



SYLLABUS: Population Theory (SYD5105-01)
Spring 2008
F 9:00-12:00, BEL 517

Professor Isaac W. Eberstein

Course website: <http://campus.fsu.edu>

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Dr. Isaac W. (Ike) Eberstein, Charles Meade Grigg Professor of Sociology
Center for Demography & Population Health
Bellamy Bldg, Room 601A
Office Hours: TR 1:30-3:00 & by appointment
850-644-7108 (voice); 644-6208 (FAX)
Email: Eberstein@fsu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES:

This course will familiarize students with the diverse models and frameworks that are used to understand demographic events and with the disciplinary, organizational, and ideological forces that shape the form and content of our field. More specifically, you will (1) develop an organizing framework for the models used in contemporary demographic research, and (2) acquire some comparative exposure to their basic characteristics, boundary conditions, and strengths/ limitations. I see this as a "tool" course (e.g., statistics). The term paper will allow you to look closely at theoretical formulations within your specific substantive area of interest.

My goals are that after completing the course, you will be able: (a) to identify and characterize the various theoretical formulations used in demographic research, (b) to assess the relative strengths, weaknesses, and assumptions of different models, and (c) to demonstrate your mastery of "theory" in one area of demographic research of your choice. In addition to this "content/ discipline knowledge," you will improve your skills in written and oral communication through your papers and seminar presentations/ discussion. You will also improve your critical thinking skills by reading and evaluating the pertinent professional literature.

BACKGROUND: Demography can be defined as the scientific study of the causes and consequences of population change. This includes the study of the components of change (fertility, mortality, migration) as well as composition (age structure, racial/ ethnic composition, labor force, household structure and living arrangements, etc). Not surprisingly, these phenomena have long been of interest to scholars from many fields. There are sociological, economic, and psychological models (etc.) of fertility, mortality, and migration (etc.).

Population theory (that is, the set of frames of reference used to understand and interpret demographic events) is characterized by many of the same debates as in the social sciences more generally. There has been a marked increase in the use of ethnographic and other qualitative data to illuminate demographic processes, and even of some use of postmodernist insights to help understand demographic patterns. However, these innovations have occurred within a generally positivist and quantitative framework.

Population theory is like other human products in that ideas wax and wane in influence with time and social conditions. We will consider the historical development of population theory, particularly in relation to the work of Malthus, and also address ideological and external forces

that have shaped the field. While this is clearly insufficient in terms of the development of population theory as a whole, it is at least arguably the case that one cannot be said to have studied this topic without exposure to Malthus. A similar case can be made for the external social and policy context in which the field has developed.

We will also examine various topical areas of demographic research and alternative disciplinary approaches. It will be instructive to compare the kinds of questions, concepts, and models used in demographic research by, e.g., anthropologists, economists, and sociologists. Similarly, comparatively assessing the theoretical approaches that are used to study, e.g., fertility, with those used to study, e.g., health/ mortality, will provide a helpful basis for developing a more comprehensive frame of reference that can be used to organize the extensive and wide-ranging work in the field. Finally, we will select a few topics for more in-depth coverage of emerging theoretical issues.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

D. Poston and M. Micklin (2005) *Handbook of Population*. NY: Kluwer. This book is an attempt to comprehensively cover the field of demography at the professional level (that is, as a reference book, not a textbook) by describing the status of knowledge on wide-ranging aspects of demographic structure and process, explicating disciplinary approaches to these questions, and reviewing the various ways in which demographic research is applied. We will use the book as a core document and springboard for our consideration of population theory. This book will of course be supplemented by extensive readings from primary sources and the current professional literature.

CONDUCT OF THE SEMINAR: At the beginning of each class I will introduce and give perspective on the week's readings, as well as make suggestions of common themes, issues, etc. For most classes, someone will be assigned to review & present specific items on the reading list. Everyone will engage in general discussion grounded in the readings and encompassing issues highlighted in individual weekly reaction papers.

