

SYD 3020 Population and Society

Fall 2008 (online)

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COURSE OBJECTIVES: SYD3020 is an introduction to the field of population studies (known as demography). Many consider demography a sub-field of sociology, so it is therefore important to understand the ways in which population processes effect and are affected by social phenomena. By the end of this course:

- each student will be expected to know the “introductory terminology” of demography.
- each student will be expected to learn how to calculate and estimate some of the statistics that are used in demography (such as crude birth rates, death rates, etc.).
- each student is expected to be able to identify specific population issues in a given population and explain what these issues mean for future social and economic development.
- each student is expected identify some of the population issues that we are observing in the world today, as well as micro-level and macro-level strategies for addressing these issues.

TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS: The textbook utilized in this course is “*Population: An Introduction to Concepts and Issues (10th Edition)*” by John R. Weeks. The ISBN (10) number is: 0-495-09637-7. Earlier editions of the text are available, however, I caution against using these editions, as the quizzes that you take will be based on material from the 10th edition of the text.

Some video materials are required for the course. These videos will be made available in Windows Media Player, Google Video Player, and Real Formats (I will try to let you know which formats so that you can download the necessary software to access), either as files to download or streaming videos to watch on the web. These videos will be located in the *Course Library* folder of the course website.

It is assumed that by signing up for an online course, that you will acquire sufficient internet access for yourself in such a way that your completion of course assignments will not be impeded. In the event that you find yourself having problems with internet access, it is up to you to sort it out and complete your assignments. Obviously, college libraries are a good place to try internet, but also keep in mind that there is free WIFI in many places on FSU’s campus (all you need is your FSU ID to sign in). I also suggest you try public libraries (almost every town has one), as well as establishments such as Panera Bread, Starbucks, Crispers, and many other coffee shops.

COURSE POLICIES AND GRADING: All students in this course will be assigned to a group of about twenty other students. Each group will be assigned a mentor, who will act as their human contact point with the course. Every Monday morning, I will send an email to the class detailing the tasks of the week, as well as other helpful advice (like where to find examples of assignments) and any news that they feel the class should know.

Your mentor is your first point of contact for the course- if you get locked out of a quiz, have questions about discussion boards, etc., you should email your mentor first. If it is a situation that they cannot resolve, I they will pass your email along to me, and I will then handle it. Bear in mind that for most of your issues, your mentor will be able to assist you, and so it is advantageous for you to try to resolve issues and problems with your mentor before coming to me.

I am also maintaining a discussion board where we can discuss problems or questions that may arise during the course of the semester. There you may find answers to some of your questions, removing the necessity for you to wait for a response from your mentor or me.

If you send an email to either your mentor or me, know that you can expect an answer in about 24 hours during the week. If you email us during the weekend, its best to assume that we won't respond until Sunday night or Monday mornings.

Quizzes (10%): Throughout the course of the semester, each student will take 12 multiple choice quizzes, which are found in the *Quizzes* folder of the course website. Each quiz will cover material from one chapter in the text and will be 10 questions (a combination of multiple choice or true/false questions) and must be completed within 25 minutes. The quizzes must be completed once they have been started. In the event that you “lose your wireless connection” or run into any other technological issues and are not able to complete your quiz, you must immediately send an email *to your mentor* explaining your issue. Because this is an online course, it is expected that each student be able to secure for themselves a reliable internet connection. Students that have “excessive” technological problems which prevent them from completing the quizzes may experience grade penalties. Also, if you have questions or concerns regarding quiz questions/answers, you should email your mentor regarding your concerns. Your semester quiz grade will be the average of 10 quiz scores averaged together (meaning that you can drop your two lowest quiz grades).

Class work and discussion Boards (35%): Each week students in SYD 3020 will be expected to complete a brief assignment. These assignments will range from participating in discussion boards, completing brief “homework” assignments and the like. The assignments will be submitted online and scored.

Mid-Term Project (25%): Each student will be placed in a small group with 4-5 other students to work together and complete a mid term project. The project will be a demographic profile of three countries and will be completed as a group and submitted

online. The grade for the mid term project is based on two components: the product (of the project) **and** each group member's individual participation. Basically, each group member's participation will be assessed by each of the group members and will be added to the product grade.

Final Exam (25%): Towards the end of the course, I will post of list of "prompts" that will comprise the list of possible exam questions. The final exam will consist of a 4-5 paged, double spaced written response to one prompt that will be completed and turned in during the last week of class. These essay questions will be graded on mastery of course knowledge, objectives as well as writing structure and style.

Grades will be determined on a 100 point scale and translated to letter grades as follows:

A 93 to 100

A- 90 to 92

B+ 87 to 89

B 83 to 86

B- 80 to 82

C+ 77 to 79

C 73 to 76

C- 70 to 72

D+ 67 to 69

D 63 to 66

D- 60 to 62

F 59 and below

Extra Credit. Students may earn extra credit in this course by reading and writing a one page synopses of demographic articles. Each article synopsis will be graded on a scale of 0-1. The maximum extra credit that any student may earn is 5 points (five synopses with grades of 1.0 or 10 synopses with grades of 0.5).

Due dates:

Due dates are marked on a calendar called "Calendar Assignments Population and Society" which is found in the Course Documents folder of the course website.

Assignments and quizzes are due by 11:59 pm ET on their due date. For example, on the calendar your second week's assignments are due on Friday September 12, 2008. What this means, is that you have until 11:59 pm ET on Friday September 12, 2008 to complete the assignments for the week 2.

Late Work:

I don't accept late work.

My late work policy is driven more by practicality than any sort of principle on tardiness. Most of the time, I will not be grading assignments as soon as they are due. In most cases, assignments will start being graded within about 12-48 hours after their due date, and generally, I don't check when they were turned in. So as long as your tardily submitted your assignment is sitting in the folder ready to be graded when I go to grade

it, I generally don't know (nor do I care) how late the assignment was- because my grading it is not being impeded in any way.

The reason that I don't accept late work, is that it's difficult to stay organized with grading assignments when they trickle in days and weeks after the due date. So for all intents and purposes, the deadline marks the beginning of time during which you can expect your assignment to be graded. If your assignment is waiting for me to grade it, then it is **NOT** considered late. If you haven't turned it in by the time I download the assignments to grade them, it **IS** considered late.

Of course, there are instances where an exception might be granted, but only at my discretion. These generally have to do with unexpected circumstances, such as hospitalizations, jury duty and the like. Being "ill" at "home" does not constitute an exception to the late work policy, nor does religious holidays, being a bridesmaid at a wedding, children being ill, not having an internet connection, etc.

Since this course doesn't rely on face to face contact with the instructor and doesn't require physical presence to turn in assignments, failing to complete assignments due to "illness", "internet issues", etc do not constitute acceptable reasons for late work. Since the course is online and you can submit assignments whenever you have completed them, failure to adhere to the deadlines becomes a time management issue, which is not an acceptable reason to turn work in late. One of the perks of being in an online class is that you don't have to come to campus for class, but one of the downsides is that the usual reasons for not making it to class to turn in assignments don't apply. While the late work policy may seem draconian to most of the students in this class, I try to have a very dynamic, involved class. This involves turning assignments back to you in a timely manner, which is difficult if I have to return to prior weeks' materials to grade assignments.

OTHER 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.