SOCY 749-TOPICS IN DEMOGRAPHY: DEMOGRAPHY OF AGING

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This is a graduate-level introduction to the study of the social demography of aging. The course assumes no prior training in demography or gerontology. You are required to have completed one graduate-level statistics course. The premise underlying this course is that population aging will be the major demographic phenomenon affecting the nation's institutions into the next century. The course is designed to provide students with a comprehensive examination of the trends, projections and scenarios that may unfold as the society ages. In order to understand how population aging will affect our societal institutions, we must understand both the historical dimensions and future directions of a number of issues. In this course we will examine three basic themes: 1) trends in aging and health of populations, 2) demographic and health transitions experienced by older individuals and families, and 3) issues confronting an aging society.

COURSE STRUCTURE and REQUIREMENTS:
The course will meet 11 times to discuss assigned readings. Because this is a small graduate-level class, it will be organized as a seminar rather than a lecture course. I expect each person to have thoroughly read all the assigned material, and to be involved in the class discussion at each meeting. To facilitate discussion I am requiring that at the beginning of every class you hand in at least a page of questions, comments, ideas, or reactions to the assigned readings. (You also should have a copy for yourself so you can refer to it.) This is an important requirement of the course and is worth half of your final grade. There are 11 sets of readings. For each student 10 of these will be counted at a maximum of 5 points each. This allows you one day to be absent or one missed assignment.

In addition, you will be required to do a research project.
1) You may write a research paper (15-20 typed pages) on a topic of your choosing in the demography of aging. The paper should review the relevant literature, discuss the major debates or issues, come to a conclusion about the state of our knowledge in the area (what do we know, what do we need to know?), and suggest possible avenues for future research.
2) You may write a paper presenting original research. The paper must present some original data analysis or qualitative study. The paper should be of "publishable quality." I don't expect the paper to be publishable as is, but it should have the potential to be successfully reviewed by a professional journal.

You will be expect to present to the class an overview of your research project at the end of the semester. The papers are due on May 3 at the beginning of the class. The research project and presentation will account for the other 50% of your final grade.
Overview of Demography of Aging:


Demographic, Epidemiologic Transitions:


Mortality:


Issues of Mortality:


Health and Disablement:


Morbidity/Mortality Differentials:


Effects on the Family:


Elderly Migration:


Consequences of Population Aging:


Economics of Aging:


Consequences of Retirement:

