FAMILY DEMOGRAPHY
SOC 6560
FALL 2016
303 North Eppler
2:30-5:15 Friday

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Office Hours: 2:30-3:30 Wednesday and by appointment, email anytime!

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Family demography focuses on the patterns, composition, and structure of families and households along with an emphasis on family change. The seminar offers the opportunity to learn about trends in family behavior, theories of family change, and analytic techniques to study families from a demographic perspective. In the seminar we will consider many of the substantive issues that are of concern to family demographers, including family formation and dissolution trends, such as the retreat from marriage and the rise of cohabitation; trends in divorce and repartnering; patterns of nest-leaving; the effects of family structure and instability on child outcomes; same-sex couple families; family complexity; and household intergenerational relationships. A fundamental goal of the seminar is to familiarize students with new developments and debates in family demography.

Required Readings:
Most of the readings are available online and you should be able to access electronically via the library or electronic databases. I will provide you with pdfs of other documents. Canvas will be used for course announcements and weekly essay questions. All readings should be completed prior our class meeting. Optional readings are indicated by a ‘*.’

Course Requirements and Grading:
Your grade will be determined by discussion leadership (15%), discussion participation (15%), research proposal (35%), research proposal presentation (5%), discussant comments (5%), and exam (30%).

1) Participation:
   a) It is essential that everyone come to class prepared. Your participation should be ongoing and active. If you do not attend, you cannot participate. Personal vacation and travel should be planned around the class schedule.
   b) Each student will prepare two questions (in writing) that crosscut the readings or are about a specific reading. These questions will be turned in before class.
c) Each week there will be two or three student leaders. The leaders will present the major points of the assigned readings, facilitate discussion of how the readings are interrelated, present controversial features of the readings, and critically evaluate the readings. Leading class discussion involves more than just summarizing the readings. Each student will co-lead class discussion 3 times (5% each time, total=15%). Discussion assignments will occur on the first day of class.

2) Research Proposal:
a) Your research proposal (maximum 15 pages) will give you the opportunity to examine a topic related to the demographic study of families. I must approve your topic proposal. You should define the research question, provide a rationale for the study, review the relevant research literature, and describe the data, methods and analyses that will be used to address the research question. Model your proposals on the journal articles we read this semester. You will have an opportunity to revise your proposal before you turn in the final version. I hope this project can be used to develop a dissertation or thesis proposal, journal article, or conference paper.
b) Each student will make a 10-12 minute in-class oral presentation of their research proposal.
c) Each student will also serve as a reviewer of the proposal for one other student in the seminar. You will read through a classmate’s research proposal draft and produce a 1-2 page written document with suggestions, critiques, and questions for your classmate. We are going to follow the pattern of “single blind” reviews. You will know whose paper you are reading, but they will not know who write their review. Your goal is to provide constructive criticism so your classmates can improve their proposal, both the theoretical and methodological aspects.

Deadlines:
a. Each student will submit a brief (1-2 page) research proposal that describes your research question and rationale no later than September 30. Please meet with me beforehand to discuss your topic.
b. A first draft of your proposal is due on November 14 (peer review).
c. Critiques of paper November 22.
d. Students should revise their research proposal with the comments of the instructor and peer review. The final version is due by 6:00 on November 30.
e. On December 2 and 9 each student will make a 15 minute in class oral presentation of their research proposal. Each presentation will be peer reviewed.

3) Exam
A comprehensive final exam will be given during final exam week. The exam should help you prepare for prelims. The exam is scheduled for 12/15 from 3:30-5:30.

ACADEMIC HONESTY:
The Academic Honesty policy prohibits cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism. I treat this policy very seriously. Students who violate this policy will receive a failing grade for the course and will be reported to their academic dean for disciplinary action. The following is copied from the Graduate College Handbook.
Academic honesty is the central value of an academic community. It is expected that graduate students will neither engage in nor facilitate cheating (using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids), fabrication (falsification or invention of any information or citation), or plagiarism (representing the words or ideas of others as one’s own) in their academic work. The Academic Honesty Policy can be found at the following web address: http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/studentdiscipline/index.html.

The Academic Honesty Policy contains strict sanctions, including expulsion, for all forms of academic dishonesty. Students found guilty of violating other University regulations, such as engaging in moral and ethical misconduct, or in actions that are injurious to others or threaten the orderliness and wellbeing of the campus, are subject to equally strict sanctions in accordance with the provisions set forth in those regulations.
AUGUST 26 (week 1)
What is Family Demography?


NCFMR Family Profiles:

(Supplemental Readings—we will not discuss these articles)


September 2 (week 2) [Kasey and Paul]
Interpretations of Changing Family Patterns


Liefbroer, Aart C. and Edith Dourleijn. 2006. “Unmarried Cohabitation and Union Stability:
Testing the Role of Diffusion Using Data from 16 European Countries.” *Demography* 43:203-221.


**September 9 (week 3) [Cassie and Marisa]**

**Historical Change**


Cherlin, A. 2009. *The Marriage-Go-Round*— Chapters 2, 3, and 4

**September 16 (week 4) [Lydia and Xiaoli]**

**Transition to Adulthood and Nest-leaving**


September 23 (week 5) [Paul and Maurice]
Marriage


September 30 (week 6) [Xiaoli and Lindsey 😊]
Cohabitation


**October 7 (week 7)**

**Union Formation Differentials [Diego and Marissa]**


**October 14 (week 8) [Lydia and Diego]**

**Dissolution**


**October 20 [Thursday] 6-9 in CFDR (week 9) [Cassie and Marissa 😊]**

**Repartnering**


Shafer, Kevin and Spencer James. 2013. Gender and Socioeconomic Status Differences in First and Second Marriage Formation. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 75: 544-564.


**October 27 [Thursday] – 9-12 in CFDR (week 10) [Kasey and Maurice]**

**Separation of Marriage and Childbearing**


**Nov 4**

**Family Structure and Instability (week 11) [Marisa and Lindsey]**


**Nov 11 (Veterans’ Day, no class)**

**Nov 14 Paper Due for Peer Review**

**Nov 18**

**Same-Sex Couples and Families (week 12) [Lindsey and Marissa]**


**November 22 Critique Due**

Nov 25 (Thanksgiving break)

**November 30 Final Paper to Dr. Manning**

**December 2 Class Presentations**

**December 9 Class Presentations**

**December 15 Final Exam 3:30-5:30**