THIS SYLLABUS WILL BE SUBSTANTIALLY UPDATED IN JANUARY 2016

POPULATION METHODS AND ISSUES
FOR THE UNITED STATES AND THIRD WORLD

PA 5301 – Spring Semester 2011 – 3 credits
Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:15–9:30 a.m., Room HHH 60

Professor Deborah Levison
E-mail: DLevison@umn.edu

First year Humphrey and other graduate students are welcome to take PA 5301. There are no prerequisites for PA 5301.

PA 5301 is listed under the Policy Analysis concentration and is cross-listed under Social Policy, Economic and Community Development, Global Policy, and Women and Public Policy. Humphrey students may elect to assign PA 5301 credits to any of these concentrations. PA 5301 is also the core class for the graduate minor in Population Studies.

Course Objectives:

The course has multiple objectives: • To teach basic demographic methods. The course is intended to provide familiarity with terminology used on an everyday basis in the popular media and an understanding of the methodology behind the numbers, and to enable students to use basic demographic techniques in the course of research or policy analysis dealing with human populations. • To familiarize students with population trends in the United States and the world. Topics covered include: fertility, mortality, and the demographic transition; population growth and the environment; infant mortality; sexuality and the control of fertility; trends in family structure and living arrangements in the U.S, including divorce and cohabitation; fertility inside and outside of marriage; cultural differences in family structure; HIV/AIDS; migration and refugee populations; and aging topics. • To expose students to some of the topics studied by demographers and economic demographers, concerning a wide range of different populations, via case studies. Readings are a mix of older “classics” and more recent publications. • To encourage students to think about the connections between U.S. trends, U.S. national policy, and U.S. international policy and population trends in the developing world. Likewise, to encourage students to think about the implicit assumptions about population trends and sexuality which surround us and get incorporated into our work and into public policy in general. • To provide each student with the opportunity to write and polish a paper which she/he would be proud to show potential employers as a writing sample. In the past, PA 5301 term papers have comprised one-third to one-half of the Professional Paper for a number of students. Similarly, non-Humphrey graduate students often choose topics related to their theses.
Required textbook and readings:


Course structure:

On Tuesdays, I will either give an introductory lecture for the unit, to place the readings in a broader context, or lecture on demographic techniques and work on exercises with the class. Students are expected to do the assigned reading from Palmore & Gardner and to work the assigned problems before the lecture. If a problem set is assigned, it is due at the beginning of the Tuesday lecture. Several tests will cover the basic demographic methods in Palmore & Gardner and other methodological issues.

Students are expected to attend class regularly. If they do not, they will be asked to withdraw from PA 5301.

Students may be assigned to small study groups. First-year graduate students and all undergraduates are required to participate in study groups; participation is optional for others but must be decided at the beginning of the semester. Having decided to participate in a study group, you must honor that commitment. Study groups are expected to meet for at least 1 hour every other week. Students should work problems before the group meeting, then use the study group time to compare and discuss answers.

Other assigned readings should be completed before the Thursday class. To encourage timely reading of the articles and to ensure that you think about what you are reading, a very short reaction paper for each set of readings will be due before the beginning of the Thursday class. You will post reaction papers on the class Moodle website. You are expected to read the reactions posted by your classmates before class on Thursday. Reaction papers will be required for Weeks 2–15, except that each student may choose two other weeks in which she/he will not turn in reaction papers. Thus, you will write 12 reaction papers.

One longer paper will be due: a topic proposal is due in the 3rd week of class; a rough draft is due in the 10th week of class; and the final paper is due in week 14. One objective of the longer paper is to give students practice writing policy-relevant analyses of population-related issues. Since policy-makers do not have much time to read, your PA 5301 paper must be fairly concise: no more than 15 pages of text plus a one-page policy brief or executive summary. The bibliography and tables, graphs and figures will not be counted as part of the 15 pages. You are encouraged to include graphs and figures that clarify your points. The paper must be double-spaced type or at least space-and-a-half type;
the font size should be a minimum of 12 point. It should have page numbers. Lateness at
any of the deadlines will be penalized. Content, structure, grammar, and spelling are
taken into account in the paper’s grading. Any final paper with a substantial number of
grammatical problems will receive a grade no higher than a B, no matter how good the
content. If in doubt, ask a friend to proof-read your paper. Your paper should end up
being good enough to show to a potential employer or, for HHH students, to use as part
of a Professional Paper.

