



Department of Urban Studies and Planning
USP 520 – Applied Demographic Methods I
Winter Quarter 2012

Instructor

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Class Dates and Times: Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:00-11:50AM

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, Noon-1PM, and by appointment

Course Description

USP 520 is a graduate-level course that blends 'traditional' pedagogy with seminar-style instruction to familiarize students with principles and methods of demographic analysis. In addition to addressing the theoretical background of population research, the course introduces students to basic demographic concepts, components of population change, demographic data sources, and techniques of population analysis—including population estimates, forecasts, and projections. From plummeting birth rates in Japan to retirement migration in Bend, specific emphasis is placed on the spatial dimensions of practical problems at national, regional, state, and local scales. Focusing on evaluative skills and techniques of population analysis, the course is particularly useful for students interested in population geography, regional and urban planning, and demographic marketing.

Textbooks

- Plane, David A. and Peter A. Rogerson. 1994. *The Geographical Analysis of Population: With Applications to Planning and Business*. New York, NY. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
***Required**
- Smith, Stanley K., Jeff Tayman, and David A. Swanson. 2001. *State and Local Population Projections: Methodology and Analysis*. New York, NY. Kluwer Academic Publishers.
***Required**
- Other readings will be available either via D2L or through the PSU Millar Library

Course Requirements

USP 520 is a graduate-level course where informal class discussion is not only encouraged, but constitutes a critically important part of the course. The nature of the material requires regular presentations by the instructor, but in order to ensure lively and stimulating discussion, students are expected to have completed the week's readings prior to attending class. As graduate students, I expect you to assume leadership in discussing class readings.

Reading assignments for this course will be communicated to you and available through D2L. Other readings will be available via the Millar Library.

Considering this is a graduate-level course, students are expected to attend regularly.

Evaluation

Critical Reading Responses. Given this is a graduate-level course, the assigned readings constitute an important part of the course. After you have read each week's readings, provide no more than a 1,500 word response, which at a minimum, includes the following components: 1) bibliographic entry for the reading, 2) date and time when you read the material, 3) notes, observations, salient points, and potential relevance to your research, and 4) [most importantly] a critical reaction to the readings, which can take the form of discussing each article independently or in concert with one another and a critical analysis should include:

- A response to the themes, ideas, arguments, and points of debate within or across assigned articles. Keep in mind that an author's claims are often implicit and not explicit (which underscores the importance of a *critical* analysis on your part).
- Move beyond merely summarizing the literature by positioning yourself in the debate and supporting your position with reasoned thought.

Over the course of the quarter, students should submit at least 4 reading responses through the D2L dropbox. The responses are due by the beginning of class (10AM) on Monday of the subsequent week (e.g. Week 1's reading responses would be due on Monday, January 16 at 10AM if not for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day).

Assignments. There is a series of exercises that provide for hands on application of applied population analytics by collecting, analyzing, and interpreting population data. All of the exercises listed will require completion outside of the classroom and will be due on the date specified on the assignment. It is the student's responsibility to turn the assignments in on time. Students who do not turn the assignments in on time will be assessed a penalty of 15% per calendar day. In all cases, assignments must reflect the individual work of each student, even if the assignment was completed through group collaboration. **Note:** Assignments are **not** accepted via e-mail.

Midterm Exam. A take home problem set (quantitative and qualitative) reviewing topics covered through the mid-point of the class will be assigned. Students are expected to complete the exam working independently from their colleagues.

Research Paper. The primary assignment for USP 520 is to prepare an **original** research paper that is journal length (i.e. 15-20 pages) on an individually chosen topic/issue appropriate to the content of the course. Topics should be developed early in the quarter and after consultation with the instructor. A formal, written description of the paper needs to articulate a research question and/or problem statement that at a minimum, covers the following:

1. A clear definition of your topic
2. The relevancy or importance of your topic
3. What aspects (i.e. what research questions your paper is going to focus on)

The paper will be graded based on the following criteria:

1. Quality of research and topic selection
 - What is the quality of thought regarding the research topic or the issue being addressed?

