Demography is an interdisciplinary field that deals with the life course of populations, describing how people are born and age; live and reproduce; fall ill and die. Demographic statistics and trends are often used by politicians, the media, and social scientists as launching points or supports for their arguments. Throughout the course, we will focus on issues that feature in contemporary social science and policy debates, including population aging, fertility and reproduction, population and economic development, immigration, and disparities by sex, race, and socioeconomic status.

The course is addressed to two groups of students (a) upper-level undergraduates and (b) graduate students. For some this course will be their only class on population. For others – especially for graduate students thinking about specializing in demography – the course is the first of several they will take. We have aimed to make the readings and lectures informative and challenging to both groups. Because of the mix of students, the amount of reading materials may be higher than usually encountered in other undergraduate courses.

Because demography is an interdisciplinary field, we offer Econ 623 and Soc 663 jointly. Knowledge of more than one specialized discipline (e.g., sociology, economics, population health, anthropology, statistics, mathematics, . . . ) is needed to appreciate the depth and breadth of population issues and research. Scholars in population studies do not have to forfeit their disciplinary training but must be willing to respectfully and completely consider alternative approaches beyond their own. Our expectations is that you will do so.

In the course you will be presented with more than one perspective on the basic components of population change: fertility, mortality, migration, aging. We have split the lectures according to our research expertise, and hope that you gain from this division of labor.

We have taught the material several times but this is the first time we have tried to meld the courses. We seek your feedback: please let us know what works, what doesn’t, what’s confusing, what readings and study aids are helpful and what else could make the material easier to understand.

Readings

Readings should be completed BEFORE the lecture for which they are assigned. There are two types of readings listed below: required and supplementary. Supplementary readings are optional for undergraduates, but graduate students (especially those planning on taking the demography prelim in sociology) should do all the readings.

Most readings are journal articles that represent classic or contemporary treatments of population issues. All the readings except Riley’s book (see below) are available on the course’s Learn@UW page.
There is one book required for this course:
The book is available for purchase at the University bookstore and via Amazon.com. Two copies are also available at the UW libraries.

We highly recommend keeping a short reading journal to help you think about the readings and study for the exams. Suggested format:

- Begin with the full reference
- Identify the main aim of the author(s). For example: to critically review a particular literature, or to answer a specific research question, or to test a hypothesis.
- Briefly describe the data used in the reading (if any) and the methods (if any).
- List, in bullet form, up to 5 main “take-home messages” of the reading.
- What are the major strengths and limitations of the reading?
- What question(s) or complaints do you have about this reading?

Course requirements, assignments, & grading

1. **Two exams (30% each).** The first exam (October 20) will cover the topics of mortality change and population health, the second (December 15) will cover material presented since the first midterm.

2. **Research paper (40%).** Your research paper grade will include three components: (i) Paper topic and bibliography (5%, due October 1st); (ii) Detailed outline and thesis statement (5%, due November 10); and (iii) Complete research paper (30%, due by Friday, December 18, 5:00 pm). See more details below.

3. **Attendance policy.** Expected. We will take attendance every class via a short quiz (conducted sometime during class) on material covered previously in class or in the assigned readings. Results on the quizzes will be used as “tie-breakers” when assigning final grades. Students with a perfect class attendance will receive 5% of extra credit. The attendance quizzes will not be returned or otherwise graded.

At the conclusion of the semester, the instructors will determine the common distribution of final grades.

**Research paper**

For their final paper, students are expected to identify a contemporary population issue and review the relevant academic literature. Successful papers will be structured around a research question (e.g. How has the HIV epidemic influenced fertility patterns in sub-Saharan Africa? How are rising levels of education influencing the health of aging populations? What is the relationship between population growth and environmental change?) and will cite at least five articles (that we have not discussed in class) from peer-reviewed scientific journals. Graduate students are encouraged to choose a topic that relates to their broader research interests. All students are welcome to meet with us during office hours for assistance choosing a paper topic.

On October 1st, students will submit their proposed paper topic (ideally phrased as a research question, like the examples above) along with a bibliography of 5-7 relevant articles that you can draw on to answer that research question. Then, on November 10th, you will submit a detailed outline that
includes your thesis statement (ideally: a carefully considered answer to the research question you posed) and a summary of the key arguments and data points you will use to support your thesis. You will receive feedback on these assignments and will be expected to incorporate that feedback as you write your paper. Late assignments will lose one letter grade for each day that they are late.

You final papers must be double spaced, in 12pt Times New Roman font. Undergraduates should plan to write 6-8 pages; graduate students should plan to write 8-12 pages. The final papers are due on December 18th via the course dropbox on Learn@UW.

Accommodations

Please send the instructors an email by the end of the second week of the course if you are eligible for special arrangements or accommodations for testing, assignments, or other aspects of the course. Accommodations are provided for students who qualify for disability services through the McBurney Center. Their website has detailed instructions about how to qualify: http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/. Provide a copy of your accommodations request (VISA) to the instructor by the end of the second week of class. We try to reserve rooms and proctors by the third week in class, so we must know of all accommodations by then.