A process of peer reviewing will be used to improve your final papers and facilitate the
paper-writing process. Students will comment on other students’ proposed paper topics
and drafts. Timely participation in this process is expected and will be graded. A hand-out
will describe expectations for the peer review process.

Yes, there are a lot of assignments. I want you to get your money’s worth out of graduate
school! Something is due most class meetings. If you keep up, you’ll do fine. However,
that doesn’t mean you’ll like it. Most say they do, but some students hate my style of
teaching and complain about the amount of required work. A recent student wrote on an
anonymous evaluation, “...your course workload is far too large. I feel pulled in too many
directions – mastering population formulas, readings, and reaction postings, and trying to
write a large paper. .... And I have other classes, a master’s project, and a job.” If you
think you might be this kind of student, you’ll be happier if you take a different course.

Grading:

Neither problem sets 1–4 nor reaction papers will receive letter grades. They will be
checked off: check-minus (unsatisfactory to weak) or check (satisfactory to excellent) will
indicated the quality of your work. Lateness will be recorded. Reactions should be posted
to the Web before class time on the due date. Problem sets and reaction papers not turned
in will be given zeros.

Tests, assignment 5, and the longer paper will receive letter grades. Peer reviews will
receive letter grades as well. There will not be a final examination. Class participation—
being there, being on-time, and being an alert participant in class—will be rewarded.
These weights in percentages are approximate:

5%  Problem sets 1–4
35%  Tests
5%  Assignment 5
5%  Reaction papers
10%  Class participation
5%  Peer review
30%  Longer paper (including topic, outlines, draft, final)
Electronics in class.

You may use your laptop computer in class for note-taking or (rarely) looking up answers to questions that come up in class. You may not use it for checking email or Facebook or anything else. It’s very tempting – and also very rude, not to mention detrimental to your education. First offenders are asked to turn off the computer for the class. Second offenders are required to keep computers put away for the rest of the semester. Similarly, cell phones and Blackberries and the like may kept on and visible by people with small children or similar responsibilities (but tell the instructor); everyone else is expected to keep their electronics out of sight and out of hearing.

Incompletes:

Incompletes are rarely given. I have designed the course so that you can complete the work during the semester. Documented family crises or medical emergencies may result in you needing to negotiate an incomplete. In that case, the Humphrey Institute’s policy on incompletes will be followed. First, I only grant incompletes or make-up exams if you have requested them in advance. Second, by finals week you must have submitted in writing a description of what work remains to be done and the date by which you will have completed the work — use the HHH form for incompletes. Failure to submit the work in that time will result in a 0 for that assignment, and may lead to a failing grade for the course. I do not allow students to submit additional work for extra credit.

Mental Health:

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student’s ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website at http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu

For 10 extra points, send the instructor an email saying, “I read the syllabus” by 5 pm on Friday of Week 1. Do not mention this to others in the class; it is their job to find it by themselves.

Disabilities:

It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor early in the semester to discuss their individual needs for accommodations.
Other Resources for Success:

**Center for Writing’s Student Writing Support.** Student Writing Support provides free writing instruction for all University of Minnesota students - graduate and undergraduate - at all stages of the writing process. They help students develop productive writing habits and revision strategies via in-person consultations.


