
Course information

Course number: SOCI 312

Course title: Population and Society

Section: 500

Time: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 12:40–1:30pm

Location: Scoates Hall (SCTS) 208
(<https://aggiemap.tamu.edu/?bldg=0478>)

Credit hours: 3 (three)

Course website: <http://www.ernestoamaral.com/soci312-24fall.html>

This website provides this syllabus, slides, details about assessments and grades, videos, extra readings, external links, and other materials, which will be uploaded throughout the semester.

Canvas website: <https://canvas.tamu.edu/courses/327974>

I will utilize Canvas to write announcements to students, receive assignments, quizzes and exams, and post grades. **If students want to communicate with me, you should email me. I do not check messages sent to my Canvas Inbox.**

Instructor details

Instructor: **Ernesto F. L. Amaral**, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology
(<http://www.ernestoamaral.com>)

Office: Liberal Arts Social Sciences Building (LASB) 320
(<https://aggiemap.tamu.edu/?bldg=1609>)

Phone: (979)845–9706

Email: amaral@tamu.edu

Office hours: <https://tamu.zoom.us/my/amaral>

I will provide office hours by appointment. Students must request appointments by email at least 48 hours in advance. When you enter this Zoom session, you will be placed in a waiting room. I will add you to the chat after I finish talking to the previous student.

Course description

The main objective of this course is to introduce concepts in demography, related to the three components of fertility, mortality, and migration. This is an introduction to the sociological study of populations (social demography). Demography is the scientific study of human populations and the changes in size, composition, and distribution of these populations. Discussions about demographic issues will be linked to the methods needed to analyze these topics. In recent years, few issues in the world are as important as population growth and change.

This course will cover topics related to population growth and decline, age-sex composition, data sources, and the association between demographic transition and economic outcomes. We will present general concepts on periods and cohorts, Lexis diagram, mortality measures, epidemiological transition, causes of mortality decline, life tables, period measures, and behavioral and policy influences on health. The course will address trends and differentials in fertility, proximate determinants of fertility, period measures, and tempo-quantum effects. The classes on migration will evaluate trends and differentials in population flows, estimation of migration rates, urbanization, and effects on receiving and sending areas. We will also cover demographic projections, age structure transition, changes in household composition, labor force participation, and population policies.

Course prerequisites

None.

Course learning outcomes

Upon successfully completing this course, students should be able to:

- Identify main concepts and methods in demography, related to fertility, mortality, and migration.
- Explain links between demographic changes, economic outcomes, and public policy issues.
- Evaluate general demographic trends throughout the world, based on publicly available secondary data.
- Perceive, analyze, and discuss the dynamics of human populations.
- Investigate population issues from the perspective of the social sciences.

Textbook and resource materials

The following textbook is **required** for this course. There are several options to buy or rent (new, used or digital) copies of this book. As a student at Texas A&M you are not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from a university affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from independent retailers, including online retailers.

Poston, Dudley L.; Bouvier, Leon F. 2017. **Population and Society: An Introduction to Demography**. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2nd edition. (P)
([Amazon](#))

Via the course website, I will provide files containing this syllabus, slides, extra readings, exams, databases, external links, and other materials, which will be uploaded throughout the semester.

Grading policy

Grading scale: The course follows the standard rules of the university regarding the letter grading scale (<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule10>).

Assessment	Percent of final grade	Details	Grading scale	Percent
Perusall assessments	36%	9 assessments, 4 points/assessment, at least 4 comments/assessment	A	90–100%
Essay assignment	10%	Written communication and empirical & quantitative skills assignment	B	80–89%
Quizzes	10%	20 quizzes, 2 questions per quiz, 0.25 points per question	C	70–79%
Exam 1	10%	40 questions, 0.25 points per question	D	60–69%
Exam 2	10%	40 questions, 0.25 points per question	F	0–59%
Exam 3	10%	40 questions, 0.25 points per question		
Final exam	14%	56 questions, 0.25 points per question		
Total	100%			

Do not miss assignments, quizzes, exams, and the final exam. Every point is important to your grade.

