

# Course Syllabus for Sociology 43402

## Population Dynamics

### Spring 2020

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**Time & Place** Jenkins and Nanovic Hall B052, MW 11:00 AM-12:15 PM

**Office Hours** MW 1:30-2:30 and by appointment. I am generally very accessible via phone, voicemail, email, Facebook video, Skype, and Zoom. I may set up extra office hours when there is high demand to see me.

## Course summary

Demography, the science of population, is concerned with virtually everything that influences, or can be influenced by, population size, distribution, processes, structure, or characteristics. This course pays particular attention to the causes and consequences of population change. Changes in fertility, mortality, migration, technology, lifestyle and culture have dramatically affected the United States and the other nations of the world. These changes have implications for a number of areas: hunger, the spread of illness and disease, environmental degradation, health services, household formation, the labor force, marriage and divorce, care for the elderly, birth control, poverty, urbanization, and business marketing strategies. An understanding of these is important as business, government, and individuals deal with the demands of the changing population.

## Required Texts

Jennifer Hicke Lundquist, Douglas L. Anderton & David Yaukey. 2015. Demography: The Study of Human Population, Fourth Edition. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.  
Online Readings packet for Sociology 43402. Compiled by Richard Williams. Available on the the Course Web Page. (Approximately 600 pages, but most of it is not that difficult.)

Lundquist provides a very good overview of the facts, concepts and issues of population dynamics. The readings packet includes selections from a wide variety of mass media and scholarly sources. Though sometimes lengthy, most of the material in the packet is fairly easy to read. The packet is designed to achieve the following purposes:

- To supplement Lundquist, providing additional information on key topics
- To illustrate the wide array of issues, controversies and opinions on population issues
- To show the “real” impact that population issues have on people’s lives

The packet reflects a wide range of views, but I do not claim to present a “balanced” perspective on each and every single issue. Students are encouraged to offer their own views on the issues and to do additional reading on topics of interest to them.

## Format & Policies

*Short version.* I will try to be fair and balanced but do not claim that I will always succeed. You can have whatever views you want so long as you can back them up. All electronic items (e.g. phones, laptops) should be turned off during classtime!!! Check your email regularly for information about upcoming classes. A variety of learning styles will be used, including me asking questions and soliciting comments and often breaking you down into small groups for discussion. Staying on top of the readings is very important. Meeting with me occasionally, either in-person or via video-conferencing, is strongly encouraged.

*Long version.* First, let me make clear that, while I try to be fair and balanced on all topics, I may not always succeed. Further, while I try to keep my own personal views from being too obvious, they no doubt will sometimes become apparent. I stress that you are free to hold whatever views you want and to express them both in class and in your writing. I don't want to inhibit discussion, so not everything you say in class has to be thoroughly researched first! But *when evaluating your exams and papers, the key thing for me is how well you can defend your views and support them with evidence.* I've given lots of good grades to essays I fundamentally disagreed with but were well written and given poor grades to essays whose viewpoint I shared but where the case was not well presented.

Second, I know from personal experience that the urge to check an iPhone or laptop can be irresistible at times. I also know it can be incredibly annoying for everyone when someone is frantically typing away and it isn't about the class. Perhaps even more critically, from your standpoint, at least some studies have found that “students who use their mobile phones during class lectures tend to write down less information, recall less information, and perform worse on a multiple-choice test than those students who abstain from using their mobile phones during class.” (<http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-professor-blog/the-age-of-distraction-getting-students-to-put-away-their-phones-and-focus-on-learning/>) *Therefore all electronic items should be turned off during classtime.* I may make exceptions when we want to look something up. If that creates problems for you (e.g. you really do take all your notes on your laptop and don't just check Facebook) let me know and we can talk about it.

Third, I have increasingly found that students don't use email as often as they used to. But I do. *Check your email at least once a day to keep up on any classroom updates* on what we will be covering and my expectations of you for coming classes.

