

## Population Problems

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The world is currently in the midst of an enormous demographic transition. Over the next century, the global population is projected to increase from 7 to 12 billion. Low-income countries (particularly in Africa) will grow rapidly, while nations in Western Europe and East Asia are expected to decline in size. Over the same period in the United States, the median age will rise to 40, the Asian and Hispanic-origin populations will triple in size, and the proportion of white Americans will decline.

This sociology course draws on materials and perspectives from the related fields of demography (the statistical study of populations) and epidemiology (the study of the distribution and determinants of health and disease states in populations). We will examine how certain social phenomena – particularly structural inequality – influence and are reproduced by population change both globally and in the contemporary United States. Throughout the course, we will focus on issues that feature in current social science and public policy debates, including population aging, fertility and reproduction, immigration, and social inequalities. We'll pay special attention to health disparities by race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.

The goals of the course are **(1)** to provide students with methodological tools to understand population change in a systematic way, **(2)** to introduce the core concepts and debates in social demography and social epidemiology, and **(3)** to use these tools and concepts to (a) understand how population processes contribute to the production of inequality within and across generations and (b) examine racial and ethnic inequality in the United States and its implications for population health.

## Course structure and attendance

The course consists of two lectures and one section meeting per week. **Section meetings will start on Monday, September 7th.**

You are expected to read and/or view all assigned materials **before** lecture. Lectures will draw attention to select issues from the required readings and videos, but also present new material not covered in the assigned readings. Lecture slides will be posted online but do not contain all the important information covered in class. You are responsible for all material covered in lecture in addition to everything covered in the required assignments. If you must miss class for any reason (e.g. religious holidays, family emergencies), it is your responsibility to get notes from your classmates for the sessions that you miss.

The weekly discussion sections give you the opportunity to engage with the material on a deeper level. Section discussions are an integral part of this course, and section attendance is mandatory. Your contributions to discussions should demonstrate your familiarity with the reading material. You're encouraged to draw links among texts and concepts, connecting back to readings and discussions from earlier in the course. Your TA will distribute a separate section handout with further instructions about the attendance and participation policies.

## Course communications

Due to the large size of this course, please adhere to the following procedure:

- If you have questions or concerns, always check the course website and syllabus first.
- If you can't find what you need there, contact your TA first.
- If issues remain, come to my office hours – there's no appointment needed. You can also always talk to me after lecture.
- If a schedule conflict prevents you from talking with me after lecture or during office hours, email [mengelman@wisc.edu](mailto:mengelman@wisc.edu) to set up an appointment for another time.

Please remember that email is a professional communication tool, and proper form matters (e.g. salutation, syntax, signature). This website has examples and guidelines about emailing professors and TAs: [www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor](http://www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor). We try to respond to all emails within two business days.

## Required readings and videos

All required articles and videos will be made available through the course's Learn@UW page (<https://learnuw.wisc.edu/>). There are no required books for this course.

## Evaluation and grades

Your grade in this course will be based on the following components:

- Exam 1: In class, Thursday, October 15th (25% of total grade, covers weeks 1-7)
- Exam 2: In class, Tuesday, December 15th (35% of total grade, covers weeks 8-15)

- Three short writing assignments, due at the beginning of class on October 8th, November 17th, and December 10th. The purpose of these assignments is to connect what you have learned in class to whats going on in the world around you. Instructions will be given and discussed in section. (30% of total grade)
- Attendance and *active* participation in section (10% of total grade)

There will be an opportunity to complete an extra credit essay worth up to 2% of the total grade. A prompt for this assignment will be posted on Learn@UW in November, and the essay will be due by December 3rd.

Grades will be assigned in accordance with the UW undergraduate grade policy, using the following point distribution:

A: 93-100 AB: 87-92.99 B: 83-86.99 BC: 77-82.99 C: 70-76.99 D: 60-69.99 F: 0-59.99

You may contest specific exam and assignment grades *up to two weeks* after exams and assignments have been returned. Raise minor issues (e.g. computational errors in your score) with your TA. Any substantive concerns about the contents of your answer should be discussed with the professor. Requests to re-grade assignments after final grades are submitted will not be honored.

