



The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 2180B
Development and Health Inequalities
Winter 2017
Mon 2:30-4:20pm, SSC 3022

Instructor: Rachel Margolis, PhD
Office Hours: Monday 12pm - 1:30pm
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2 seminar hours, 0.5 course

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to the study of factors that influence the health of populations. In the first part of the course, we will focus on how to interpret common measures of population health, such as life expectancy at birth and measures of morbidity and disability. Next, population health will be considered from a comparative and historical perspective. We will study the principal factors driving the massive health improvements of the past century, as well as some of the obstacles that have recently emerged. Then we will consider the factors underlying the major health disparities across countries and regions and health disparities among individuals that are associated with their gender, level of educational attainment, occupation, and race/ethnicity. The next section will address major health policy issues in developing countries, with reference to the effectiveness of health interventions for improving the health of a population. Attention is paid to dilemmas facing countries with extremely limited resources. Last, we turn to current health issues in highly developed countries such as obesity, smoking, diet, and exercise. We will also discuss social relationships and health and the ways in which we affect each other's health.

Prerequisite(s): None

Antirequisite(s): The former SOC 2279A/B

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Characterize measures of population health to capture infant and child health, adult health, disability, and mortality.
2. Calculate basic measures of a life table and interpret them.
3. Recognize and critique different types of studies used to understand the factors contributing to changes in health over time and differences in health across subpopulations.
4. Communicate the results of figures, graphs, and tables of results that we discuss in class.
5. Identify the major health policy issues in countries with high and low resources.

Required Texts

Readings will be posted on the course website. See schedule and readings below. There are no required texts to buy for this course. Please make sure you are enrolled on the course website through owl.

Method of Evaluation

The course is based on class lectures and readings. You are expected to do the assigned readings and to come to class. Lectures cover material that is not discussed directly in the course readings, but for which you are responsible. Conversely, you also are responsible for the material covered in the readings even if the material is not reviewed in class.

The mid-term and final examinations will include both multiple choice, short answer Questions, and may contain short essays. Some of these questions will involve calculating and interpreting measures of population health and communicating the results of figures, graphs and tables.

Evaluation Breakdown

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

- Midterm exam (2-hour exam held in-class): 45%
- Final exam (3-hour exam during exam period, scheduled by the Registrar's Office): 55% This exam will be cumulative, covering all material throughout the semester.

How to Contact Me

You can come to office hours with any questions about the material. You can also email me at: rachel.margolis@uwo.ca

How to get important course information: For information about the course, please read the course outline carefully. Also, check the course website for announcements.

Overview of Course Schedule

Week	Dates	Topic
1	January 9	Measuring Health
2	January 16	
3	January 23	
4	January 30	No class
5	February 6	Determinants of Mortality/Health Change
6	February 15	Health Disparities
	February 20	Reading Week
7	February 27	Midterm Test (In Class)
8	March 6	Health Policy in Poor Countries
9	March 13	Population Growth, Family Planning &
10	March 20	Reproductive Health
10	March 27	Health Policy in Rich Countries/Health Behaviors
11	April 3	Social Relationships and Health
Exam Period	TBA	Final Exam

Course Schedule and Readings

Weeks 1-3 Measuring Health

Week 1

Lee, Ronald D. 2003. The demographic transition: Three centuries of fundamental change. *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17(4): 167–190.

Week 2

Rowland, Donald. 2003. Chapter 8: Life Tables, Pages 265-293. In: *Demographic Methods and Concepts*. Oxford University Press.

Wilmoth, John. 2000. Demography of Longevity: Past, Present, and Future Trends. *Experimental Gerontology* 35:1111-1129.

Week 3

Scherbov, Sergei and Warren C Sanderson. 2016. New Approaches to the Conceptualization of Age and Aging. *Journal of Aging and Health* 28(7):1159-1177.

Sanderson, Warren and Sergei Scherbov. 2008. Rethinking age and aging. *Population Bulletin* 63(4): 1–16.

Week 4 No Class

Week 5 Determinants of Mortality/Health Change

Oeppen, Jim and James W. Vaupel. 2002. Broken limits to life expectancy. *Science* 296(5570): 1029–1031

Caldwell, John C. 1986. Routes to low mortality in poor countries. *Population and Development Review* 12(2): 171–220

Week 6. Health Disparities

Cutler, D.M., A. Lleras-Muney, and T. Vogl (2008). Socioeconomic status and health: dimensions and mechanisms. NBER Working Paper Series 14333.

Austad, Steven N. 2006. Why women live longer than men: Sex differences in longevity. *Gender Medicine* 3(2): 79–92

McKee, M. and V. Shkolnikov. 2001. Understanding the toll of premature death among men in Eastern Europe. *British Medical Journal* 323(3), 1051–1055

Week 7 Mid-term Exam in Class.

