Instructor: Dr. Sarah Brauner-Otto
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Office: 728 Leacock Building
Office hours: Fridays 10-11 am or by appointment
https://mcgill.zoom.us/j/86062209469?pwd=VE1qM2NYN09BS3N1WE05dkxwdEpJZz09

Course description:
This is a survey course in basic techniques that are widely used in demographic analysis. These include techniques that describe population structure, analyze demographic dynamics, and evaluate demographic data. The aim of this course is to introduce you to these various demographic methods, to understand their strengths and weaknesses, and to see how these techniques may be applicable to your own research.

There are no specific pre-requisites for this course. I will assume you have a basic knowledge of demography and social science research. If you have not had a specific class in demography you may want to pick up a textbook to use as a reference (e.g. Weeks, John R. 2012. Population: An Introduction to Concepts and Issues.). The library has some of these books on its shelves.

Some basic math skills (adding, subtracting, division, multiplication, exponentiation, etc) are necessary to be successful. You do not need to be a “stats” person, only willing to look at and work with tables, numbers, and simple formulae.

Online learning environment for Winter 2021. This semester will be completely online. We will hold synchronous lectures via zoom during the regularly scheduled class period (Fridays, 2:35-4:25pm Montreal time). This will allow you to ask questions as they come up—something I think crucial for grasping methods. I will record the lectures and post them on myCourses if you are not able to make class or want to review the material.

Course website:
We will make use of the course website through myCourses. Readings not in the textbook may be posted there and I will use the email feature for most email communications.

Required text:

You can buy the book on amazon.ca or directly from the publisher. You can also purchase or rent an e-version of the textbook from www.vitalsource.com or www.redshelf.com.

I have used this book in the past so older graduate students in the sociology program may have a copy they are willing to loan or rent.
This book comes with a CD containing additional exercises. Some of these will be included in the homework. If you have problems reading or accessing the CD material we can find a solution but you must let me know as soon as possible.


This is a fun introduction to many of the ideas that are central to demographic analysis.

Additional readings can be found electronically through myCourses or the library. If not, they will be made available to students either through the myCourses website or as an email attachment.

You will need a calculator for this class. Most, if not all, the calculations will only require a basic calculator like the one on your cell phone or computer.


**Course requirements:** The course requirements are non-negotiable. If you know you cannot meet them, do not take this course.

1. **Mid-term Exam (20%).** There will be one mid-term exam. This is a timed, open-book exam and will cover all material presented up to this date. You will have 6 hours to complete the exam over a 48 hour period. The exam will be made available on myCourses starting at 2:35pm (Montreal time) on February 12th and must be submitted on myCourses by 2:35pm (Montreal time) on February 14th. Once you open the exam you will have 6 hours to complete it. If you experience technical difficulties or other unexpected circumstance that prevent you from submitting your exam on time please email me as soon as possible.

2. **Final Exam (35%).** There will be an open-book, cumulative final exam. You will have 6 hours to complete the exam. The exam will be made available on myCourses starting at 4:25pm (Montreal time) on April 16th and must be submitted on myCourses 6 hours after you have started the exam. It must be completed by 2:30pm on Thursday, April 29th. If you experience technical difficulties or other unexpected circumstance that prevent you from submitting your exam on time please email me as soon as possible.

3. **Homework (30%).** There will be 6 homework assignments (each worth 5%) throughout the semester. Every student must turn in their own assignment, but I encourage students to work together on completing them. These are graded Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. Homework should be emailed to me by the start of the class period in which they are due. You may need to include equations in your homework. You can do this using the equation editor in Word.
4. “Where has demography gone?” presentation (15%). Each student will do short (~20 minute) presentation on how the discipline of demography has changed. Students will select and comment on a Presidential Address from a previous Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America (PAA). The presentation should include a brief summary of the main argument in the address. Comments could be updates of the data, reflections on how “right” or “wrong” the address was, dimensions that were lacking from the original argument, and/or extensions of the original address.

Grading:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Homework (6*5)</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Grading:

POLICIES

“In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.” (approved by Senate on 21 January 2009 – see also the section in this document on Assignments and evaluation.)

Make-up exam policy.

Note: The exams cannot be made up. If you know you will miss either exam do not take this course.

