POPULATION AND ENVIRONMENT
SOCIOLOGY 485

COURSE SYLLABUS
SUMMER I 2006

Course Information:

Meeting Place: 209 Bailey Hall
Meeting Times: Monday–Friday, 11:50 am–1:35 pm
May 30–June 30, 2006

Instructor Information:

Instructor: Dr. Alan Barton
Office: 201F Kethley
Telephone: (662) 846-4097
E-mail: abarton@deltastate.edu
Webpage: http://ntweb.deltastate.edu/vp_academic/abarton/
Office Hours: The instructor holds regular office hours Monday–Friday, 9:45–10:15 am and
11:15–11:45 am. If you cannot make one of these times, use the above contact information to
set up an appointment.

Course Webpage:

The most up-to-date information on the course can be found on the course webpage:

http://ntweb.deltastate.edu/vp_academic/abarton/SOC485SU06/SOC485Syllabus.htm

Course Overview:

This course introduces students to demography, the study of population structure and change,
and to causes and consequences of demographic conditions. The course highlights
demographic concepts, such as fertility, mortality, migration and population momentum;
demographic topics, such as population change, overpopulation, and urbanization; and
demographic relations, such as the nexus between population growth and agricultural
production, environmental deterioration, and public health. Population processes are situated
in the context of sustainable development, to understand the interactions between population
change and broader social and environmental change.

Prerequisite: SOC 101 or permission of instructor.
Course Objectives:

Students that successfully complete this course will be able to:

(1) Define important demographic concepts and calculate demographic measures.

(2) Explain how population structure has changed through history, and provide reasons why population structure has changed.

(3) Explain the connections between population structure, population change, and food production.

(4) Explain the connections between population structure, population change, and various environmental issues.

(5) Identify and discuss current issues, and how they are shaped by population structure and change.

These objectives contribute to overall course goals:

(1) Developing critical thinking skills. The class discussions, readings, writing assignments and quizzes are designed to encourage you to develop and use higher-order thinking skills, including analytical, synthetic and applied thinking. Click here for more information on thinking critically.

(2) Understanding the social structures and processes that condition our lives. A basic goal of all sociology courses is to help you understand the nature and workings of these social structures, and how they open opportunities and impose constraints on individuals operating within these structures. C. Wright Mills called this using your "sociological imagination," activities in this course are designed to encourage you to use your sociological imagination. Click here for more information on the sociological imagination.

Course Organization and Approach:

This course uses a participatory, learner-centered, adult education approach. An adult education approach recognizes that you are responsible for your own learning. The professor can only provide opportunities to learn, but cannot force you to learn. You are expected to work hard in this course, meaning that for every hour of class time, you should spend at least two to three hours outside of class preparing by doing readings, assignments, studying for quizzes and exams, and thinking about the course material.

You are expected to take responsibility for the success of the course, that is, you should take an active interest not just in the course material, but in the course itself, making it a success for all participants. Factors such as interest, motivation, creativity, and initiative are important elements in evaluating your performance in the course and assigning a grade.

Course material is presented in several formats, including articles from scientific journals, pamphlets from government agencies and social service organizations, videos, lecture, and student-led class discussions. The course material combines basic demographic concepts and tools, which are applied to historic and topical social and environmental policy issues.
Readings:

The readings for this course are all available on-line. The Course Outline below lists the reading assignments for each class meeting; you should do the assigned reading BEFORE the class meeting for which it is assigned. Click here for tips on how to study the course readings.

Overview Texts:


Topical Readings:


**Recommended Readings:**


Learning Opportunities, SOC 485:

All students taking the course for undergraduate (SOC 485) credit must complete the following assignments:

(1) Reading, Attendance and Participation in Class Discussions (20 points)

- You are expected to do all of the assigned readings and attend all class sessions
- You are expected to engage in classroom discussions, reflecting on the topic and readings
- In class discussions, the quality of your contributions is more important than the quantity of contributions
- Participation in class discussions is not graded based on whether what you say is “right” or “wrong;” rather, you are expected to engage the material critically, and demonstrate an understanding and ability to apply the course material in productive ways

(2) Midterm Exam (20 points)

- You will be given a take-home midterm exam on Tuesday, June 13; the exam is due on Friday, June 16
- The midterm exam consists of one short essay (1-2 pages) and one long essay (3-4 pages)
- The questions will be broad and test your ability to synthesize course material
- You should draw on a variety of course material in preparing your essay, including readings, lectures, films, and discussions
- Make sure you are aware of the course policies pertaining to assignments, below (i.e. paper must be typed, late work will not be accepted)

(3) Final Exam (20 points)