All assessments will not be graded on a curve.

Grades will not be rounded up (e.g., 59.9 is an F, 69.9 is a D, 79.9 is a C, 89.9 is a B).

Plagiarism: All students who commit plagiarism are assigned zero for the assessment.

Study groups: You are not competing with others in this class for a grade. Feel free to form study groups to review course materials. However, assignments, quizzes, and exams are not group projects. Students should complete all graded activities individually. Students should not prepare or compare their answers to these activities with the work of others before submitting for a grade.

Perusall assessments: Perusall is a tool that aims to change how students view the reading of material from a solitary experience to one that is engaging and collaborative with classmates and instructors. **You access these assessments directly on Canvas.** Perusall automatically grades students' engagement with the assigned materials and once prompted, will upload grades to Canvas.

Due date: The **due dates** of Perusall assessments are available in the calendar of activities of this syllabus. These assessments are **open through Canvas from the beginning of the semester until 11:59pm of the due date.**

Comments: Basically, I ask you to read articles or watch videos throughout the semester on topics related to the course material. You should write answers and comments, as well as engage in discussions with your colleagues in order to get points for these activities.

Goal: For each Perusall assignment, **your four highest quality comments will be graded.** I recommend that you contribute more than four comments to improve your chances of earning a good score. You should write comments distributed throughout the article or video, not only on a specific portion of the assigned material. You should also interact with other students, since a portion of your grade comes from starring other comments and engaging in dialogues with your classmates.

Zero if no comments: Students who just open the article and video, but do not write any comments, will earn a zero on the specific assessment.

Engaging with others: If you want to hear from the TA or another student, just make an annotation with names following the “@”.

Hiding comments: You might want to read the papers without comments from other students. This will create a “clean copy” that will allow you to focus on your reading and then enable the comments when you are ready to interact. To temporarily hide highlights from other students, click on the “All comments” dropdown in the top navigation bar and select “No comments.”

Perusall grading: Students will earn their grades on each Perusall assessment according to the following grading criteria:

Grading criteria for each Perusall assessment	Points
Quality of comment 1	0.75
Quality of comment 2	0.75
Quality of comment 3	0.75
Quality of comment 4	0.75
Comments distributed throughout assessment	0.50
Reading/watching the entire material	0.50
Maximum possible points per Perusall assessment	4.00

Essay assignment will be related to written communication and empirical & quantitative skills, as requested by Texas A&M University. Details about this assessment will be provided on the course website. This assignment will be submitted through Turnitin within Canvas. Turnitin is an online database system designed to help instructors **detect plagiarism**, track citations, facilitate peer reviews, and provide paperless grading markup in written assignments. Students will have **until 11:59pm of the due date** to turn in this assignment. The **due date** of this assignment is listed in the calendar of activities of this syllabus.

Quizzes will be available on Canvas (**open from 1:25pm until 11:59pm of the class day**) and will consist of multiple-choice questions and/or other types of questions. Students will answer the quiz online on Canvas after class hours. The content of the quiz can cover any topic we discussed throughout the course up to the day of the quiz. You will be allowed to look at your notes and class material to answer the questions. The **dates** of quizzes are available in the calendar of activities of this syllabus.

Exams will be given online on Canvas (**open from 12:40pm until 1:30pm of the class day**) and will consist of multiple-choice questions and/or other types of questions. There will be no face-to-face classes on exam days. You will be allowed to look at your notes and class material to answer the questions. See more information about Student Rules regarding examinations via the following link (<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule08>). The **dates** of exams are available in the calendar of activities of this syllabus.