## Exam policy

You will take two midterm exams, accounting for 60% of your final grade. All material presented in lecture and in your required readings is fair game. The exams will consist of multiple-choice and short-answer questions that emphasize concepts, facts, and mechanisms discussed in class and in your readings. The exams are non-cumulative and will take place during normal class times. Note: Your online schedule will list a “final exam” time for this course. Please ignore this: there will be no additional final exam after the course ends.

Unfortunately, a class of this size cannot accommodate make-up exams, so please don't ask if you can take a test at a different time to accommodate travel plans. Exceptions to this policy include missing an exam because of a serious illness, a serious family emergency, or a religious observance. In such cases, please let the professor and your TA know as soon as possible so we can make alternate arrangements. Note that you'll need to provide evidence of illness or emergency.

## Digital devices

You may use **laptops or tablets** to take notes during lecture. However, please **keep cells phones off and away** during lecture and section. If we have any evidence that you're using a laptop, tablet computer, phone, or other device for anything other than discussion-related purposes, the TAs will write down your name and your participation grade may be docked. Please note that Facebook, Twitter, and/or other social-media sites are not considered to be course-related, even if you're posting about your professor, TA, or classmates...

Absolutely no devices (including phones, laptops, iPods, etc.) are allowed during exams, and you may not record any lectures without written consent from Dr. Engelman.

## Accommodations

Please send Dr. Engelman and your TA 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; campus policy requires that religious observances be accommodated if you make a timely request early in the term. See <https://kb.wisc.edu/page.php?id=21698> for details.

## Academic Integrity

In your exams and written assignments, you are expected to exercise academic honesty and integrity. 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.

Cheating, plagiarism, or any other breach of academic integrity on an assignment in this course will result in an automatic failing grade of 0 for the exam or assignment in question, and a submission of written reports to your college dean and the dean of students. Those administrators may (at their discretion) take further disciplinary action. Please note that lack of familiarity with policies will not excuse failure to comply with them.

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](http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html).

Remember that while internet makes it very easy to plagiarize (both intentionally and not), but it also makes it easy to identify plagiarized texts. Please note that the Department of Sociology has a license for anti-plagiarism software. Your submitted written work for this class can be compared to a large database of existing written work. Similarly, your work can be added to this database against which future students work will be compared. Please make every effort to avoid such issues in your section writing assignments.

## Department learning objectives

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

the Department of sociology:

- *Critically Evaluate Published Research*: Sociology graduates will be able to read and evaluate published research as it appears in academic journals and popular or policy publications.
- *Communicate Skillfully*: Sociology majors write papers and make oral presentations that build arguments and assess evidence in a clear and effective manner.
- *Critical Thinking about Society and Social Processes*: Sociology graduates 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*: Sociologists 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.

## Departmental notice of grievance and appeal rights

The Department of Sociology regularly conducts student evaluations of all professors and teaching assistants near the end of the semester. Students who have more immediate concerns about this course should report them to the instructor or to the chair, 8128 Social Science (Pamela.oliver@wisc.edu).

## Civility

This course touches on a number of subjects that are at the center of debates and even controversy in the United States. We will engage with these controversies in class (and even more so in section), so being civil and mindful will be essential for keeping the conversations constructive. Throughout our discussions, we (the teaching staff) will start out under the expectation that no one is intentionally raising inflammatory or inappropriate questions or comments; we ask you to do the same, and to help avoid making anyone reconsider that expectation. At the same time, we recognize that there might be points at which someone's questions or comments strike someone else as hurtful or deeply objectionable. In such cases, we ask all of you to seriously consider the other person's point of view. It's important to neither jump to the conclusion that someone is completely aware of how their contributions are registering with everyone else in the room, nor to assume that reactions to a given contribution are off base simply because the speaker didn't intend or understand the contribution to be problematic. In short: be empathetic and strive to keep the discussion respectful. Put yourself in the other person's shoes, and try to help them understand your own point of view, drawing on the course material. If you notice someone else becoming upset, ask yourself why that might be the case, and think about the purpose of academic exchange. Remember: the idea is not to win an argument; the idea is to come to a better understanding of population problems and their potential solutions.