**Guidelines and suggestions for reaction papers:**

- Refer to readings by the last name of the first author.
- For full credit, mention each reading.
- Be brief! Three sentences per reading should be plenty. In this case, longer does not necessarily mean better.
- Comments on the different readings do not need to be separated into different paragraphs; if you want to make a comparison, that is fine.
- **DO NOT SUMMARIZE** the readings. I’ve read them too!
- It is acceptable (but not necessary) to discuss current events or personal experiences to illustrate a point.
- Part of your reaction may be a response to previously posted reactions of your classmates, as long as what you write also reflects your own perspective on the readings.

**Suggestions for the paper:**

- Pick a topic in which you are really interested.
- To find a topic, go to the library and browse through recent issues of population journals: *Demography, Population and Development Review, Studies in Family Planning*, etc.
- Use the additional topics list as a resource.
- If the topic is big, focus on a very small part of it. I can help you narrow it down.
- Consider your paper a report. You are employed by ...? Pick your government agency, international organization, non-profit, non-governmental organization, etc. You then need to direct your report to a particular audience—possibly your employer. My hope is that a well-defined audience (other than the professor) will help you to place your paper topic in a policy framework. If you choose to address, for example, the Twin Cities’ Metropolitan Council, or a Bush administration official, or a foreign government’s ministry of education, then say so in a paragraph before beginning the paper. Describe your audience, so I know to whom you are writing. (Set the scene in italics, or on a separate page).
- The deadlines are for your benefit, not mine. The more opportunities you have to get input on your paper and to revise it, the better it will be.
WEEKLY TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK 1, January 18: Demographic Transition

Introduction.
Hand-out on potential paper topics.
Exercise 5 handed out.
Lecture: demographic transition; preview of population growth rates and doubling times.

WEEK 1, January 20: Mortality methodology

Read Palmore & Gardner, Chapter 1, all (pp. 1-7) and Chapter 2, pp. 9–19 and 30–34 (infant mortality rates). Work problems as you read. (They will not be collected or graded.)
Start reading *Ishmael*.
Problem Set 1 (mortality) handed out.
Hand-out on standardization.
Lecture: definition of rates; mortality rates and risks.

WEEK 2, January 25:

Read Palmore & Gardner, Chapter 2, pp. 19–30. Work problems as you read.
Read hand-out on standardization.
Lecture: young vs. old populations, standardization.

WEEK 2, January 27: Family Planning

Post your reaction paper to Week 2 on the Web.

---

1 There is a typo in Table 2.5. The heading for columns (3) and (4) should be “Age distribution (per 1,000).”
WEEK 3, February 1: Birth Control

Paper topic proposal due. (See hand-out on “Paper Topic and Outlines.”) Post topic to Paper Topics (Week 3) on the Web.

Problem Set 1 due.

Guest presenter: Dr. Amy Gilbert, M.D., MPH.

An understanding about current birth control options will provide useful background knowledge for a variety of readings. After a presentation on contraceptive methods being used now in the U.S., Dr. Gilbert will discuss the “intendedness” of pregnancy.

WEEK 3, February 3: Mortality Transition
For your information: Deborah’s definitions of diseases.


Read through Chapter 8 in Ishmael. Post reactions, but we will save the discussion of this book for Week 4.

Movie: A Walk to Beautiful.

Post your reaction paper to Week 3 on the Web.

WEEK 4, February 8: Population Growth–Influential Voices


Mosher, Steven W. (2008) Population Control: Real Costs, Illusory Benefits, Introduction (pp. ix-x) and Chapter 1 (pp. 3-29).

Post your reaction paper to Week 4 on the Web.

First 15 minutes of class: assign peer reviewers.
WEEK 4, February 10
Test on mortality measures. Bring a calculator.
Individual meetings with Deborah about paper topics.

WEEK 5, February 15
Outline of paper due. (See hand-out on “Paper Topic and Outlines.”) Post outline to Short Outline (Week 5) on the Web.
Read Palmore & Gardner, Chapter 2, pp. 35–59 and Appendices 1 and 2, pp. 131–134 and 135–137. Work problems as you read.
Lecture: life tables.
Problem Set 2a (life tables) handed out.