Moving on to the actual format of the class now - We will use a variety of learning styles in this class. Sometimes I will do lectures and/or PowerPoint presentations, usually asking questions or inviting comments as I talk. We may have one or two guest speakers. Near the end of the semester the students will take over the class as they present their papers.

Often, though, I will ask you questions about the readings or break you down into small groups. I therefore expect you to be familiar with the readings in advance, especially the material in the readings packet. The course web page has discussion questions that will help you to focus your reading and prepare for class discussion; since similar or related questions often show up on the exam, it will be to your advantage to prepare answers for these questions as we go along.

To prepare for discussions, I want you to jot down notes from the readings that you think are especially important, any thoughts of your own on the subject, and questions which you would like to see discussed. Keep in mind, too, that you are reading opinions as well as facts, and that you are welcome to raise alternative viewpoints. In general, you should be prepared to make at least a few points about every major discussion question asked. *You are required to give me a copy of your notes before each small group discussion.*

You are encouraged to occasionally meet with me to discuss things like your papers. Besides in-person meetings, phone, and email, I am happy to video-conference at a mutually agreeable time using Zoom, Skype, or Facetime.

## Assignments, Exams, Grading

*Short Version:* There are two take-home exams and one major paper/ class presentation. Each is worth 29% of your grade. The other 13% is for class participation. The class participation grade is affected by your attendance, the class notes you hand in before each small group discussion session, and, of course, your verbal contributions in class. Regular and on-time attendance, staying on top of the readings, handing in your notes when required, and occasionally speaking up in class (i.e. all things that you should be doing anyway) are the biggest things you can do to help your class participation grade. (Conversely, if you like to skip class a lot and never do the readings until the night before the exam, this may not be the course for you.) The Honor Code and anti-discrimination policies are in effect.

*Course Requirements.* There will be two take home exams (a midterm and a final) and one major paper/class presentation. Each will count for 29% of your grade. Class participation will account for the other 13%. Exams will consist of essay and short-answer questions. NOTE: You must complete both exams and the paper. I reserve the right to give a D or F to any student who does not do so, regardless of how well they have done on the parts they completed.

*Exams.* One of the things that will be most important on the exams will be your ability to incorporate material from the readings. The best exams will go beyond what was said in class and will cite specific facts, opinions, authors and articles. They will be like short research papers, incorporating information from a variety of sources, except I have provided you with the readings in advance. Since successful class participation also depends on mastery of the reading, it is important that you not fall behind.

*Attendance & Participation.* I expect this to have a fairly neutral impact on most people's grades. But, I think these procedures will help you to understand the material better, produce better papers and exams, and improve the overall quality of the classroom experience.

Basically, I am expecting you to attend class regularly, keep up on the readings, hand in the short assignments on time, and make at least occasional contributions to class discussion. These are all things you should be doing anyway, and if you do them this should be easy 13 points for you. HOWEVER, if you don't do these things, the penalties could pile up. You can lose a point for each missed assignment; each absence after the third one; a poor end-of-semester presentation (and 2 points if you don't do the presentation at all). So, if you like to skip a lot of classes and never do the readings until the night before the exam is due, this may not be the course for you.

*I expect everyone to attend class regularly and to arrive on time; more than three absences and/or excessive lateness will severely hurt your class participation grade. Attendance will be taken each class. If absences are excessive, University policy allows me to give you a D or F after providing written notice.*

I will let you know in advance when we are breaking down into small groups (probably at least 4 to 6 times during the semester). To make sure that everyone is familiar with the material and has something to contribute, I want you to jot down at least a half dozen notes from the readings that you think are especially important, any thoughts of your own on the subject, and questions which you would like to see discussed. (It is a good idea to always do this but it is especially critical to do so on discussion days.) In general, you should be prepared to make at least a few points about every major discussion question asked. *BEFORE the small group discussions you should email me a copy of the notes you prepared* (preferably typed but scanned handwritten notes are ok). I will mostly grade these on a present/absent basis but I do expect to see evidence that you have thought about the points and gone over the readings. *The better your notes are, the better prepared you will be for the exam.*