Week 8 Health Policy in Poor Countries

Debra Carr. 2004. Improving the health of the world's poorest people. *Population Reference Bureau Health Bulletin* No. 1.

Four case studies from: Levine, Ruth. 2007. *Case Studies in Global Health: Millions Saved*.

Case #15: Preventing Iodine Deficiency Disease in China

Case #8: Preventing Diarrheal Deaths in Egypt

Case #17: Eliminating Measles in Southern Africa

Case #19: Treating Cataracts in India.

Weeks 9-10 Population Growth, Family Planning, and Reproductive Health

Bongaarts, John and Steven Sinding. 2011. Population policy in transition in the developing world. *Science* 333(6042): 574–576.

Two case studies from: Levine, Ruth. 2007. *Case Studies in Global Health: Millions Saved*.

Case #13: Reducing Fertility in Bangladesh

Case #2: Preventing HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections in Thailand

Week 11 Health Policy in Rich Countries/Health Behaviors

Taubes. 2001. The Soft Science of Dietary Fat. *Science* 29:2536-2545.

Taubes, Gary. 2007. Do we really know what makes us healthy? *New York Times*.

URL: <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/16/magazine/16epidemiology-t.html>

Olshansky et al., 2005. A Potential Decline in Life Expectancy in the United States in the 21st Century. *New England Journal of Medicine* 352(11).

Samuel Preston. 2005. Deadweight? The Influence of Obesity on Longevity. *New England Journal of Medicine* 352(11):1135-37.

Week 12 Social Relationships and Health

Christakis, Nicholas A. and James H. Fowler . 2007. The spread of obesity in a large social network over 32 years. *New England Journal of Medicine* 357: 370–379.

Kolata, Gina. 2011. Catching obesity from friends may not be so easy. *New York Times*, August 8, 2011. URL <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/09/health/09network.html>

Parker-Pope, Tara. 2010. Is marriage good for your health? *New York Times Magazine*, April 12, 2010. URL <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/18/magazine/18marriage-t.html>

Important Policies

Policies for Assignment Deadlines

There will be **no make-up midterm exams**. If a student misses the mid-term due to sickness or another acceptable excuse, the student must present an official document justifying the absence and (only in this situation) the weight of the midterm will be added to the final exam. To get accommodation, the student needs to tell the professor about the accommodation within 2 weeks of the midterm. In case of lack of justification for the absence, a grade of zero will be attributed to the midterm exam.

Academic accommodation will NOT be granted automatically on request. You must demonstrate by documentation that there are compelling medical or compassionate grounds before academic accommodation will be considered. For personal illness, if you should consult Student Health Services regarding your illness or personal problem, you should request a Student Medical Certificate from the physician. If you were seen by an off-campus doctor, obtain a certificate from his/her office at the time of your visit. The off-campus medical certificate form must be used and can be found at: <http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/docs/procedures/medicalNote.pdf>

Notes stating “For Medical Reasons” are not considered sufficient.

For any other circumstance, if you are not sure what documentation to provide, ask your Academic Counselor. If your documentation is judged sufficient, the academic counselor will issue a Recommendation for a Special Examination. Once you have this form, contact your instructor as soon as possible to make arrangements. Even if approved from your home faculty Academic Counselor, there is no guarantee that you will be allowed to write the makeup final exam. You need permission from your home Faculty Counselor, your instructor, and the Department Chair. Failure to follow this procedure may result in an examination grade of zero. You must ensure that the Special Examination form has been signed by the instructor and Department Chair and that the form is returned to the Academic Counseling Office for approval without delay. Make-up final examinations, if permitted, will be written within one month of the end of the exam period.

Book airline flights after you know the dates of your final examinations so they do not conflict with any exams.

A Note on Plagiarism

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence (the Scholastic Offence Policy can be viewed in the Western Academic Calendar).

Plagiarism Checking: All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (www.turnitin.com).

Policies on Examinations

Scientific and basic calculators will be allowed during examinations. Graphing calculators and cell phones are not permitted during the exam.

Students asking for their exams to be re-graded need to ask within 2 weeks of receiving the mark. In this case, the whole exam will be re-graded.

Policy on Laptops and other Electronics/Phones in Class

Laptops are permitted in class for course materials only. Be sure that all cell phones are turned off at the beginning of class.

Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness

Western's policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Students must see the Academic Counselor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation:

http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical_accommodation.html

Accessibility Options

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website:

www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html

Scholastic Offences

The goal for the course is to learn basic demographic methods and internalize how demographers think about measuring population change. The assignments are a key part of learning how the methods work. It will be helpful to talk about the methods with classmates and this is strongly encouraged. However, it is important to do the problem sets without collaboration. This will help to learn the material and prepare for exams.

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site:

www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Mental Health

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.