SOCIOLOGY 611: DEMOGRAPHIC TECHNIQUES
Fall 2013: Wednesdays, 3:30-6:10

Professor: Joan R. Kahn  
Office: 3137 Art/Soc  
Phone: 301-405-6412  
E-mail: jkahn@umd.edu  
Office Hrs: Mon. 11-12 (or by appt)

T.A.: Joanna Kling  
Office: 1108 Art/Soc  
E-mail: jkling@umd.edu  
Office Hrs: Weds. 12-2 (or by appt)

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
This is a survey course in techniques that are widely used in demographic analysis. These include techniques that describe population structure, analyze demographic dynamics and evaluate demographic data. In addition, many of the analytic skills and techniques stressed throughout the course have more general applicability in social science research. The aim of the course is to acquaint you with the nature and structure of a variety of techniques and to provide you with experience in applying these techniques to substantive problems.

PRE-REQUISITES:
This course assumes that students have a basic familiarity with the field of demography. This will provide a useful background for many of the methods and techniques covered in the course. If you have had no exposure to demography as an academic discipline, you should read through a textbook such as the one by John Weeks, Population: An Introduction to Concepts and Issues. It provides an overview of the demographic perspective and the field as a whole.

TEXTS:
There is 1 required text for this course, and it should be available for purchase either online or at the University Book Center or the Maryland Book Exchange. PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE OBTAINING THIS BOOK!!

Demographic Methods and Concepts by Donald Rowland (DR) (2003)

Additional readings will be assigned from articles and chapters that will be available on Canvas (stay tuned for more details!).

FORMAT:
This course will follow a lecture and discussion format. Each week, I will lecture on methods and techniques for the first 1.5 hours and then the last hour will be devoted to student-led discussions of the research articles. Each week, by the evening prior to class, all students are required to post brief comments on that week’s readings on the course Discussion Board on Canvas. Then, during class, 1-2 students will lead a discussion of the readings, guided by their brief summary of the readings as well as 2-3 questions per article.
HOMEWORK:
There will be a series of written assignments (problem sets) during the semester, each due on a specified date. In an effort to save paper, we will make assignments available on Canvas, and you will turn in your assignments through Canvas as well. We will provide a template for each assignment (in EXCEL) to help you organize your work. Late assignments will be tolerated only under extreme circumstances (please contact your TA if you run into time issues).

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

Mid-term Exam  Wednesday November 6
The midterm exam is “closed book,” however, you will be permitted to bring 1 page of notes (i.e., a “cheat-sheet”) with formulae, definitions, etc.

Final Project  Due Wednesday, December 11
The final project will be an extensive demographic analysis of one country’s growth patterns, culminating in a population projection for the year 2050. The analysis should include a careful assessment of the components of population growth throughout the period since before the country even started to pass through the demographic transition; the analysis should be based on a combination of the student’s assessment of the published literature on the subject, an evaluation of existing data sources, and also a component projection to 2050. The final product will include a report (not to exceed 20 pages) as well as a Powerpoint presentation, both due on December 11, the last day of class.

GRADING:
Homework  45%
Mid-term  25%
Final Project  20%
Participation  10%

There will be no Incompletes. Students must complete ALL required work in order to get credit for this course.
TOPICS/READINGS TO BE COVERED AND TENTATIVE TIME SCHEDULE:
Note: DR refers to the Rowland text. PG refers to the Palmore & Gardner’s Measuring Mortality, Fertility and Natural Increase (see Canvas for pdf)

1. **Introduction to the Field of Demography** (Sept. 4)
   DR Chapters 1-2
   Kent & Haub (2005) “Global Demographic Divide”
   http://www.prb.org/pdf06/60.4GlobalDemographicDivide.pdf

2. **Age-Sex Structure** (Sept. 11)
   DR Chapter 3 “Age-Sex Composition.”

3. **Standardization and Decomposition** (Sept. 18) **HW #1 DUE**
   DR Chapter 4
   PG Chapter 2 (pp. 9-34)

4. **Measurement of Mortality and Health** (Sept. 25) **HW #2 DUE**
   DR Chapter 6
   Freedman et al. 2007. “Chronic conditions and the decline in late life disability.”
   *Demography* 44(3): 459–477

5. **The Life Table** (Oct. 2)
   PG Chapter 2 (pp.35-61)
   DR Chapter 8

6. **Life Table Applications**  
   **(Oct. 9)**  
   **HW #3 DUE**  
   CR Chapter 9  
   Crimmins et al. 2009. “Change in Disability-free life expectancy for Americans 70 years and older.” *Demography* 46:627-646  

7. **Measurement of Fertility**  
   **(Oct. 16)**  
   **PG Chapter 3**  
   **DR Chapter 7**  

8. **Fertility Applications**  
   **(Oct. 23)**  

9. **Measurement of Marriage, Families & Households**  
   **(Oct. 30)**  
   **HW#4 DUE**  
   **DR Chapter 7 (pp. 251-255)**  

10. **MIDTERM EXAM**  
    **(Nov. 6)**

11. **Migration**  
    **(Nov. 13)**
    **DR Chapter 11**

12. Population Projections (Nov. 20) HW #5 due

NO CLASS: Study Day to work on projects (also travel day prior to Thanksgiving) (Nov. 27)

13. Population Distribution (Dec. 4)
DR Chapter 10

14. Student Presentations of Final Projects (Dec. 11) Projects due