Economics 466: Economics of Population
Course Outline and Reading List
Fall 2011

Instructor:
David Lam, Professor of Economics, 218 Lorch Hall, 763-9237, davidl@umich.edu
Office hours: Wednesday 2:00-4:00

Graduate Student Instructor: Tanya Byker, tbyker@umich.edu , 105 Lorch Hall

Class Meeting Time and Place:
Tuesday and Thursday 10:00-11:30, 1570 CC Little (computer lab)
See UM CTools web site for office hours and announcements (https://ctools.umich.edu).

Course Description:
This course uses an economic perspective to analyze the dramatic changes in fertility, mortality, marriage, and household structure in recent decades in both industrialized and developing countries. The course includes a computer lab component built around statistical analysis of household survey data. Students will use the statistical package Stata to analyze demographic and economic change in the United States and other countries, applying recent innovations in the application of microeconomic theory and econometrics to the analysis of demographic behavior, labor markets, poverty, and inequality. Topics include: economics of fertility and marriage; economic and demographic analysis of population growth; intergenerational transmission of income inequality; impact of changing age structure on social security systems. Coursework includes: computer-based problem sets and writing exercises; a paper based on computer analysis of household survey data; written midterm and final examinations.

Prerequisites: Economics 401. Students are expected to have a basic familiarity with intermediate microeconomics. Given the emphasis on statistical analysis in the course, Economics 404 or 405 are strongly recommended. Familiarity with computer statistical packages will be useful but is not required.

Course Material:
There is no text book or course pack. All readings are available through the CTools web site for the course.

Grading: Required work for the course consists of the following:
- A 15 page term paper (counts for 30% of grade).
- A mid-term exam (counts for 25% of grade)
- A final exam (counts for 35% of grade)
- Problem sets throughout the course (10% combined). Problem sets will generally be due on Tuesdays at 11:45 p.m. We encourage collaboration on problem sets, but each student must write up a separate problem set for submission.

Upper-Level Writing Requirement: Writing requirements are the same for all students in the class. Writing assignments include the problem sets and the term paper. The grade on the first draft of your term paper counts for 30% of the final paper grade. Note that you must get a grade of C- or better in the course in order to satisfy the upper-level writing requirement.

Important Dates:
Tuesday October 4: Term paper proposal due
Thursday October 20: Mid-term exam
Tuesday November 8: First draft of term paper due at 5:00 p.m. (posted to CTools and hard copy delivered to Tanya Byker in Lorch 105)
Wednesday December 14: Final term paper due at 5:00 p.m. (posted to CTools and hard copy delivered to Tanya Byker in Lorch 105)
Friday December 16: Final exam
Outline of Lectures and Reading List
(* indicates required readings, other readings optional)

Tuesday September 6
Overview of Demographic Rates and Population Dynamics

Thursday September 8
Historical Patterns of Demographic and Economic Change

Tuesday September 13
The Demographic Transition and Economic Impact of Rapid Population Growth
*“The end of cheap food,” The Economist, December 6, 2007.
*“Malthus, the false prophet,” The Economist, May 15, 2008.
*“Feeding the World,” The Economist, February 24, 2011.

Thursday September 15
Computer Lab: Introduction to Stata and census data (Problem Set 1 assigned)

Tuesday September 20
Computer Lab: Descriptive statistics, do files

Thursday September 22
Computer Lab: Advanced descriptive statistics, graphing (Problem Set 2 assigned)

Tuesday September 27
The Economics of Fertility: Quantity-Quality

Thursday September 29 (Problem Set 3 – Term Paper proposal – assigned)
Computer Lab: Overview of IPUMS-I data sets

Tuesday October 4 (Term Paper Proposal due)
Fertility and Investments in Children in Developing Countries
*“Go forth and multiply a lot less, The Economist, October 29, 2009.

**Thursday October 6**  
Computer Lab: Introduction to regression (Problem Set 4 assigned)

**Tuesday October 11**  
**Human Capital Investments and Earnings**  

**Thursday October 13**  
Computer Lab: More regression: Earnings equations

**Tuesday October 18**  
Fall STUDY Break – No Class

**Thursday October 20**  
Mid-term Exam

**Tuesday October 25**  
**Poverty and Inequality**  

**Thursday October 27**  
Computer Lab: Measuring poverty and inequality (Problem Set 5 assigned)

**Tuesday November 1**  
**The Demography and Economics of Age Structure**  

**Thursday November 3**  
Computer Lab: Age Pyramids and Analysis of Age Structure

**Tuesday November 8**  
(First draft of term paper due at 5:00p.m. in Tanya Byker’s office)  
**Women’s Labor Force Participation and Fertility in the U.S.**  
Thursday November 10
Is There an Opt-out Revolution?


Tuesday November 15
Economics of Marriage


Thursday November 17
Computer Lab: Analyzing Marriage and Families

Thursday November 22
Economic Links Between Generations


Thursday November 24
Thanksgiving, No Class

Tuesday November 29
Economics of HIV/AIDS


Thursday November 17
Computer Lab: Analyzing the impact of orphanhood

Tuesday December 6
Experimental evidence on returns to education


Thursday December 8
Computer Lab: Effective presentation of data in term papers

Tuesday December 13
Discussion of the future of the world

Wednesday December 14
Term papers due at 5:00 p.m.
Electronic copy posted to CTools and printed copy handed in to Tanya Byker’s office

Friday December 16
Final exam 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. (location to be announced)