*Paper.* The paper should be typed, double-spaced, and approximately 10 to 20 pages long. The paper should include a bibliography and all sources for material should be clearly cited. *I want both an electronic and printed version of your paper.* Papers are due April 10<sup>th</sup> (although you are welcome and encouraged to hand them in well before that.). On April 15, 17, 24, and 29, you will be given 15 minutes to discuss some aspect of your paper that you think would be of interest to the class (Amount of time and dates may be adjusted based on final enrollment). As a courtesy to your fellow students, I expect everyone to be there on those days. I usually assign grades *after* the presentation, so a strong (or weak) presentation can impact your grade.

I must approve your topic. By March 6<sup>th</sup>, you should give me a one-page typed summary briefly describing your proposed topic and any sources you have already identified. I encourage you to schedule meetings with me to talk about your ideas. If you want to give me a draft of your paper by March 25<sup>th</sup>, I will try to return it with comments within about 7-10 days. Note that there is nothing that stops you from starting or even completing your paper well in advance of the due date; if you get a lot of the work done early the end of the semester will be a lot less hectic for you.

The paper should be a major, in-depth examination of some major demographic issue or problem. It should demonstrate that you are familiar with the relevant research, and that you understand the issues and controversies involved. Your own original thinking, or your ability to offer some sort of critique, may be most helpful (but your own thoughts must not be used as a

substitute for adequate research). A minimum of a half-dozen scholarly sources should be cited (e.g. books, journal articles). You can also cite other sources – Time, Newsweek, Atlantic Monthly, the New York Times and Wall Street Journal often have excellent articles - so long as you have the minimum number of scholarly references. Throughout her book, Lundquist suggests a number of references that you may find useful. You'll also likely find that the Population Bulletins published by the Population Reference Bureau are very helpful to you; use these as a starting point, but don't stop there. Depending on your topic, you may find it helpful to do some original empirical research using sources like the Census Bureau's web site. Note that <https://scholar.google.com/> is generally better than Google when searching for sources.

*Honor Code.* Entering Notre Dame you were required to study the on-line edition of the Academic Code of Honor, to pass a quiz on it, and to sign a pledge to abide by it. The full Code and a Student Guide to the Academic code of Honor are available at <http://honorcode.nd.edu/>. Perhaps the most fundamental sentence is the beginning of section IV-B: “The pledge to uphold the Academic Code of Honor includes an understanding that a student’s submitted work, graded or ungraded – examinations, draft copies, papers, homework assignments, extra credit work, etc. - must be his or her own.” I reserve the right to use University-approved mechanisms (such as Turnitin) if I suspect plagiarism or cheating. The Notre Dame Writing Center conforms with the Honor Code so I am ok with students turning to it for help (<http://writingcenter.nd.edu/>).

*Non-Discrimination/ Inclusion Statement.* The University of Notre Dame is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and strive to maintain a positive learning environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. In this class we will not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment will be appreciated and given serious consideration. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate, please advise me and we will work with the Office for Students with Disabilities to make appropriate arrangements. (My thanks to Kevin Barry for the suggested wording of this.)

## Some Possible Paper Topics

Following are possible topics for your paper, but you are free to choose others. We will cover many of these in class, but I am sure you will be able to provide a much more in-depth examination. While there will often be some overlap with classroom material, *your presentations should emphasize material that has not already been covered in class.*

- Population status, problems, and prospects in the region/country of your choice (e.g. the former USSR, China, Israel, Latin America, Europe). I'll focus more on the United States, so you may find it worthwhile to look at other countries that are of interest to you.
- What effect does overpopulation in developing countries have on them, on the United States, and on world peace and stability? Is overpopulation really a problem, or is the problem the way in which resources are allocated within societies?

