The Economics of Sex-Ratio Imbalances
Course Syllabus

INSTRUCTOR

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Office hours
Mon, 130-230
and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In China, by 2020 there will be 24 million "surplus" men who will not be able to marry. On college campuses in the US, where the male-female ratio among undergraduates is about .75, the situation is very different. What happens when there are too many or too few men? Who wins and who loses? We will explore the economics literature for answers to these questions. Our exploration will consider the effects of sex-ratio imbalances on marriage, fertility, risky sexual behavior, STIs, crime, labor supply, and wages.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

There are three broad objectives: (1) develop a basic understanding of the relationship between biology and the sex ratio; (2) learn how sex-ratio imbalances are caused by both sex-selection and sorting; and (3) identify the economic effects of sex-ratio imbalances and assess their implications for society.

COURSE MATERIAL

Required course material will be comprised of scholarly and popular articles listed on the course schedule and posted on eLC. In addition, I recommend the follow two books as foundational material for course discussions.

Recommended books

Hvistendahl, Mara, Unnatural Selection: Choosing Boys over Girls, and the Consequences of a World Full of Men (Public Affairs, 2011). [Hvistendahl website; Amazon book link]

TOPICAL OUTLINE

1. The set-up
2. “Prices” and choices
3. Biology and sex ratios
4. Imbalances from sex selection
5. Imbalances from sorting

ODYSSEY GOALS

1. Introduce first-year students to the importance of learning and academics so that we engage them in the academic culture of the University.
2. Give first-year students an opportunity for meaningful dialogue with a faculty member to encourage positive, sustained student-faculty interactions.
3. Introduce first-year students to the instruction, research, public service and international missions of the University and how they relate to teaching and learning in and outside the classroom so that we increase student understanding of and participation in the full mission of the University.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING POLICY

Grades will be determined on the basis of your performance on the following assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article summaries</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
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For the article summary assignments, you will be required to provide a three-sentence summary of the assigned reading and compose a question about its content for class discussion, using the form posted on eLC. The summaries will be due at noon on the class day when the article is scheduled to be discussed. Article summaries will be categorized and scored as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality category</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accurate summary and relevant question</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accurate summary or relevant question</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submitted assignment with neither an accurate summary or relevant question</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present but no submitted assignment</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
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For the short essay, you will be required to describe and explain a sex-ratio imbalance effect that you found most interesting or provocative. The essay will be limited to 500 words and due at the end of the FYOS.
You will be ranked relative to other students in the class according to your overall performance and grades will be assigned based on class rank. I will use the plus/minus system to make distinctions within grade categories.

Related to **Odyssey Goal #3** is the requirement to attend three FYO events. Although your grade in this seminar will *not* be affected by your compliance with the “events requirement”, I strongly encourage you to satisfy it. Your first-year experience will certainly be enhanced if you do. You will find a list of sanctioned events on the **FYO website**.

**Class Attendance**

Regular class attendance is required. As indicated in the description of the required article summaries, failure to attend class will affect your course grade.

**Assignment Due Dates**

Failure to submit an assignment at the scheduled time will cause you to forfeit all of the points associated with that assignment.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY**

**Cell phones must be muted or turned off, and stowed away during class.** Laptops may be used in class, but only for purposes directly related to the course (e.g., taking notes and viewing course materials.

**UNIVERSITY HONOR CODE & ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY**

*As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University’s academic honesty policy, “A Culture of Honesty,” and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in “A Culture of Honesty” found at: [https://ovpi.uga.edu/academic-honesty](https://ovpi.uga.edu/academic-honesty). Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.*

**CHANGES TO THE SYLLABUS**

*The syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.*