If you wish to request a scheduling accommodation for religious observances, send an email by the end of the second week of the course stating the specific date(s) for which you request accommodation. See https://kb.wisc.edu/page.php?id=21698 for details on UW’s campus policy.

Academic Honesty

In your written assignment, you are expected to exercise academic honesty and integrity and to produce original work. If you must use the exact words used in another source, use quotation marks to indicate that those words are not your own and provide full credit to the source. If you are using an idea you obtained from someone else, cite the author(s), even if you did not quote her/him/them directly. The set of ideas you must cite includes those obtained from Wikipedia or any Internet source. According to UWS 14, academic misconduct occurs when a student:

- seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
- uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
- forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
- intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
- engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of [...] academic performance;
- assists other students in any of these acts.

The university’s Writing Center has an excellent webpage about how to successfully quote and paraphrase texts: http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QuotingSources.html. See also these guidelines about avoiding plagiarism: http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html.

The internet makes it very easy to plagiarize (both intentionally and not), but it also makes it easy to identify plagiarized texts. Evidence of academic dishonesty in an assignment will result in an automatic grade of zero for the assignment, and will be reported to the Dean of Students following a meeting with the professor.
Logistics and Classroom Etiquette:

Laptops and all other electronic devices (cell phones, iPads, tablets, etc.) should be in “sleep” or “airplane” mode at the beginning of class. Electronic devices are not allowed for use in class, (unless approved (with documentation) by the McBurney Center). Electronic devices prove distracting and create barriers for communication and sociability. The course requires a minimum amount of note taking. We will post in a timely fashion lecture notes and supplementary material on the course web page. As a courtesy to your fellow students and the instructors, please arrive on time and stay for the entire class. If you must leave early, courtesy dictates you notify the speaker before class. Also, please sit by the door.

Grievance and Appeal Procedures

The Departments of Economics and Sociology have developed a grievance procedure through which you may register comments or complaints about a course, instructor, or a teaching assistant. Both departments also use course evaluations. If you wish to make anonymous complaints to an instructor or teaching assistant, the appropriate vehicle is the course evaluation. If you have a disagreement with an instructor, we strongly encourage you to resolve the dispute with him or her. The grievance procedure is for situations where neither the course evaluation nor direct contact is appropriate.

To file a grievance with the Economics department, you should go the undergraduate departmental office (Social Science 7238) and request a Course Content Sheet. On it you must provide a detailed statement about what you find unsatisfactory. You must also sign the sheet, provide your student ID number, an address and phone number. The Departments investigates grievances fully and will respond in writing. Your name, address, phone number and student ID will not be provided to the instructor or teaching assistant and will be treated confidentially. The Department uses this information in case the Department Chair or the chair’s nominee wishes to meet with the student to gather additional information. The written response is mailed to the address provided by the student.

If you would like to report an immediate concern to the Sociology office, please contact the chair at 8128 Social Science, or via email: Pamela.oliver@wisc.edu

Sociology learning objectives

Beyond the specific substantive and methodological content we will cover in this course, we have designed this course to achieve the following instructional objectives designated as priorities by the Department of sociology:

- **Critically Evaluate Published Research**: Students will be able to read and evaluate published research as it appears in academic journals and popular or policy publications.
- **Communicate Skillfully**: Students will write papers that build arguments and assess evidence in a clear and effective manner.
- **Critical Thinking about Society and Social Processes**: Students can look beyond the surface of issues to discover the ”why” and ”how” of social order and structure and consider the underlying social mechanisms that may be creating a situation, identify evidence that may adjudicate between alternate explanations for phenomena, and develop proposed policies or action plans in light of theory and data.
• **See Things from a Global Perspective**: Students learn about different cultures, groups, and societies across both time and place. They are aware of the diversity of backgrounds and experiences among residents of the United States. They understand the ways events and processes in one country are linked to those in other countries.

• **Prepare for Graduate School and the Job Market**: Students use their social research skills to identify opportunities for employment or further study, assess their qualifications for these opportunities, and identify strategies for gaining the necessary knowledge and experience to improve their qualifications. Students are encouraged to develop and maintain portfolios of their written work and educational experiences to aid them in preparing applications.

• **Improve project management skills**: Students will improve their skills in time management, ordering and executing a series of complex and inter-related tasks, and integrating distinct components of a project into a final product.