REQUIREMENTS: *Additional instructions for specific assignments will be provided on the course Blackboard website.*

(1) Weekly readings will be assigned from the P&M book and from the professional literature. Readings outside the book are available online through the FSU libraries or on the website. I have tried to limit readings to a number that everyone can reasonably be expected to read before class.

(2) Informal weekly reaction papers (about 500-1000 words) which demonstrate to me that you have read and thought about the week's readings by highlighting important issues, questions, or problems that should be discussed in class. I am interested in your critical and informed assessment of readings and issues, and in your effort to link what we are doing in class to larger issues in the field. Upload papers to weekly assignment link on the Bb web site.

(3) Article/ chapter presentations (N = 2-4, depending on enrollment). Present a summary review and, most importantly, a critical and informed assessment of particular items on the reading list that also serves to link these readings with larger issues in the field. Class presentations should probably be some 30 minutes in length, depending on the material. You don't have to do a reaction paper when you are doing a presentation.

(4) A term paper which examines theoretical frameworks or models in research on a specific area of the field and organizes these models in a comparative framework that illuminates their characteristics, strengths/ weaknesses, boundary conditions, and implicit assumptions. The paper will provide the basis for a presentation to the seminar (30 minutes) over "the status of theory on X" during one of the last several class meetings. As a resource, you should choose one

of the first 13 chapters in P&M (review of knowledge on various dimensions of demographic structure and demographic processes). Your topic and initial, rough ideas for the paper must be written (no more than 2 pages) and turned in for my preliminary review and approval by mid term (February 29). The paper is due in final form no later than April 23. My goal is that the term paper will be helpful to you as an early draft of part of your MS or doctoral review paper, or the theory background section of an empirical paper you are working on or something like that. The key test of theory is whether it is helpful in our understanding of the world. I hope you will find that the paper is useful to you.

GRADING: The grade for the semester will be based on my evaluation of the term paper and proposal (40%), reaction papers (25%), presentations (25%), and the quality of your general seminar participation (10%). At the most fundamental level, I will assign grades using my best professional judgment based on the application of professional standards to the task at hand.

Reaction papers, article presentations, and general seminar participation will typically be graded using a check, check-plus, or check-minus system, based on my judgment of their quality. A check-plus paper will be especially thoughtful, insightful, and articulate. It will demonstrate that you have read and thought about the weekly materials by critically assessing the readings and linking these issues to larger questions in the field. A check-minus paper will be one that lacks focus or is poorly written or undeveloped; it may indicate only a perfunctory reading and limited understanding or reflection on the material. A check paper will be adequate, but not particularly remarkable – making a good point or two but not well-developed or discussed. Presentations and seminar participation will be evaluated in an analogous manner.

As a general philosophy, I expect everyone to model the highest professional standards in this seminar. All work must be completed to get a grade. I may require that inadequate work be redone. I will accept late work, but only occasionally and under extenuating circumstances. Finally, I strongly discourage incompletes.

COURSE POLICIES:

Academic Honor Code. Students are expected to uphold the Academic Honor Code published in The Florida State University Bulletin and the Student Handbook. The Academic Honor System of The Florida State University is based on the premise that each student has the responsibility (1) to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity in the student's own work, (2) to refuse to tolerate violations of academic integrity in the university community, and (3) to foster a high sense of integrity and social responsibility on the part of the university community. Please see the following web site for a complete explanation:

<http://www.fsu.edu/Books/Student-Handbook/codes/honor.html>.

Students must abide by the highest standards of academic integrity. Any form of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of "zero" for that particular assignment. I reserve the right to use all means at my disposal to screen for plagiarism, including electronic citation checkers (e.g., Turnitin.com). For more information on plagiarism, see

<http://online.fsu.edu/learningresources/plagiarism>.

Procedures for dealing with alleged academic dishonesty are described at:

http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/undergrad/info/acad_regs.htm#AcademicHonor

Student Conduct Code. Everyone in this class is expected to adhere to principles embodied in the FSU Student Contact Code, available at:

<http://www.fsu.edu/Books/Student-Handbook/2003codes/conduct.html>. This code essentially requires everyone to maintain the highest professional standards of conduct in this class, whether in face-to-face meetings or online. Violation of the conduct code carries a range of penalties that can range from a reduced grade to expulsion.

