

GRADUATE PROGRAM in APPLIED DEMOGRAPHY

Department of Sociology

A growing number of administrative, planning, and statistical agencies at all levels of government, public policy research organizations, and private industries are showing an interest in employing persons whose primary training and expertise is in the use and analysis of population statistics. In addition, an increasing number of students have shown an interest in acquiring specialized training in techniques of demographic analysis at an earlier stage in their graduate education than is common in more traditional graduate programs. Designed in response to these trends, the Graduate Program in Applied Demography prepares graduates for employment in a variety of service, government, or business settings upon the completion of the master's degree. Students who intend to continue their education through the doctoral degree should also consider the Graduate Program in demography within the Department of Sociology. This program has different requirements for the master's degree in demography and is generally designed to prepare students for entry into a doctoral level program.

Program Requirements

The Department requires that students in the Graduate Program in Applied Demography complete a minimum of **30 semester hours** of graduate level course work and write a master's thesis. Students must count at least 3 hours of thesis research as part of the required **30** credit hours. Because the field of demography is so broad and the professional goals of students in the program are diverse, the curriculum provides several options. Although a set of core courses must be completed by all students there is sufficient flexibility to permit the design of an individual study program as well as elective courses tailored to meet individual needs and interests.

The Core Curriculum (27 Semester Hours Required).

Required Courses. All students are required to take the following four courses (12 hours):

- Sociology 5200 Techniques of Demographic Analysis
- Sociology 6110 Intermediate Methodology
- Sociology 6120 Intermediate Statistics
- Sociology 6210 Population and Society

Electives (Minimum of 6 Semester Hours Required). All students must take two electives, with one selected from the substantive electives and the other from among the techniques electives.

Substantive Electives. All students are required to take one of the following courses (3 hours):

- Sociology 6560 Family Demography
- Sociology 6580 Sociology of Aging
- Sociology 7260 Migration
- Sociology 7270 Morbidity and Mortality
- Sociology 7280 Human Fertility and Family Planning

Methods Electives. All students are required to one of the following courses (3 hours):

- Sociology 6270 Introduction to Applied Demography
- Sociology 7190 Longitudinal Data Analysis
- Sociology 7200 Techniques of Demographic Analysis II
- Sociology 7230 Population and Third World Development
- Earth, Environment, & Society 5100 Geographic Information Systems

Thesis Credits (Minimum of 3 Semester Hours Required): All students specializing in Applied Demography are required to write a master's thesis and to register for at least 3 credits of Sociology 6990, Thesis Research. Students may enroll for additional thesis credits, but only 3 are required and no more than 6 may be counted toward the minimum degree requirements.

Extra Courses. In addition to the 27 required semester hours, all students will complete at least 3 additional hours of course work. We offer the following recommended options for students to consider as they design their individualized study plans. In order of preference these options are:

1. Additional graduate level demography courses offered by the Sociology Department.
2. Additional graduate level courses offered by the Sociology Department
3. Additional graduate level courses offered by other BGSU departments.
4. Sociology 6890 Internship in Applied Demography (No more than 6 hours).
5. Additional credits of Sociology 6990, Thesis Research (No more than 12 total hours).

The Core Curriculum: A block of **four required** courses comprises 12 of the total of 30 semester hours required for the MA degree with a specialization in Applied Demography. Every attempt will be made to ensure that each of these courses is scheduled on a regular basis. Since it is anticipated that students will normally be in the program for two full years, these requirements are easily met. In the event that unforeseen problems or conflicts prevent a student from entering any one of these courses, the student may request that an alternative program of study be developed to substitute for the required course. Such requests must be submitted in writing to the

Graduate Coordinator.

Twelve additional credit hours are accumulated by taking any four of the alternative electives. The courses will be scheduled at least once every two years; thus most students will normally not have any problem fitting at least four of these courses into their program of study. As indicated above, should that not prove to be possible due to unavoidable schedule conflicts or failure to offer a particular course, students again may request (in writing to the Graduate Coordinator) that some other suitable course or study program be substituted.

Thesis. The thesis is the culmination of an individual research experience that may use new data or information to replicate an earlier study, a secondary analysis of data from another study, or the product of original research based on primary data. A public oral presentation of the thesis proposal, which is a detailed description of the problem and planned research, is required. Upon completion of the thesis, the student must pass a public defense of the thesis conducted by his or her committee. This oral examination also evaluates the student's knowledge of general demographic principles and techniques. The thesis committee minimally consists of the student's thesis advisor and two other full-time faculty from the Department of Sociology. Once a student has a thesis proposal approved by the Graduate College, she or he must be in continuous registration (excluding summers) for at least one hour semester until the thesis is completed. At least one month must pass following the approval of the proposal and the final thesis defense.

Extra Courses. The Graduate Program in Applied Demography offers several options that permit each student to design an individualized plan of study. The only option which requires additional explanation is option (d), the internship option.

Since practical experience is often the best teacher the **internship option** provides students with an excellent opportunity to develop further their applied demography skills. Students who elect this option will be assisted in selecting a placement appropriate to their interests and career aspirations either with a local public agency or private business establishment. Depending on the particular placement the intern will work either on a project he/she has designed, in consultation with their academic advisor and internship supervisor, or on a project assigned by the internship supervisor. In either case, between 200 and 400 clock hours (depending on the number of semester hours earned) must be spent in observation and work at the internship placement. At the conclusion of the internship students will be required to submit a formal report (1) summarizing the nature of the project in which they were engaged and their contribution to it, and (2) evaluating the overall internship experience in terms of its relevance and value to their program of study.

Program Planning

The curriculum outlined above, in conjunction with the requirement set forth in the *Graduate College Bulletin*, are the minimal formal expectations which all students must satisfy. Professionally motivated students should seek additional opportunities to facilitate progress toward the goals they have established. The faculty responsible for this specialized program will do everything they can to make such opportunities available. All of these faculty members, for example, welcome the participation of students in the various research projects in which they are engaged. Further, they will attempt to develop and offer special topic seminars regularly, with the number and type of such topical seminars depending both upon faculty availability and student interests. It is essential that students entering this program plan their schedules far in advance. Among the factors to consider are: most required courses are taught only once a year, or once every two years. Thus careful planning is required in order to have access to all required courses in a timely manner.

Applied Demography Faculty

- Kelly S. Balistreri, Associate Professor
PhD, 2006--Bowling Green State University
Migration; immigrant children; health and inequality; overweight and obesity
- Susan Brown, Distinguished Professor
PhD, 1998--Pennsylvania State University
Family demography; family formation and dissolution; cohabitation; fertility
- Wendy Manning, Dr. Howard E. and Penny Daum Aldrich Distinguished Professor
PhD, 1992--University of Wisconsin
Family demography; cohabitation; nonresident fathers; nonmarital fertility; adolescence
- Lauren Newmyer, Assistant Professor
PhD, 2023—Pennsylvania State University
Fertility; health; aging; social networks
- Laura Sanchez, Professor
PhD, 1992--University of Wisconsin
Family demography; marriage; gender; animal-human interaction
- Jenjira Yahirun, Associate Professor
PhD, 2012—UCLA
Family; demography; migration/immigration