**Career Help for Econ Majors**

If you would like to discuss career options and career skills learned as an economics major, you are encouraged to email the Department Career Coordinator, Elizabeth Foste at foste@wisc.edu.
## Course Overview and Organization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>September 3</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>ME &amp; JW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>September 8</td>
<td>Demographic transition &amp; population growth</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September 10</td>
<td>Malthus: Theory and Evidence</td>
<td>JW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>September 15</td>
<td>Rising longevity</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September 17</td>
<td>Population and economic development</td>
<td>JW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>September 22</td>
<td>Medicine, public health, &amp; mortality decline</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September 24</td>
<td>Epidemiologic transition</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>September 29</td>
<td>Population aging</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>October 1</td>
<td>Inequalities by sex</td>
<td>ME, Paper topic due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>October 6</td>
<td>Inequalities by socioeconomic status</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>October 8</td>
<td>Inequalities by race</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>October 13</td>
<td>Health across the life course</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>October 15</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>October 20</td>
<td><strong>Exam 1</strong></td>
<td>JW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>October 22</td>
<td>Fertility Overview: Levels, Trends, Measurement</td>
<td>JW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>October 27</td>
<td>Neoclassical economic theory of fertility</td>
<td>JW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>October 29</td>
<td>Easterlin: Perspective of a reluctant economist</td>
<td>JW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>November 3</td>
<td>Anthropological and sociological theories of fertility</td>
<td>JW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>November 5</td>
<td>Family Planning Programs</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>November 10</td>
<td>Fertility response to mortality</td>
<td>JW, Outline due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>November 12</td>
<td>Different perspectives on marriage</td>
<td>JW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>November 17</td>
<td>Matching Markets: On the job and at home</td>
<td>JW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>November 19</td>
<td>Household Behavior: Altruism and Rotten Kids</td>
<td>JW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>November 24</td>
<td>Population Environment: Tragedy of the Commons</td>
<td>JW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>November 26</td>
<td><em>Thanksgiving</em></td>
<td>No class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>December 1</td>
<td>Migration: Economic perspectives</td>
<td>JW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>December 3</td>
<td>Migration and health</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>December 8</td>
<td>Weighing Lives</td>
<td>JW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>December 10</td>
<td>Review &amp; Conclusion</td>
<td>JW &amp; ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>December 15</td>
<td><strong>Exam II</strong></td>
<td>JW, Paper topic due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final paper will is due on or before Friday, December 18.
Detailed Schedule

**Thur. Sept 3: Introduction to the course**

*Supplementary reading*


**Tue. Sept 8: Demographic Transition & Population growth**

*Required reading*


*Supplementary reading*


**Thurs, Sept 10: Malthus: Theory and Evidence**

*Required reading*


*Supplementary reading*


**Tue., Sept 15: Rising longevity**

*Required reading*

Riley, ch. 5

Supplementary reading


Thurs., Sept 17: Population & economic development

Required reading

Riley, Rising Life Expectancy, chapter 4.


Supplementary reading


Tue. Sept 22: Why did mortality decline? The role of medicine and public health

Required reading

Riley, Rising Life Expectancy, chapters 2 and 3.


Supplementary reading


Thurs., Sept 24: Epidemiologic transition

**Required reading**


**Supplementary reading**


---

Tue., Sept 29: Population aging

**Required reading**


**Supplementary reading**


---

Thurs., Oct 1: Inequalities by sex/gender

**Required reading**


Supplementary reading


Tue. Oct 6: Inequalities by socioeconomic status

*** Paper topic/research question and bibliography due in class ***

Required reading


Supplementary reading


Thurs. Oct 8: Inequalities by race

Required reading


Supplementary reading


Sat., Oct 13: Life course linkages

Required reading


Supplementary reading


Thurs., Oct 15: Review

Tue., Oct 20: * EXAM 1 *

Thurs. Oct 22: Fertility overview: Levels, trends, measurement

Required reading


Supplementary reading


Tue. Oct 27: Neoclassical economic theory of fertility

Required reading


Supplementary reading


**Thurs. Oct 29: Easterlin: Perspective of a reluctant economist**

*Required reading*


*Supplementary reading*


**Tue. Nov 3: Anthropological and Sociological Theories of Fertility**

*Required reading*


*Supplementary reading*


**Thurs. Nov 5: Family Planning Programs**

*Required reading*


Supplementary reading


Tue. Nov 10: Fertility Response to Mortality

Required reading


Supplementary reading


Thurs. Nov 12: Different Perspectives on Marriage

Required reading


Supplementary reading

Tue., Nov 17: Matching Markets: On the job and at home

Required reading


Supplementary reading


Required reading

Supplementary reading

Tue. Nov 24: Population and Environment: tragedy of the commons
Required reading
Hardin, Garret (1968) Tragedy of the Commons, Science 162(3859): 1243-1248.

Supplementary reading

Thurs. Nov 26: Happy Thanksgiving! No class

Tue. Dec 1: Migration: Economic perspectives
Required reading

Supplementary reading
Thurs. Dec 3: Migration and health

Required reading


Supplementary reading


Tue. Dec 8, Weighing Lives: Ethical Considerations in Population Analysis

Required reading

Supplementary reading

Thurs. Dec 10: Review & Conclusion

Tue., Dec 15: Exam II

Final paper will be due via the Learn@UW DropBox on Friday, December 18, 5pm.