

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Schar School of Policy and Government

EDPO 880 / POGO 750: Economics of Education
3 Credits, Fall 2022
Monday 4:30-7:10 pm (Virtual Class Meeting via Zoom¹)

Faculty

Name: Matthew P. Steinberg
Office Hours: By Appointment
Office Location: Arlington Campus, Van Metre Hall 677
Office Phone: 703.993.5596
Email Address: msteinb6@gmu.edu

Prerequisites/Corequisites

Enrollment limited to students in the PhD program, and by faculty permission.

University Catalog Course Description

Explores selected topics in education across all doctoral specializations. Offered by Graduate School of Education and Schar School of Policy and Government.

Course Overview

This graduate seminar will provide an overview of selected theoretical, conceptual and empirical perspectives on topics in the economics of education. We will apply economic principles to analyze a wide range of educational issues, including education finance, educator labor markets, school accountability and educational choice. This course assumes that students have no prior background in economics. Many of the readings will contain technical economic material, but the focus will be on the conceptual, theoretical and empirical findings of economic research within education. It is expected that students reflect on the findings we cover and how these findings may inform and relate to students' educational and professional experiences, and how economic theory and empirical evidence might inform students' experiences in education and education policy and how this disciplinary lens can be applied to students' own developing

¹ Zoom meeting ID: 933 3609 8356; Zoom meeting passcode: 534996; Zoom meeting link: <https://gmu.zoom.us/j/93336098356?pwd=WmNvSnMrRFdudHhIQkhtcnI3VmVNZz09>

research topics. As we move through the course, students should gain a solid understanding of how economists think about and study education-related issues.

Each class meeting will be organized around a theme or issue in U.S. public education, including (but not limited to): (a) education production; (b) education finance; (c) the role of government in education; (d) teacher labor markets; (e) accountability and the role of principal-agent relationships; and (f) educational choice and the political economy of schooling. We will dedicate the first part of each class meeting to framing the week's theme/issue in the context of social science and economic theory. We will ground the class discussion by clarifying key terminology and research methods presented in each week's empirical studies. The remainder of each class meeting will be dedicated to class discussion of the week's readings.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered using a seminar/lecture format.

Learner Outcomes and Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Develop an understanding of the fundamental themes, topics, concepts and tools in the economics of education.
2. Engage with and discuss empirical research on major education policies through the lens of economic analysis.
3. Employ the tools and fundamental principles of economics to examine and analyze education policies.
4. Think critically about how the fundamental themes and concepts in the economics of education inform education policy debates and issues.

Required Texts

1. Lovenheim, M., & Turner, S.E. (2017). *Economics of Education*. New York, NY: Worth Publishers.
2. All other readings, including journal articles and shorter, non-technical articles, are available through the course blackboard page. (Note: some of the journal articles may contain statistical or methodological concepts that may be unfamiliar; we will review and discuss these concepts in class). The instructor can suggest additional readings on methodological and statistical concepts and education-policy related topics of interest.

Course Requirements and Performance Evaluation

Expectations:

1. Attend all classes. Please provide advance notice, when possible, if you must miss a class. On these occasions, please get notes and any handouts from a colleague.

2. Read all assignments carefully and thoroughly prior to class and bring copies (either hard or electronic copy) to class.
3. Actively participate in class discussions and activities and respectfully engage with one another.
4. Submit all assignments on time. All assignments are due by 4:00 p.m. on the date indicated in the *Assignments* section below and must be emailed to the instructor at msteinb6@gmu.edu. Format for written assignments: Times New Roman size 12-point font, 1" page margins and 1.5" line spacing. Citations/references should adhere to the APA style guide manual.

Grading:

This course is graded on the Graduate Regular scale (see: <http://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/grading/>). Cumulative points corresponding to each grade are as follows:

A+ 97-100	A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 70-79
A 93-96	B+ 87-89	B- 80-82	F ≤ 69

Professional Dispositions

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see

<https://ds.gmu.edu/>).

- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/> .