

Sociology 170 Population Problems

Professor: Jenna Nobles

Lectures: T/Th 2:25-3:15pm, Ingraham B10

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Over the next century, the global population is projected to increase from 7 to 12 billion. Some low-income countries will grow rapidly, while wealthier 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 Wednesday, January 18th.**

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.

Note that there will not be a lecture on **Thursday, April 27**. In the place of this class, optional review sessions will be held before the course exams. The exact date, time, and location of these sessions will be announced in class and in section prior to the exams.

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 jnobles@ssc.wisc.edu to set up an appointment for another time. **These emails must contain "170" in the title; otherwise they risk being filed into spam.**

Email is a professional communication tool, and appropriate form is appreciated at UW-Madison, as it will be in your current and future places of employment. 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, February 23 (20% of total grade, covers weeks 1-6)
- Exam 2: In class, Thursday, April 6 (20% of total grade, covers weeks 6-10)
- Final Exam: Wednesday, May 10, 12:25-2:25, location TBA (30% of total grade, covers full semester)
- Two short writing assignments, due in section during week 8 and week 14. 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. (20% of total grade)
- Attendance and *active* participation in section (10% of total grade)

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 three exams, accounting for 70% of your course grade. All material presented in lecture and in your required readings is fair game. The exams will consist of questions that emphasize concepts, facts, and mechanisms discussed in class and in your readings. The in class exams are non-cumulative and will take place during normal class times, locations TBA. The final exam will be cumulative.

Unfortunately, a class of this size cannot accommodate make-up exams; this includes requests for 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

Keep cell phones away during lecture and section. You may use **laptops or tablets** to take notes during lecture, but if you do so you must **sit in the first 10 rows of the lecture hall**. If you are using a laptop, it benefits you and everyone around you to save email/texts/social media posts until after class. A recent study found that multitasking students performed worse on a postclass test; critically, so did classmates who could see the computer: Sana, F., T. Weston, and N.J. Cepeda. (2013). Laptop multitasking hinders classroom learning for both users and

nearby peers. *Computers & Education* 62:24-31. Please be considerate of your classmates. The TAs will intervene if multitasking becomes distracting.

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

Accommodations

Please send Dr. Nobles or 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/>. 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. Please make every effort to avoid such issues in your section writing assignments.

Department 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 and make oral presentations 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.

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 (jraymo@ssc.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	January 17	Introduction	
	January 19	Population concepts	
2	January 24	Demographic transition	
	January 26	Population growth & the environment	
3	January 31	Why fertility changes	
	February 2	Human control over fertility	
4	February 7	Lowest-low and sex-selective fertility	
	February 9	Human longevity	
5	February 14	Population aging	
	February 16	Epidemiological transition	
6	February 21	Health reversals	
	February 23	Exam 1	
7	February 28	Social construction of race	
	March 2	Racialized social systems	
8	March 7	Health in the US	Writing assignment 1 due in section
	March 9	Health inequalities I	
9	March 14	Residential segregation	
	March 16	Neighborhoods and health	
10	March 21	<i>Spring Break</i>	
	March 23	<i>Spring Break</i>	
11	March 28	Health inequalities II	
	March 30	Health inequalities III	
12	April 4	Life course perspective	
	April 6	Exam 2	
13	April 11	Why do people migrate?	
	April 13	Immigration to the US	
14	April 18	Border militarization	Writing assignment 2 due in section
	April 20	Ethnic enclaves	
15	April 25	DACA & the DREAM Act	
	April 27	<i>No class</i>	
16	May 2	Migration and health	
	May 4	Review & Conclusion	
F	May 10	Final Exam	12:25-2:25pm

Detailed Schedule

Jan 17: Introduction

Jan 19: 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.

Jan 24: The Demographic Transition

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

Jan 26: Population growth and the environment

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

Harte, John. (2007). Human Population as a Dynamic Factor in Environmental Degradation. *Population & Environment* 28:223-236.

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

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

Jan 31: Why fertility changes

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

Feb 2: 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.

Feb 7: 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.

Feb 9: 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>

Feb 14: 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.

Feb 16: 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.

Feb 21: Health reversals

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

Feb 23: Exam 1**Feb 28: 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.

Mar 2: 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.

Mar 7: Health in the US

***** Writing Assignment 1 DUE in Section this week ******

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

Mar 9: 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.

Mar 14: 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.

Mar 16: 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)

March 21 and 23: Spring Break, no class

Mar 28: 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.

Mar 30: 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.

April 4: A life course perspective on disparities

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.

April 6: Exam 2

April 11: 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)

April 13: Immigration to 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.

April 18 Border militarization

***** Writing Assignment 2 DUE in Section this week ******

April 20 Ethnic enclaves

Massey, D. (2008). *New Faces in New Places: The Changing Geography of U.S. Migration*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. Chapter 2.

April 25 DACA & the DREAM Act Gonzales R. (2011). Learning to Be Illegal: Undocumented Youth and Shifting Legal Contexts in the Transition to Adulthood. *American Sociological Review* 76(4):602-619. Pages 605-617.

Galindo R. (2012). Undocumented & unafraid: The DREAM Act 5 and the public disclosure of undocumented status as a political act. *Urban Review*, 44(5), 589-611.

April 27: No class

May 2: 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*.

Eberhardt, Mark S. and Elsie R. Pamuk. 2004. The Importance of Place of Residence: Examining Health in Rural and Nonrural Areas. *American Journal of Public Health*, 94: 1682-1686.

May 4: Review & Conclusion

Wed. May 10: Final Exam