This course is a survey of demographic, social, economic and public health perspectives on health and mortality in developed and developing countries. Lectures and readings cover health transition and explanations of mortality decline; etiology of important infectious diseases; nutritional status and its interactions with morbidity and mortality; socioeconomic and behavioral determinants of health and survival; demographic dimensions of mortality; and consequences of mortality decline. The course is designed to introduce the student to the major research issues in the field of mortality as well as the methods to study them.

The format of the course consists of lectures and class discussions. Students should complete the readings before each class, and are strongly encouraged to participate in class discussions. Most important readings will be identified prior to their coverage in class.

**Course requirements:**

1. a short paper (8-10 double-spaced pages) due on March 21. The student will select a topic from sections XI or XII. These topics will not be covered by class lectures or discussions. The paper should integrate and critique literature on the selected topic and will constitute 20% of the final grade.
2. problem sets will be assigned on the application of methods covered in the course - 10% of the grade;
3. a final exam (70% of the grade).

Students may also choose to write a paper for the course, which is due on the last day of class. The student may choose what weight to give to the paper in the final grade ranging from 30% to 50%; the weighing must be indicated at the time the paper is turned in. The same criteria will be used to judge the paper regardless of the weight assigned. A one-page description of a paper topic must be turned in by February 22.
I. The Health Transition and Dimensions of Mortality Decline

A. Overview


B. Dimensions of Mortality Decline


II. Explanations of Mortality Decline

A. Developed Countries


B. Developing Countries


Case Studies


III. Indirect Estimation of Child Mortality


IV. Measurement of causes of death, morbidity, and nutritional status

A. Causes of Death

Ewbank, Douglas C. Alzheimer’s Disease as a Cause of Death in the U.S. Population Studies Center, University of Pennsylvania. Mimeo.


B. Morbidity


C. Nutritional Status


V. Infectious Diseases

A. Overview


B. Infectious Diseases and Child Health


C. Other Infectious Diseases


VI. Socioeconomic Determinants of Health and Survival

A. Developed Countries


Preston, Samuel H. and Irma T. Elo. 1995. *Are Educational Differentials in Mortality Increasing in the


B. Developing Countries


VII. Demographic Dimensions of Mortality

A. Age Patterns


B. Heterogeneity


C. Cohort Influences


VIII: Indirect Estimation of Adult Mortality


IX. Consequences of Mortality Decline

A. Age Structure and Morbidity


B. Social and Economic


**X. Health Programs and Policy Issues**

**A. Developing Countries**


**B. Developed Countries**


XI. Influence of Other Factors on Mortality

A. Reproductive Patterns


B. Perceptions of Disease and Death


**C. Personal Health Practices and Use of Health Services**


**D. Social Support**


**XII. Sex Differences in Mortality**

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