## Course overview

Week	Date	Topic	Notes
1	September 3	Introduction	
2	September 8	Population concepts	
	September 10	Demographic transition	
3	September 15	Population growth & the environment	
	September 17	Why fertility changes	
4	September 22	Human control over fertility	
	September 24	Lowest-low and sex-selective fertility	
5	September 29	Human longevity	
	October 1	Population aging	
6	October 6	Epidemiological transition	
	October 8	Health reversals	<b>Writing assignment 1</b>
7	October 13	Summary & Review	
	October 15	<b>Exam 1</b>	
8	October 20	Social construction of race	
	October 22	Racialized social systems	
9	October 27	Health in the US	
	October 29	Health inequalities I	
10	November 3	Residential segregation	
	November 5	Neighborhoods and health	
11	November 10	Health inequalities II	
	November 12	Health inequalities III	
12	November 17	Life course perspective	<b>Writing assignment 2</b>
	November 19	Why do people migrate?	
13	November 24	<i>Thanksgiving week</i>	No class
	November 26	<i>Thanksgiving</i>	No class
14	December 1	Immigration to the US	
	December 3	Ethnic enclaves	<i>Extra credit essay (optional)</i>
15	December 8	Migration and health	
	December 10	Review & Conclusion	<b>Writing assignment 3</b>
16	December 15	<b>Exam 2</b>	

## Detailed Schedule

### **Thurs. Sept 3: Introduction**

### **Tue., Sept 8: Population concepts and measures**

Preston, S. H., P. Heuveline, and M. Guillot. (2001). *Demography: Measuring and modeling population processes*. UK, Blackwell Publishers. **Pages 1-8, 16-20.**

Population Reference Bureau. (2004). *Population Handbook*, pages 1-11.

### **Thurs. Sept 10: The Demographic Transition**

Weeks, J.R (2004). "Demographic Perspectives" in *Population: An Introduction to Concepts and Issues*, Ninth Ed., Wadsworth Publishing. Chapter 3.

### **Tue. Sept 15: Population growth and the environment**

Population Reference Bureau. (2004). *Population Handbook*, pages 13-22.

Rosling, H. (2010, December). The magic washing machine. TED Video, 9:16.

[http://www.ted.com/talks/hans\\_rosling\\_and\\_the\\_magic\\_washing\\_machine.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/hans_rosling_and_the_magic_washing_machine.html)

Test your ecological footprint: <http://www.earthday.org/footprint-calculator>

### **Thurs., Sept 17: Why fertility changes**

Hirschman, C. (1994). Why fertility changes. *Annual Review of Sociology* 20:203-233. **(Focus on pp. 208-217.)**

### **Tue., Sept 22: Human control over fertility**

UNFPA. (2008). How Universal is Access to Reproductive Health? Pages 9-19.

Kaiser, J. (2011). Does Family Planning Bring Down Fertility? *Science* 333:548-549.

### **Thurs., Sept 24: Lowest-low and sex-selective fertility**

Morgan, S. P. (2003). Is Low Fertility a Twenty-First Century Demographic Crisis? *Demography* 40(4): 589-603.

Hesketh, T and Z. W. Xing. 2006. Abnormal sex ratios in human populations: Causes and consequences *PNAS* 103:13271-13275.

**Tue., Sept 29: Human longevity**

Oeppen, J. and J. Vaupel (2002). Broken Limits to Life Expectancy. *Science* 296:1029-1031.

Fries, J.F. (1980). Aging, Natural Death, and the Compression of Morbidity. *New England Journal of Medicine* 303:130-135.

Hans Rosling. (2010). 200 Countries, 200 Years, 4 Minutes:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbkSRLYSojo>

**Thurs., Oct 1: Population aging**

Williamson, J.B. and D.M. Watts-Roy. (2009). Aging boomers, generational equity, and framing the debate over social security. In *Boomer Bust? Economic and Political Issues of the Graying Society*, edited by Robert B. Hudson. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group. 153-169.

**Tue., Oct 6: Epidemiologic Transition**

Horiuchi, S. 1999. Epidemiological Transitions In Human History. In United Nations, ed. *Health and Mortality Issues of Global Concern* pp 54-71. NY: United Nations.

**Thurs., Oct 8: Health reversals**

McKee, M. and V. Shkolnikov. (2001). Understanding the toll of premature death among men in eastern Europe. *BMJ* 323: 1051-1055.