- Is global warming real? If so, how does overpopulation in the developing world and over-consumption in the developed world contribute to it? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the possible policy options?
- Demographic and social consequences of improved technological control over fertility. You might consider the possible impacts of couples being able to choose the sex of their child, test-tube babies, abortion pills, more effective contraceptive methods, surrogate motherhood, etc.
- Catholic perspectives on population issues (e.g. abortion, artificial insemination, birth control, stem cell research). Why does the church hold certain positions? What impact do those positions have? You might offer some sort of critique, or some sort of defense or attack, of Church positions. (You are free to take whatever positions you want, but I expect serious research and facts to be backing up your claims.)
- The American family - what did it used to be like, how has it changed, what will it be like in the future? You might look at changes in family size and composition, the feminization of poverty, changes in family routine, divorce, gay families, cohabitation, etc.
- Demographic effects of changing women's roles (such as on the labor force, fertility, male/female differentials in mortality).
- Demographic effects of changing men's roles and statuses. Do men continue to be the privileged ones? Or is there, as Christina Hoff Sommers claims, a "war against boys" that is turning men into the disadvantaged sex?
- Possible effects of demographic changes on businesses, marketing and politics in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. What types of products/services will rise/decline in importance? What will the impact be on the American labor force or American politics? Conversely, how will changes in the labor force affect business? You might discuss the effects of changing age composition and changing lifestyles.
- Just a few years ago, many were saying that demographic changes (e.g. the increasing population of Hispanics) were giving Democrats a long-term lock on the presidency. Obviously, that wasn't true in 2016. Why? How are demographic and other factors likely to affect electoral politics in the future?
- Contemporary health problems. Why have health problems such as obesity and diabetes increased in recent years? What effect are they having on the US and/or world population? Will new health care policies in the United States alleviate health problems or make them worse?
- The future of social security - is a "crisis" coming? How will America deal with the elderly in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Can "generational warfare" be averted?
- The effects of legal and illegal migration on the United States, both currently and in the future. Do American workers suffer from it? What benefits do immigrants bring? Would policy changes, such as the Dream Act, building the wall, or ending citizenship for anchor babies, be good or bad?
- The effect of demographic characteristics on poverty and wealth in America. How much do family origins, race, sex, etc., affect the status attainment of individuals in America today? Is the middle class collapsing, and if so why?
- Housing and segregation in America. What effect has racial segregation in housing and other areas had on American life? Is segregation declining, or will it change in the future?



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TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Jan 15, 22 – Introduction; Overview of the World’s Population

Lundquist, Ch. 1, “Introduction”  
Lundquist, Ch. 2, “Demographic Data”  
Readings packet, “Population: Historical overview”

Jan 20 – Class cancelled because of Martin Luther King Day Events. Later in the semester I may assign you an additional out-of-class task to make up for this.

Jan 27, 29 - Population, resources, environment, and food. A look at the theories of Malthus, Marx, the demographic transition, and others, followed by an examination of the effects of overpopulation in the world today.

Lundquist, Ch. 3, “Population Growth.”  
Readings packet, “Population, resources, environment & food”

Feb 3, 5 - Fertility: concepts and trends ; also, Birth Cohorts. A look at fertility concepts and measurement; The importance of age and sex structure; current status of fertility in the United States and the world; the Baby Boom and other birth cohorts

Lundquist, ch. 7, “Fertility.”  
Lundquist, Ch. 4, “Age and Sex Structure.”  
Readings packet, “Fertility: Concepts & Trends”  
Readings packet, “Birth cohorts.”

Feb 10, 12, 17 - Fertility: Issues, problems, policies. Includes adolescent fertility: costs and consequences; New reproductive technology and the issues it raises; the battle over reproductive rights.

Readings packet, “Fertility Issues: Teenage Sex & Unwed Pregnancy”  
Readings packet, “Fertility issues: Reproductive technology”  
Readings Packet, “Fertility Issues: The battle over reproductive rights”

Feb 19, 24 – Status and Roles of Women and Men. A discussion of the demographic implications of recent changes in gender roles, families, and households.