The **Final exam** will be given online on Canvas and will consist of multiple-choice questions and/or other types of questions. There will be no face-to-face class on the final exam day. You will be allowed to look at your notes and class material to answer the questions. This exam will be given during final examinations week in accordance with the schedule published by the Office of the Registrar (<https://aggie.tamu.edu/registration-and-records/classes/final-examination-schedules>). The **date** and **time** of the final exam are available in the calendar of activities of this syllabus.

Guide for online quizzes, exams, and final exam

Students should read the **following instructions** about online quizzes, exams, and the final exam before starting them on Canvas. The **dates** of quizzes, exams, and the final exam are available in the calendar of activities of this syllabus.

1. Main information about your online quiz:

- 1.1. Two multiple-choice questions at 0.25 points each for a total of 0.5 points.
- 1.2. The quiz will be available on Canvas from 1:25pm until 11:59pm of the class day.
- 1.3. However, once you begin, you will have **five minutes to complete the quiz**.
- 1.4. Two minutes and 30 seconds per question (2 questions, 5 minutes in total).

2. Main information about your online exam:

- 2.1. 40 multiple-choice questions at 0.25 points each for a total of 10 points.
- 2.2. The exam will be available on Canvas between 12:40pm and 1:30pm on the exam date.
- 2.3. You will have **50 minutes to complete the exam**.
- 2.4. One minute and 15 seconds per question (40 questions, 50 minutes in total).

3. Main information about your online final exam:

- 3.1. 56 multiple-choice questions at 0.25 points each for a total of 14 points.
- 3.2. The final exam will be available on Canvas during the time defined by the university.
- 3.3. You will have **two hours to complete the final exam**.
- 3.4. Around two minutes and 9 seconds per question (56 questions, 120 minutes in total).

4. More information about quizzes and exams:

- 4.1. **No password** is required.
- 4.2. The multiple-choice **questions will be randomly selected** by Canvas from a pool of questions that I created. Thus, these questions will not be the same for all students.
- 4.3. The quiz or exam will **shut down once the time limit has been reached**, so pay attention to the clock.
- 4.4. The quiz or exam will **close once the deadline has been reached**, even if you only just started it.
- 4.5. You will only see **one question at a time**.
- 4.6. You **cannot go back to the previous question** once you submit your answer.
- 4.7. Use a **good internet connection** to take the quizzes and exams, such as the wireless connection at Texas A&M University.
- 4.8. **If you do lose your internet connection**, I recommend that you close your browser and then sign back into Canvas. You should be able to continue the test where you left off. Please note that the clock will continue to run, so do not assume that you have lots of time to utilize.

5. If you have problems, tell me:

- 5.1. If you have any problems at all, please contact me as soon as possible through email.
- 5.2. I will be available throughout the day to help you.
- 5.3. Do not wait 20–30 minutes before contacting me about any problems.
- 5.4. I want to know immediately so that I can help.

Course schedule (tentative)

The tentative calendar of activities below includes dates, course topics, readings, and exam dates for this course. Changes will be indicated during classes and will be posted on the course website.

Lecture	Date	Topic	Reading Author.chapter	Assessments
AUGUST				
01	08/19 (Monday)	Syllabus An introduction to demography	Syllabus & P.1	
02	08/21 (Wednesday)	An introduction to demography	P.1	
03	08/23 (Friday)	An introduction to demography	P.1	
—	08/23 (Friday)	Last day to add/drop courses	—	
04	08/26 (Monday)	Age and sex composition	P.10	Quiz 1
05	08/28 (Wednesday)	Age and sex composition	P.10	Quiz 2
06	08/30 (Friday)	Video: Don't Panic: Hans Rosling Showing The Facts About Population		Perusall 1
SEPTEMBER				
—	09/02 (Monday)	Labor Day	—	
07	09/04 (Wednesday)	Age and sex composition	P.10	Quiz 3
08	09/06 (Friday)	Exam 1		Material from lectures 1–7
09	09/09 (Monday)	World population change over time	P.12	
10	09/11 (Wednesday)	World population change over time	P.12	
11	09/13 (Friday)	World population change over time	P.12	Perusall 2
12	09/16 (Monday)	Population change in the United States	P.13	Quiz 4
13	09/18 (Wednesday)	Population change in the United States	P.13	Quiz 5
14	09/20 (Friday)	Population change in the United States	P.13	Perusall 3
15	09/23 (Monday)	Theories of demography	P.2	Quiz 6
16	09/25 (Wednesday)	Theories of demography	P.2	Quiz 7
17	09/27 (Friday)	Theories of demography	P.2	Perusall 4
18	09/30 (Monday)	Theories of demography	P.2	Quiz 8