**\*\*\* Writing Assignment 1 DUE in Lecture \*\*\*\***

**Tue., Oct 13:** Summary & Review for Exam

**Thurs., Oct 15 Exam 1**

**Tue., Oct 20: The social construction of Race**

Golash-Boza, T. (2014). Chapter 3: Racial Ideologies from 1920 to the Present. (pp. 63-89), and Chapter 6: White Privilege and the Changing Racial Hierarchy. (pp. 147-173), in *Race and Racisms: A Critical Approach*. Oxford University Press.

**Thurs., Oct 22: Racialized social systems in the United States**

Golash-Boza, T. (2014). Chapter 7: Understanding Racial Inequality Today: Sociological Theories of Racism. Pages 178-190 in *Race and Racisms: A Critical Approach*. Oxford University Press.

Reskin, B. (2012). The Race Discrimination System. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 38, 17-35.

**Tue., Oct. 27 : Health in the US**

Institute of Medicine. 2013. *US health in international perspective: Shorter lives, poorer health.* Summary, chapter 3, and chapter 4.

**Thurs., Oct 29: Health inequalities I: Introduction**

Link, B.G., and J.C. Phelan. (1995). Social Conditions as Fundamental Causes of Disease. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 35: 80-94. **Focus on pages 84-88.**

Kawachi I, SV Subramanian, & N Almeida-Filho. 2003. A Glossary For Health Inequalities. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health* 56: 647-652.

**Tue., Nov 3: Residential segregation**

Massey, D. S. and N. A. Denton (1993). *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of an Underclass.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. Chapters 2 and 4.

**Thurs., Nov 5: Neighborhoods and health**

Adelman, Larry. 2008. Place Matters. In *Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?* Part 5, 29 minutes. San Francisco, CA: California Newsreel. (Link available on Learn@UW)

**Tue., Nov 10: Health inequalities II: Race**

Krieger, Nancy. 2005. Stormy Weather: Race, Gene Expression, and the Science of Health Disparities. *Am J Pub Hlth* 95(12): 2155-2160.

Adelman, Larry. 2008. When the Bough Breaks. In *Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?* Part 2, 29 minutes. San Francisco, CA: California Newsreel. (Link on Learn@UW)

Jones, C.P. et al. 2008. Using Socially Assigned Race to Probe White Advantages in Health Status. *Ethnicity & Disease* 18:496-504.

**Thurs, Nov 12: Health inequalities III: Poverty and stress**

Sapolsky, R. Sick of Poverty *Scientific American.* 21 Nov 2005.

Kawachi, I., N. Daniels, and D.E. Robinson. 2005. Health disparities by race and class: Why both matter. *Health Affairs* 24(2):343-352.

**Tue., Nov 17: A life course perspective on disparities**

**\*\*\* Writing Assignment 2 DUE in Lecture \*\*\*\***

Paul, AM. 2010. How the first nine months shape the rest of your life. *Time* 4 Oct 2010.

Geronimus AT, Hicken M, Keene D, Bound J. (2006). "Weathering" and age patterns of allostatic load scores among blacks and whites in the United States. *Am J Publ Hlth* 96(5):826-833.

**Thurs., Nov 19: Why do people migrate?**

Massey, D.S., J. Durand, and N. Malone. (2002). *Beyond Smoke and Mirrors*. Chapter 2.

Chamie, Joseph (2009). Mind the gap: Public and government views on migration diverge. *Yale Global Online Magazine* (16 October)

**November 24-26: Happy Thanksgiving! (No class)**

**Tue., Dec 1: Economic migration and undocumented persons in the U.S.**

Martin, P. (2007). Managing Labor Migration in the 21st Century. *City and Society* 19(1): 5-18.

Urrea, L.A. (1993). *Across the Wire*. New York: Anchor Books. Pages 9-20.

**Thurs., Dec 3: Ethnic enclaves**

Massey, D. (2008). *New Faces in New Places: The Changing Geography of U.S. Migration*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. Chapters 1 and 10.

**Tue., Dec 8: Migration and Health**

Adelman, Larry. (2008). Becoming American. In *Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?* Episode 3, 29 minutes. San Francisco, CA: California Newsreel. (Link on Learn@UW)

Scommegna, P. (2013). Exploring the paradox of U.S. Hispanics' longer life expectancy. *Population Reference Bureau*.

**Thurs., Dec 10: Review & Conclusion**

**Tue., December 15: Exam 2**