- You will be given a take-home final exam on Tuesday, June 27; the exam is due on Friday, June 30
- The final exam follows the same format as the midterm; one short essay (1-2 pages) and one long essay (3-4 pages)
- The questions are similar to the midterm, and emphasize material in the second half of the course (since the midterm exam)
- You should draw on a variety of course material in preparing your essay, including readings, lectures, films, and discussions
- Make sure you are aware of the course policies pertaining to assignments, below (i.e. paper must be typed, late work will not be accepted)

(4) Case Studies (30 points)

- You will prepare and submit a five-page research paper, due on Monday, June 26
- The paper will present case studies of demographic and environmental change in two countries; Use the link below for instructions on how to prepare this assignment
- You will present the results of your paper to the class on Friday, June 23
- Your paper should be typed, 10 or 12 point font, 1 inch margins, double spaced
- You are expected to do your own work on this project and paper; the course policy on plagiarism and cheating will be enforced with no exceptions.
(5) "Demography in the News" Discussions (10 points)

- You will lead one 30 minute discussion on a topic of current interest pertaining to demography, population change, food production and/or the environment; The discussion will be on Wednesday, June 14
- Select an article from a current newspaper or news magazine that pertains to your topic
- Submit your article to the professor two days before your discussion, along with a list of discussion questions; your article will be photocopied and shared with other students in the class
- You will then facilitate a class discussion on the topic, encouraging participation by all members of the class
- You should get other students talking about the topic, mediate the contributions of other students to keep the discussion focused, and guide the discussion to ensure that the social and policy issues are covered

(6) Course Engagement (± 10 points)

- The instructor will evaluate your performance based on factors such as the motivation, interest, and improvement over the course of the semester

Grading:

There are a total of 100 points available for the semester. Your final score is simply the sum of all points earned over the semester. If you accumulate 90 or more points over the course of the semester, you will get an “A” in the course. If you accumulate 80 to 89 points, you will get a “B,” for 70 to 79 points you will get a “C,” and for 60 to 69 points will get a “D.” If you total less than 60 points, your final grade will be an “F.” Note that you start with zero and earn points; you do not start with 100 and lose points.

If you comply with all course requirements and submit all of the assignments satisfactorily and on time, you can expect a “C” in this course. To receive a higher grade, you must demonstrate a superior grasp of course material and an ability to apply the material in productive ways. It is also helpful to show an interest in the course material and in learning, and an achievement-based orientation.

Your final grade in this course represents an evaluation of your performance in the class. It is not an assessment of you as a person, nor of your knowledge and abilities in general. If you want to get a higher grade in this course, you should focus on meeting all of the course requirements and doing well on the assigned coursework.
Policies and Expectations:

Responsibility:

YOU are responsible for learning the course material and for your progress in the course. You are expected to attend class regularly and complete all of the assignments. You are expected to know all material presented during class sessions, whether you attended the class or not. If you miss a class session, you should check with another student to see what you missed. “I didn’t know” is NEVER a valid excuse. If you don’t know something, it is your job to find out.

Assignments:

You are responsible for completing all of the assignments in this course in a timely fashion. Assignments are due at the time specified; no late assignments will be accepted, and missed assignments cannot be made up. If you miss class or an assignment, you are making a choice that prioritizes other activities above the class. If you miss an assignment, you will receive a grade of zero for that assignment.

ALL work that you submit (except in-class work) should be typed. If you submit a paper with more than one sheet, please attach all sheets with a staple or paper clip BEFORE you bring the assignment to class to turn in.

If you must miss a presentation or other in-class activity, it is up to you to arrange to trade with another student before the event. Please notify the instructor of such changes. If you miss a scheduled presentation, you are affecting the entire class, and points will be deducted from your grade for the assignment (i.e. you will get a grade that is below zero).

Illnesses and Emergencies:

Illnesses and emergencies MUST be documented. If you must miss class due to illness or another personal emergency, notify the instructor BEFORE the missed class period either by e-mail or telephone. If you cannot notify the instructor in advance, bring a note from a doctor or other professional to the next class meeting.

Illnesses and emergencies pertain only to the student, not to the student’s family, friends or others.

University Activities:

If you must miss class for an official university activity, you should make arrangements with the instructor BEFORE the missed class. Appropriate documentation is required.

If you miss a quiz or an assignment due to an illness, emergency or official university activity, this will count as your drop grade.

Absences:

If you are absent, and do not notify the instructor or bring a note, it will count as one full absence. If you notify the instructor before the absence, the missed class will count as one-half absence. If you bring a note from a doctor or other professional, the first two missed classes will count as excused, and will not count as an absence. After two excused absences, each additional excused absence counts as one-half absence. Each absence will result in a one-point
deduction from your attendance grade, and may also affect your participation and course
e ngagement grades.