Readings packet, “The status and roles of women and men”

*Feb 26 – Catch up, Review for first exam; Take home exam handed out*

*Mar 2– NO CLASS. TAKE HOME EXAM DUE BY 10:00 pm.* If you keep up with the readings this should be plenty of time to finish the exam. But, if the due date is problematic because you have several other exams and papers due at about the same time, contact me in advance and we can negotiate over an extension.

*Mar 4 – PAPER TOPICS ARE DUE. Drafts are due March 25 if you want me to offer comments.*

Mar 4, 16 - Demographics. A look at how demographic information is used in business, political, and social planning.

Readings packet, “Demographics.”

Mar 18, 23 – Marriage & Family. A discussion of the demographic implications of recent changes in families, and households.

Lundquist, Ch. 8, “Unions and Householding.”  
Readings packet, “Marriage, divorce, families and households”

Mar 25, 30 - Mortality; also, AIDS. Includes causes of death; differences in mortality by sex, marital status, age, etc.

Lundquist, Ch. 5, “Mortality.”  
Lundquist, Ch. 6, “Morbidity and Health.”  
Readings packet, “Health, disease, mortality & AIDS.”

April 1 - The elderly. Characteristics of the elderly; caring for the elderly; social security; social problems presented by the elderly. Samuel Preston’s 1985 PAA Presidential address (under generational warfare) will definitely be discussed.

Lundquist, Ch. 4, “Age and Sex Structure”, pp. 118-130 (Problems of old populations).  
Readings packet, “Aging: The Elderly & Their Caregivers”  
Readings packet, “Aging: Generational Warfare?”  
Readings packet, “Aging: Social Security.” (Time permitting)  
Readings packet, “The future of aging.” (Time permitting)

Apr 6 - Poverty and Wealth. Effects of sex, race, and other characteristics on status attainment; Poverty and welfare in America; the financial problems of the middle class, including credit & bankruptcy.

Readings packet, “Poverty & Welfare”

*Apr 8 – PAPERS DUE*



Apr 8 – There are a variety of related topics I would like to cover if time permits. Remember, even if we do not go over a topic in depth, you may have opportunities to address it using the course readings in one of the optional exam questions.

Race. We'll be talking about the importance of race throughout the course. In this part, we'll pick up some new issues, such as what is race and the controversy over multiracial classifications. We may also talk about housing and segregation and general demographic issues concerning minorities not covered elsewhere.

Readings packet, "The Relevance of Race"  
Readings packet, "Housing and Segregation." (Time permitting)  
Readings packet, "Diversity & Affirmative Action" (Time permitting)  
Lundquist, Ch. 11, "Population Diversity."

Migration (brief discussion) Causes and consequences of migration; current migration controversies, e.g. building the wall

Lundquist, Ch. 9, "Migration."  
Readings packet, "Migration."

Urbanization (brief discussion);

Lundquist, Ch. 10, "Urbanization."  
Readings packet, "Urbanization."

*Apr 15, 20, 22, 27 - In-class paper presentations.*

*April 29 – The Future; Catch up; Review for final exam; Take home final handed out.*

Discussion will include a focus on the bleak vision of the future presented in Doug Massey's Presidential Address to the Population Association of American, and the responses to it. We will definitely go over Massey's address in class.

Readings packet, "The Future."

*Thursday, May 7, 6:15 pm – Take home finals are due* (but are welcome sooner). DO NOT BE LATE!!! I only have a few days to get your grades in, and I am not allowed to give incompletes.

### Key Dates:

First take home exam: Due March 2<sup>nd</sup> by 10:00 pm  
Paper Topics submitted for approval: March 6  
Drafts due if you want advance comments: March 25  
Papers due: April 8  
Class presentations: April 15, 20, 22, 27  
Final take home exam due: Thursday, May 7, 6:15 pm