Lecture	Date	Topic	Reading Author.chapter	Assessments
OCTOBER				
19	10/02 (Wednesday)	The sources of demographic information	P.3	Quiz 9
20	10/04 (Friday)	Exam 2		Material from lectures 9–19
—	10/07 (Monday)	Fall Break	—	
21	10/09 (Wednesday)	The sources of demographic information	P.3	
22	10/11 (Friday)	The sources of demographic information	P.3	Perusall 5
23	10/14 (Monday)	Fertility	P.4	
24	10/16 (Wednesday)	Fertility	P.4	Quiz 10
25	10/18 (Friday)	Fertility	P.4	Perusall 6
26	10/21 (Monday)	Fertility	P.4	Quiz 11
27	10/23 (Wednesday)	Fertility	P.4	Quiz 12
28	10/25 (Friday)	Mortality	P.7	Perusall 7
29	10/28 (Monday)	Mortality	P.7	Quiz 13
30	10/30 (Wednesday)	Mortality	P.7	Quiz 14
NOVEMBER				
31	11/01 (Friday)	Exam 3		Material from lectures 21–30
32	11/04 (Monday)	Mortality	P.7	
33	11/06 (Wednesday)	Mortality	P.7	
34	11/08 (Friday)	Internal migration	P.8	Perusall 8
35	11/11 (Monday)	Internal migration	P.8	Quiz 15
36	11/13 (Wednesday)	Internal migration	P.8	Quiz 16
37	11/15 (Friday)	Internal migration	P.8	Perusall 9
38	11/18 (Monday)	International migration	P.9	Quiz 17



Lecture	Date	Topic	Reading Author.chapter	Assessments
NOVEMBER				
39	11/20 (Wednesday)	International migration	P.9	Quiz 18
40	11/22 (Friday)	International migration	P.9	
41	11/25 (Monday)	International migration	P.9	Quiz 19
—	11/27–29 (Wed.–Fri.)	Thanksgiving Holiday	—	
DECEMBER				
42	12/02 (Monday)	International migration	P.9	Quiz 20
43	12/06 (Friday)	Final exam (10:30am–12:30pm) Essay assignment (by 11:59pm)		Material from lectures 32–42
Extra reading	—	The family and sexuality	P.5	
Extra reading	—	Contraception and birth control	P.6	
Extra reading	—	Race and ethnicity	P.11	
Extra reading	—	Population distribution	P.14	
Extra reading	—	Population policy	P.15	
Extra reading	—	The Earth in the 21st and 22nd centuries	P.16	

Department of Sociology Civility Statement

The Department of Sociology supports Texas A&M University's commitment to civility and welcomes individuals of all ages, citizenship, abilities, education, ethnicities, family statuses, genders, gender identities, languages, military experience, political views, races, religions, sexual orientations, socioeconomic statuses, and work experiences (see <http://diversity.tamu.edu/>). As this is a social science class, discussions are to be research-based and should always be presented in a respectful manner when engaging with fellow students, teaching assistants, and instructors. This applies both inside and outside of the classroom and includes online spaces. The Student Conduct Code Rule 21 regarding appropriate classroom behavior will also be strictly enforced (<https://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule21/>). If a student is being disruptive or disrespectful (rude, inappropriate, unprofessional, and/or harmful to others) either in the classroom or during class-related communications outside of lecture (online or in-person), the instructor or teaching assistant will address this behavior following the department and university disciplinary guidelines. See (<https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/sociology/home-page/civility/>) for a more detailed discussion of these principles and the rules of conduct.