Email. There are three key points regarding email for this class.

- To communicate with you I will most likely use the email tool on myCourses. It is your responsibility to check this email account (or have it forwarded to an account you use more regularly). It is also your responsibility to ensure that I receive any messages from you. I recommend sending messages through myCourses to ensure your messages to me from a non-McGill account are not mistaken as SPAM.
- Email is a written document and should be treated as a permanent record of communication. Each email should be addressed specifically (e.g. Dear Dr. Brauner-Otto,) and include your name as a closing. I will not respond to emails that do not have these components, are not written in complete sentences (e.g., no texting shortcuts), or if the answer to your question is...
in the syllabus. If you have read the syllabus but do not understand something make that clear in your email.
• I typically respond to emails within 24 hours. If you have not heard from me after 24 hours you may email me again to make sure I received your message.

**Academic misconduct.** “McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/integrity](http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity) for more information).”

«L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site [www.mcgill.ca/integrity](http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity)).”

Academic misconduct of any sort will not be tolerated. If I find evidence of any academic misconduct for any activity in this class I will report the offense to the Office of the Dean of Students and they will determine the appropriate sanction.

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to deceptive acts such as the following: cheating, fabrication (lying), falsification, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity, or violation of departmental or college rules. Signing in for another student on an attendance sheet is considered academic misconduct.

**Announcements and updates.**
You are responsible for all announcements and updates made in class and on myCourses (this includes items on the Discussion Board and those posted as Announcements), as well as for all course materials given out in class. You should also check for new announcements or material on myCourses at least weekly. I recommend having myCourses send you a daily update so you do not miss anything important.

**Policy Concerning the Rights of Students with Disabilities**
“If you have a disability please contact the instructor to arrange a time to discuss your situation. It would be helpful if you contact the Office for Students with Disabilities at 398-6009 before you do this.”

**Policy for the Accommodation of Religious Holy Days**
“1 Students are not to be penalized if they cannot write examinations or be otherwise evaluated on their religious holy days where such activities conflict with their religious observances. (…) 2 Students who because of religious commitment cannot meet academic obligations, other than final examinations, on certain holy days are responsible for informing their instructor, with two weeks’ notice of each conflict. (…) 3 When the requested accommodation concerns a final examination, students are responsible for advising their faculty office as soon as possible and not later than the deadline for reporting
conflicts. Additional documentation confirming their religious affiliation may be requested.”
(Approved by Senate - November 20, 1996 - Minute 92)

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

© Instructor generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.
Course Outline (subject to change)

Week 1. January 8
Introduction to the course, syllabus, and other planning

Week 2. January 15
Demographic data, growth, rates, and probabilities
Rowland Chapters 1 and 2

https://github.com/MJAlexander/d_is_for_demography

Recommended:
Week 3. January 22
HW 1 Population growth due

Age-sex composition
Rowland Chapter 3

Recommended:

Week 4. January 29
Standardization, periods, and cohorts
Rowland Chapter 4

Recommended:
Week 5. February 5  
HW 2 Standardization due  

Mortality  
Rowland Chapter 6  
Recommended:  

Week 6. February 12  
HW 3 Mortality due  
Catch up and review

Week 7. February 19  
Mid-term exam

Week 8. February 26  
Fertility  
Rowland Chapter 7  

Family  

Fertility Recommended:  


For additional background you may want to also read: Bongaarts, J. and G.

Family Recommended:


**Reading week. March 1-5**

**Week 9. March 12**

HW 4 Fertility and family due

**Life tables**

Rowland Chapter 8

Recommended:


**Week 10. March 19**

HW 5 Life tables due

**Stable and stationary models**

Rowland Chapter 9
Recommended:

**Week 11. March 26**
HW 6 Stable and stationary models due

**Migration**
Rowland Chapter 11

**Population projections**
Rowland Chapter 12

Migration Recommended:
(http://www.prb.org/Publications/Articles/2007/FeminizationofMigrationLimitsofData.aspx)

Projections Recommended:
April 2. No class. Good Friday.

Week 12. April 13
Catch up and review

Week 13. April 16
Final presentations in class.

Final exam made available at 4:25pm. Due, Thursday, April 29.