wage gap.” *Vox*, 2018.
- “Children hurt Women’s Earnings, but Not Men’s (even in Scandinavia).” *New York Times*, 2018.

#### March 9: Gender Wage Gap: Evidence

- \* “Are men and women evaluated differently in the labor market?” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O2LcjoU6aAo>
- Burszтын et al. “‘Acting Wife’: Marriage Market Incentives and Labor Market Investments.” *American Economic Review*, vol. 107, no. 11, 2017. Read pages 3288-3293, 3317-3318.
- Bertrand et al (2010). “Dynamics of the Gender Gap for Young Professionals in the Finance and Corporate Sectors”. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*. Read pages 228-231, 252-254.
- Gneezy et al, “Performance in Competitive Environments: Gender Differences.” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, August 2003. Read pages 1049-1052, 1070-1072.

March 11: Discrimination Outside of the U.S.

- \* “Moving Up a Gear: Can a free bike help a girl’s education in Northern India?”  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6nG63lSt\\_Ek](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6nG63lSt_Ek)
- Bharadwaj and Lakdawala, “Discrimination Begins in the Womb.” Journal of Human Resources Vol 48 No 1, 2013. Read pages 71-74, 98-99.
- Jayachandran, “The Roots of Gender Inequality in Developing Countries.” Annual Review of Economics, vol. 7, no. 1, 2015. Skim through the whole paper so you know each of her listed “roots”.