Class participation

I will take attendance in each class. You are responsible for your own learning, but your actions affect the entire class. Active participation in class discussion is vital to the shared learning experience. For this to work, everyone must come prepared to class, having done the readings and come prepared to discuss the week's readings in depth. Active participation is premised on respect. Being prepared for class, listening attentively, challenging ideas and not individuals—are all markers of respect in a community of learning. Thus, I expect everyone to attend class and value each other's ideas. **Hate speech will not be tolerated.**

Learning resources

The mission of the University Writing Center (UWC) is to help you develop and refine the communication skills vital to success in college and beyond. You can choose to work with a trained UWC peer consultant in person or via web conference or email. Consultants can help with everything from lab reports to application essays and at any stage of your process, from brainstorming to reviewing the final draft. You can also get help with public speaking, presentations, and group projects. The UWC's main location is on the second floor of Evans Library; there's also a walk-in location on the second floor of West Campus Library. To schedule an appointment or view our helpful handouts and videos, visit <http://writingcenter.tamu.edu>. Or call (979)458–1455.

Electronic devices

During classes, laptops, tablets, and smartphones should not be used for activities that are not directly related to the course.

Examples of **activities unrelated to class** include: checking and answering email, texting, scheduling appointments, viewing videos, and viewing websites with materials unrelated to the course.

Examples of **activities related to class** include: reviewing documents and course materials posted on the web, and examining websites that are visited as part of the lecture. If the policy is not respected, I will ban all devices for non-laptop required sessions.

Student course evaluation

Students should complete the course evaluation on <https://tamu.aefis.net/>. Students can see this [step-by-step guide](#) on how to access and respond to the student course evaluations.

Office hours

Office hours are intended to assist students who are seeking help understanding course materials (lectures, readings, lab classes, etc.) and to mentor students. Office hours do not substitute for attendance in class. I will not discuss missed classes unless the student missed those classes because of an authorized excuse. University rules related to excused and unexcused absences are located online at [Student Rule 7](#). As Student Rules state: (1) it is the student's responsibility to attend class; and (2) if I used office hours to substitute for attendance in class, it would be a disservice to students who wish to use office hours to enhance their academic success.

Late work policy

Students are not allowed to submit their course work after the due date. Work submitted by a student as makeup work for an excused absence is not considered late work and is exempted from the late work policy (see [Student Rule 7](#)).

Extracts from Student Rule 7

I provide below some important information extracted from Texas A&M [Student Rule 7](#). I simply follow the rules established by the university.

From 7.1 Notification of absences

– The student must provide notification of excused absences to the instructor in writing (e-mail is acceptable) prior to the day of absence.

– In cases where advanced notification is not possible, the student must provide notification by the end of the second business day after the last date of the absence. This notification must include an explanation of why notice could not be sent.

From 7.2 Absences

– Only excused absences defined by Texas A&M University are accepted (check the list on [Student Rule 7, Section 7.2.2](#)).

From 7.3 Absence documentation and verification

– The student is responsible for providing documentation substantiating the reason for the excused absence, including the reasons stated in Section 7.2.

– This documentation must be provided within three business days of the last date of the absence, unless otherwise stated in this rule.

From 7.4 Make up work

– Make-up work must be completed in a timeframe not to exceed 30 calendar days from the last day of the initial absence.