You are responsible for all material presented in all classes, even during an excused absence.
You should get class notes from another student for all class sessions you miss.

It is in your interest to provide the instructor with written notification (e.g. a note or e-mail) to
document any missed classes. It is risky simply to tell the instructor and expect him to
remember.

Make sure that you sign the roll sheet at each class meeting.

Class Participation:

Class participation is an important element in this course. The purpose of class discussions is
to provide you with an opportunity to practice thinking skills in a safe environment. In
discussions, you are encouraged to explore ideas presented in the readings and lectures, to
think about and apply concepts, and to develop arguments and evaluate evidence.

If you repeatedly engage in disruptive behaviors during class discussions, you will be asked to
leave the classroom.

• You must demonstrate appropriate respect for the opinions and ideas of other students
during class discussions. It is acceptable (and encouraged) to disagree with the
perspectives of other students or the instructor, but you should phrase this to show
disagreement with the idea or opinion, not with the person presenting the idea or opinion.
If you repeatedly show disrespect for other class members, you will be asked to leave the
classroom.

• Class discussions are NOT a time to chat with other students about topics not related to
the course. Talking privately with other students while the rest of the class is trying to
carry on a discussion is disruptive, bothersome, and disrespectful to other students and to
the professor. If you repeatedly speak when you do not have the floor, you will be asked to
leave the classroom.

• Class is NOT a time to catch up on your sleep. If you are not prepared to stay awake and
participate in class discussions and other activities, you should not come to class. If you
continually fall asleep during class sessions, you will be asked to leave the classroom.

If you are asked to leave the classroom for disruptive or disrespectful behavior, you cannot
make up any work that you miss as a result.

Electronic Devices (Cell Phones, Pagers, etc.):

Please make sure that all cell phones, pagers, and similar electronic devices are turned off
during class time. If your phone or pager repeatedly interrupts class, you will be asked to leave
the classroom.

DO NOT bring cell phones or other portable communication devices to class during quizzes,
exams, or in-class assignments. If the instructor sees a cell phone or other device during a
quiz, exam or in-class assignment, you will receive a grade of zero on the quiz, exam or in-
class assignment, and you will be asked to leave the classroom.
If you must have a cell phone or pager (e.g. if you are a volunteer fireman or emergency responder), you MUST make arrangements with the instructor in advance.

**Academic Honesty:**

You are expected to **comply with all academic standards and ethics** as defined in the DSU Bulletin and Handbook. You are expected to do your **own work** in this course. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will **NOT** be tolerated.

You should be fully aware of the **Course Policy on Plagiarism and Cheating**. If you are caught cheating in this course, you will be dismissed from the course with a grade of "F." In addition, a report will be filed with the university's Vice President for Academic Affairs.

**IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO UNDERSTAND THESE GUIDELINES.** Make sure you know what constitutes plagiarism and cheating **BEFORE** turning in any assignments. Once you turn in an assignment, you are representing it as your own work. If you are suspected of committing plagiarism, pleas of "I didn't know what plagiarism was" will not be accepted.

If you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism, see the DSU Library's "**Plagiarism Prevention: A Guide for Students.**" The **Course Policy on Plagiarism and Cheating** also outlines examples of plagiarism. If it is still unclear, see the instructor.

**Special Accommodations:**

Appropriate accommodations will be made for students with medical problems or diagnosed disabilities. Have Dr. Richard Houston at **Reily Student Health Center** (846-4690) contact the course instructor to make arrangements.
### Course Outline:

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<td><strong>Week 4: Population Change and the Environment</strong></td>
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<td>Wed. Jun. 21</td>
<td>• Neo-Malthusians &amp; Their Critics</td>
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<td>Commoner (1971)</td>
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<td>Thu. Jun. 22</td>
<td>• Teaching About Demographic Research</td>
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<td>Simon (1994)</td>
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| Fri. Jun. 23 | • Teaching About Demographic Research (SOC/COD 585)  
  • Case Study Presentations (SOC 485) |                     | Case Study Presentations      |

**Week 5: Summary: Causes and Consequences of a Growing Population**

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<td>• Current Issues in Demography (SOC/COD 585)</td>
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<td>Fri. Jun. 30</td>
<td>• Current Issues in Demography (SOC/COD 585)</td>
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<td>Final Exam Due</td>
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**PREPARATION and PERSEVERANCE are the KEYS to SUCCESS**

**Be prepared; don’t give up**