Americans with Disabilities Act. Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; (2) bring me a letter indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities: <http://www.fsu.edu/~staffair/dean/StudentDisability/>

Syllabus change policy. This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advanced notice. It and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

COURSE TOPICS:

<i>Week</i>	<i>Topic</i>
1.	Introduction & organization (1/11)
2	Demography: Science & Theory (1/18)
3	External forces on the field (1/25)
4-5	Disciplinary approaches & questions (2/1-2/8)
6	Malthus & his legacy (2/15)
7	Reactions to Malthus (2/22)
8-9	Demographic Transition & Modernization (2/29-3/7)
10	Spring Break (3/14)
11	Institutional models of demographic behavior (3/21)
12	Biodemographic models (3/28) ** - <i>NIH PSC</i> ; <i>guest instructor</i>
13	Emerging issues: Health & mortality (4/4)
14	Stratification/ Inequality (4/11)
15	Present term papers (4/18) ** - <i>PAA</i> ; <i>will need alternate meeting time</i>

COURSE OUTLINE

1. Introduction & organization (1/11)

P&M, Prologue

D. Massey (1994) "An evaluation of international migration theory: the North American Case." *Population & Development Review* 20(4):699-752.

M. Bholchain (2007) "On causation in demography: Issues & illustrations." *PDR* 33(1):1-36.

2. Demography: Science & Theory (1/18)

R. Vance (1952) "Is theory for demographers?" *Social Forces* 31 (Oct):9-13.

T. Burch (2003) "Demography in a new key: A theory of population theory." *Demographic Research* 9 (#11) www.demographic-research.org

R. Lesthaeghe (1998) "On theory development: Applications to the study of family formation." *PDR* 24 (1): 1-14.

J. Hobcraft (2006) "The ABC of demographic behavior: how the interplays of alleles, brains, and contexts over the life course should shape research aimed at understanding population processes." *Population Studies* 60(2):153-187.

3. External forces on the field (1/25)

P&M, Ch 28. Population Policy

D. Hodgson (1991) "Ideological origins of the Population Association of America." *PDR* 17 (1):1-34.

D. Hodgson (1988) "Orthodoxy & revisionism in American demography." *PDR* 14 (4):541-70.

C. McIntosh & J. Finkle (1995) "The Cairo conference on population and development: A new paradigm?" *PDR* 21 (2):223-260.

H. Presser (1997) "Demography, feminism, & the science-policy nexus." *PDR* 23 (2): 295-331.

4-5. Disciplinary Approaches & Questions (2/1, 2/8) (each student lead discussion on one ch)

P&M, Chapters 14 "Social Demography," 16 "Urban/ Spatial Demography," 17

"Anthropological Demography," 18 "Economic Demography," 19 "Historical Demography," 20

"Ecological Demography," and 23 "Political Demography." Read 1 substantive chapter of interest (chs. 1-13) on your own as input for your paper & later presentation on "the status of theory on X."

6. Malthus & his legacy (2/15)

T. R. Malthus (1798) *An Essay on the Principle of Population*. View the book online at <http://www.ac.wvu.edu/~stephan/malthus/malthus.0.html>.

G. McNicoll (1998) "Malthus for the twenty-first century." *PDR* 24 (2):309-16.

7. Reactions to Malthus; classical critiques & contemporary debates (2/22)

R. Meek (1953) *Marx & Engels on Malthus*, Lawrence & Wishart. Pp 11-52. (Bb)

B. Lomborg (2001) *The Skeptical Environmentalist*. Cambridge U Press. Pp 1-42. (Bb)

G. McNicoll (1995) "On Population Growth and Revisionism: further questions." *PDR* 21(2): 307-340.

Smil, V. (2005) "The next 50 years: fatal discontinuities." *PDR* 31 (2):201-36.