In summary

– *Student must submit explanation about excused absence by email to professor with attached documentation, listing the exact item within Section 7.2.2 of Student Rule 7 that refers to the absence.*

University policies

Attendance policy

The university views class attendance and participation as an individual student responsibility. Students are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Makeup work policy

Students will be excused from attending class on the day of a graded activity or when attendance contributes to a student's grade, for the reasons stated in Student Rule 7, or other reason deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about makeup work, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Absences related to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 may necessitate a period of more than 30 days for make-up work, and the timeframe for make-up work should be agreed upon by the student and instructor" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.1](#)).

"The instructor is under no obligation to provide an opportunity for the student to make up work missed because of an unexcused absence" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.2](#)).

Students who request an excused absence are expected to uphold the Aggie Honor Code and Student Conduct Code. (See [Student Rule 24](#).)

Academic integrity statement and policy

"An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do."

"Texas A&M University students are responsible for authenticating all work submitted to an instructor. If asked, students must be able to produce proof that the item submitted is indeed the work of that student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one's work, should the instructor request it, may be sufficient grounds to initiate an academic misconduct case" ([Section 20.1.2.3, Student Rule 20](#)).

You can learn more about the Aggie Honor System Office Rules and Procedures, academic integrity, and your rights and responsibilities at aggiehonor.tamu.edu.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) policy

Texas A&M University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact the Disability Resources office on your campus (resources listed below) Disabilities may include, but are not limited to attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability related needs with Disability Resources and their instructors as soon as possible.

Disability Resources is located in the Student Services Building or at (979) 845-1637 or visit disability.tamu.edu.

Title IX and statement on limits to confidentiality

Texas A&M University is committed to fostering a learning environment that is safe and productive for all. University policies and federal and state laws prohibit gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

With the exception of some medical and mental health providers, all university employees (including full and part-time faculty, staff, paid graduate assistants, student workers, etc.) are Mandatory Reporters and must report to the Title IX Office if the employee experiences, observes, or becomes aware of an incident that meets the following conditions (see [University Rule 08.01.01.M1](#)):

- The incident is reasonably believed to be discrimination or harassment.
- The incident is alleged to have been committed by or against a person who, at the time of the incident, was (1) a student enrolled at the University or (2) an employee of the University.

Mandatory Reporters must file a report regardless of how the information comes to their attention – including but not limited to face-to-face conversations, a written class assignment or paper, class discussion, email, text, or social media post. Although Mandatory Reporters must file a report, in most instances, a person who is subjected to the alleged conduct will be able to control how the report is handled, including whether or not to pursue a formal investigation. The University's goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and to ensure access to the resources you need.

Students wishing to discuss concerns in a confidential setting are encouraged to make an appointment with [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS).

Students can learn more about filing a report, accessing supportive resources, and navigating the Title IX investigation and resolution process on the University's [Title IX webpage](#).

Statement on mental health and wellness

Texas A&M University recognizes that mental health and wellness are critical factors that influence a student's academic success and overall wellbeing. Students are encouraged to engage in healthy self-care by utilizing available resources and services on your campus

Students who need someone to talk to can contact Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) or call the TAMU Helpline (979-845-2700) from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. weekdays and 24 hours on weekends. 24-hour emergency help is also available through the National Suicide Prevention Hotline (800-273-8255) or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

Academic freedom

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Academic freedom in its teaching aspect is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the teacher in teaching and of the student to freedom in learning.¹ Each faculty member is entitled to full freedom in the classroom discussing the subject which the faculty member teaches.² Texas A&M will not penalize or discipline members of the faculty because of their exercise of academic freedom.

Along with this freedom comes responsibility. It is the responsibility of faculty members to ensure that topics discussed are related to the classroom subject. Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.³ It is not the proper role of the university or any outside agency to attempt to shield individuals from ideas and opinions they find unwelcome, disagreeable, or even deeply offensive.⁴ Engaging with new ideas and perspectives helps students grow intellectually and is beneficial to the educational process.

¹ 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure.

² Texas A&M System Regulation 12.01: Section 1.2.

³ American Association of University Professors Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students.

⁴ The Chicago Statement.