WEEK 5, February 17: Population Growth & Environment
Post your reaction paper to Week 5 on the Web.

WEEK 6, February 22
Problem set 2a due.
Lecture: continue life tables.
Problem set 2b handed out.

WEEK 6, February 24: Education, Fertility & Reproductive Outcomes
Post your reaction paper to Week 6 on the Web.
WEEK 7, March 1
Problem Set 2b due.
Lecture: continue life tables
Problem set 3 (life tables) handed out.

WEEK 7, March 3: Family Planning in the Third World
Post your reaction paper to Week 7 on the Web.

WEEK 8, March 8
Problem set 3 due.
Eloundou-Enyegue, Parfait M. (2004) “Pregnancy-Related Dropouts and Gender Inequality in Education: A Life-Table Approach and Application to Cameroon,” Demography 41(3): 509-528. No need to post a reaction to this reading.
Lecture: finish life tables.

WEEK 8, March 10: Class, Racism and Fertility in the U.S.
Post your reaction paper to Week 8 on the Web.

SPRING BREAK
WEEK 9, March 22: The American Family—Myth, Reality, and Contested Definitions

To avoid having a test right after Spring Break, the discussion day will be Tuesday and the methodology day will be Thursday.


Post your reaction paper to Week 9 on the Web.

WEEK 9, March 24:
Test on life tables.

WEEK 10, March 29
Paper draft due — 2 copies, at the beginning of class.

Read Palmore & Gardner, Chapter 3, pp. 63–91. Work problems as you read.


Lecture: decomposition and fertility.
Problem Set 4 (fertility) handed out.

WEEK 10, March 31: U.S. Marriage, Cohabitation and Parenthood


Possibly: short lecture on theories of marriage.
Post your reaction paper to Week 10 on the Web.

Guest instructor: Professor Evan Roberts
WEEK 11, April 5
Peer review comments on drafts due, in class. Be prepared to explain/elaborate upon your comments in small groups.
Read Palmore & Gardner, Chapter 3, pp. 91–111. Work problems as you read.
Lecture: fertility

WEEK 11, April 7: The HIV/AIDS Pandemic
Dr. Frank Rhame, M.D., will be a guest speaker. Try to skim the readings he recommended, which are optional (see website).
Review UNAIDS documents (see Web links):
(1) Flip through *2010 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic: Executive Summary*;
(2) Skim *Understanding the Latest Estimates of the Global AIDS Epidemic*.
Post your reaction paper to Week 11 on the Web.

WEEK 12, April 12
Problem Set 4 due.
Read Palmore & Gardner, Chapter 3, pp. 111–128. Work problems as you read.
Lecture: fertility.

WEEK 12, April 14: HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa
Start reading the Diamond chapters for Week 13!
Post your reaction paper to Week 12 on the Web.
WEEK 13, April 19
Test on fertility.
Lecture on migration issues and measurement.

WEEK 13, April 21: Demography & Global Trends

Post your reaction paper to Week 13 on the Web.

WEEK 14, April 26
Final paper due. Also, you must hand in the two copies of your paper draft which are marked with the comments of your peer reviewers, along with any other comments you received from them. These should be clearly identified with the names of the peer reviewers, as the peer reviewers will be graded on the quality of their comments. Your paper will not be graded until the paper drafts with comments have been received. If they are not turned in on time, your paper will be marked down for lateness.

If you want comments on your final paper, turn in a large, self-addressed envelope.
Lecture: migration.

WEEK 14, April 28: Migration

Post your reaction paper to Week 14 on the Web. No need to comment on Riche or Capps.
WEEK 15, May 3
Assignment 5 due.
Lecture: dependency ratios, etc.
Course evaluations.

WEEK 15, May 5: Old Age and Policy Regarding Dependents
Post your reaction paper to Week 15 on the Web.

Finals Week: No final examination.