P. Demeny (2003) "Population policy dilemmas in Europe at the dawn of the twenty-first century." *PDR* 29 (1):1-28.

8-9. Demographic Transition & Modernization (2/29, 3/7)

F. Notestein (1944) "Problems of policy in relation to areas of heavy population pressure."

Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly 22: 424-444, Pp 470-483 in J. Spengler & OD Duncan (1956)

Population Theory & Policy. Free Press. (Bb)

M. Teitlebaum (1975) "Relevance of Demographic Transition Theory for Developing Countries." *Science* 188 (4187):420-25.

Caldwell, J. (1986) "Routes to low mortality in poor countries" *PDR* 12 (1): 171-220.

R. Soares (2007) "On the determinants of mortality reductions in the developing world." *PDR* 33(2):247-88.

J. Bryant (2007) "Theories of fertility decline and evidence from development indicators." *PDR* 33(1):101-27.

S. Szreter (1993) "The idea of demographic transition and the study of fertility change: a critical intellectual history." *PDR* 19 (4):659-702.

J. Bongaarts & S. Watkins (1996) "Social interactions and contemporary fertility transitions." *PDR* 22 (4): 639-682.

Billari, F. & A. Liefbroer (2004) "Is the Second Demographic Transition a useful concept for demography?" (short papers by various authors) *Vienna Yearbook of Demographic Research*, pp 1- 34. (Bb)

R. Lesthaeghe & L. Neidert (2006) "The second demographic transition in the United States: Exception or textbook example?" *PDR* 32(4):669-698.

D. Coleman (2006) "Immigration and ethnic change in low fertility countries: A third demographic transition." *PDR* 32(3):401-446.

10. Spring Break. (3/14)

11. Institutional models of demographic behavior (3/21)

P&M, Ch 24 "Fertility Planning"

A. Portes (2006) "Institutions and development: A conceptual reanalysis." *PDR* 32(2):233-62.

C. Obermeyer (1992) "Islam, women, and politics." *PDR* 18 (1): 33-60.

Lehrer, E. (2004) "Religion as a determinant of economic and demographic behavior in the United States." *PDR* 30 (4):707-26.

G. McNicoll (2006) "Policy lessons of the East Asian demographic transition." *PDR* 32(1):1-25.

12. Biodemographic models (3/28)

P&M, Chs 21 "Biodemography," 26 "Health," and 7 "Population Health"

E. Crimmins & T. Seeman (2004) "Integrating biology into the study of health disparities." ***Aging, Health & Public Policy*** *PDR* 30 (sup): 89-107.

G. Guo & Y. Tong (2006) "Age at first sexual intercourse, genes, and social context." *Dem* 43(4):747-770.

C. Seplaki, N. Goldman, M. Weinstein, and Y. Lin (2006) "Measurement of cumulative physiological dysregulation in an older population." *Dem* 43(1):165-183.

A. Basu (2006) "The emotions and reproductive health." *PDR* 32(1):107-123.

13. Health & Mortality (4/4)

P&M, Chapters 9 “Infant Mortality,” 10 “Adult Mortality

C. Turra, et al (2005) “Determinants of mortality at older ages.” *PDR* 31(4):675-698.

R. Hummer, et al (2007) “Paradox found (again): Infant mortality among the Mexican-Origin Population in the United States.” *Dem* 44(3):441-57.

M. Hayward & B. Gorman (2004) “The long arm of childhood: the influence of early-life social conditions on men’s mortality.” *Dem* 41(1):87-108.

D. Cutler & G. Miller (2005) “The role of public health improvements in health advances: The twentieth-century United States.” *Dem* 42(1):1-22.

14. Stratification/ Inequality (4/11)

P&M, Chapters 4 “Gender,” 6 “Race/ Ethnicity,” and 13 “Stratification”

Hirschman, C. (2004) “The origins and demise of the concept of race.” *PDR* 30 (3):385-415.

J. R. Udry (2000) “Biological limits of gender construction.” *American Sociological Review* 65(3):443-457 (plus comments and response).

D. Conley & N. Bennett (2000) “Is biology destiny? Birth weight and life chances.” *ASR* 65(3):458-67.

D. Massey (2004) “Segregation and stratification: a biosocial perspective.” *DuBois Review* 1(1):7-25. (Bb)

15. Present term papers (4/18)