- How well-defined is the research question?
 - How well do the research resources supplement the paper?
2. Quality of writing
 - How well does the paper flow with respect to presentation of ideas?
 - Grammar and spelling
 3. References and citations
 - Appropriate Chicago citation style
 - Quality of the resources selected

The research paper is due at the scheduled time of the final examination and serves in lieu of the final in-class written exam. In addition, students will make a *brief* (10-15 minutes) oral presentation of their research topic to their colleagues on the last regularly scheduled class meeting.

Course grades will be assigned on the student's proportion of total points based on the standard Portland State University grading scheme: 93-100% (A), 90-92% (A-), 87-89% (B+), 83-86% (B), 80-82% (B-), 77-79% (C+), 73-76% (C), 70-72% (C-) and below 70% (F).

The course grade for graduate students will be determined according to the abovementioned PSU grading scheme and based on the following evaluation:

Critical Reading Responses	20%
Assignments	15%
Midterm Exam	20%
Research Paper	35%
Leading Class Discussion	<u>5%</u>
Total	100%

Academic Success

Additionally, if you are experiencing personal issues that may be affecting your performance in the class or if you are having difficulty understanding course material, please contact me as soon as possible so I can work with you to remedy the situation. Considering that I am not too far removed from being a student, I am usually sympathetic to difficult situations and can work with you to set up an alternative schedule if required. Consider that if you are experiencing problems (personal or class related), it will likely affect your class performance and will behoove you to meet with me so we can discuss alternative arrangements.

Academic Integrity

All students are governed by Portland State University's 'Student Code of Conduct', which details the university rules regarding academic integrity and honesty for this course. The Student Code of Conduct indicates that all forms of student academic dishonesty, including cheating, fabrication, facilitating dishonesty, and plagiarism are subject to disciplinary action. As a result, keep in mind that submitted course materials are expected to be original work and *your own* work. For more information, check out the following link:

<http://www.pdx.edu/dos/codeofconduct>

Students with Disabilities

If you anticipate the need for accommodations in taking this course, you need to register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) and request that the DRC send me a notification of your registration and a summary of your specific need so I may accommodate you in whatever manner necessary. As an instructor, I am committed to making reasonable accommodations to ensure your success in this course. If you have any questions regarding any aspects of this policy or concerns, please contact me. For further information regarding the DRC, visit their website: <http://www.drc.pdx.edu/>

Writing Assistance

The Writing Center is a free resource for Portland State University Undergraduate and Graduate students, faculty/staff, and community members. At the Writing Center, a trained peer consultant will work individually with you on anything that you are writing (in or out of class), at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing.

Appointments are recommended, but are not required. For more information or to make an appointment, visit their website at <http://www.writingcenter.pdx.edu/> or stop by Cramer Hall, Room 188. The Writing Center can also be reached at (503) 725-3570.

Tentative Outline

(Subject to changes announced in class)

	Week	Topic(s)
1	Jan. 9	Introduction to population research; demographic concepts; components of population change
2	Jan. 16	Nature of population growth; demographic transition theory; geography and scale; demographic accounting equation
3	Jan. 23	Sources of demographic data; surveys and statistics
4	Jan. 30	U.S. demographic trends; measures of population distribution and composition
5	Feb. 6	Population change: Fertility, Mortality, and Migration
6	Feb. 13	Population change: Fertility, Mortality, and Migration
7	Feb. 20	Population change: Fertility, Mortality, and Migration
8	Feb. 27	Population estimates, projections, and forecasts; Principles and primary techniques
9	Mar. 5	Population forecasts; cohort-component framework
10	Mar. 12	Population forecasts; cohort-component framework and research presentations
11	Mar. 21	Research papers due on Wednesday, Mar. 21 @ 10:15AM