Instructors:
Week I: Dr. Matt Hall (mhall@cornell.edu)
Week II: Dr. Laura Tach (laura.tach@cornell.edu)
Week III: Dr. Sharon Sassler (sharon.sassler@cornell.edu)

Schedule: Monday-Thursday, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (unless otherwise noted). We will also reconvene after class some days (times to be determined) for excursions.

Course Description:
Population problems are central to societal change in numerous areas, including inequality, immigration and diversity, race relations and conflict, family life, fertility and child well-being, health and aging, and social welfare systems. This class explores the causes and consequences of population change, paying particular attention to how population processes interact with the social, economic, and political context in which they play out. Course materials are designed to engage students in contemporary debates unfolding in Europe, how population “problems” are defined, and the policies intended to solve them.

More specifically, the objectives of the course are as follows:
• to provide a comparative framework for understanding population structures and processes;
• to evaluate the different policy approaches to population problems;
• to give international breadth to U.S. course work and cultivate a comparative perspective;
• to develop analytic tools necessary to assemble comparative data, and evaluate population trends and their policy implications; and
• to strengthen oral communication and writing skills for applied policy audiences.

Learning Outcomes:
1) Expertise in a substantive area: increase understanding of social scientific perspectives on the causes and consequences of population change. Evaluate explanations for population change (including immigration, fertility and families, mortality, and aging); draw comparisons of the U.S. to European countries; and discuss different approaches to these issues from demography, sociology, and economics.
2) Demographic and policy analysis: critically assess policies on immigration and immigrant adaptation, family well-being, and poverty and social exclusion, and develop interdisciplinary tools to evaluate their impacts.
3) Conduct research & basic statistical analysis: assignments require examination of census data from different European countries, and use of basic descriptive statistical tools.
4) Written communication: assignments require writing oriented toward professional audiences, including demographic descriptions and a comparative paper.
5) Oral communication: group discussions and research presentations will increase oral communication and interpersonal relationship skills.
Course Requirements and Grading:
The course is lecture-based, with considerable time devoted to discussion. Significant emphasis will be placed on active student engagement with the course materials during our class meetings. The course is expansive and fast-paced, and you will need to read course material on your own, outside of class, and demonstrate understanding of this material. You will also need to participate regularly in class and demonstrate engaged learning throughout the course. In-class activities will use data to explore European demographic issues and will provide hands-on exposure to country-specific trends and regional patterns.

Attendance and Daily Participation (35%): You are expected to attend class regularly and to participate in classroom discussion and projects. You will also be required to prepare questions that will be used for classroom discussion, and therefore should complete the day’s assigned reading before class. You are accountable for all course-related information disseminated in class, as well as for any course-related information that may be posted online. In a course of this nature, daily participation is absolutely essential to the success of the course. Arriving late to class will be counted as an absence.

Weekly Data Assignments (30%): These three exercises will require you to construct professional-looking tables and to discuss the elements of the table. Assignments are due Monday mornings via the course Canvas page. Grades will be determined by the relevant instructor on a 0 to 10 scale.

Final policy brief (35%): The goal of your final policy brief is to provide an opportunity to understand the connection between basic demographic dynamics and social policy issues in Europe. Specifically, using the population concepts and policy issues discussed in class and covered in the readings, as well as the tabulations of demographic data completed in the weekly exercises, you will produce a brief report that provides an in-depth analysis of a population controversy relevant to your selected country.

The submitted brief should be no more than 4 pages and should incorporate at least two tables (or figures) of demographic data to support arguments. The report should integrate meaningful discussions of the summarized data with narratives of important observations concerning social policy. The final brief should be completely free of grammatical errors, be written in a clear and concise manner, and oriented toward an intelligent but non-scholarly audience (e.g., local business leaders, staff of congressional committee, foundation board of directors).

The report is due by June 26th at 5pm (Ithaca time) and should be submitted via Canvas.

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating or committing plagiarism on any assignment or exam will result in a failing score. If warranted, cases of academic dishonesty will be referred to the College of Human Ecology’s Academic Integrity Hearing Board.

Policies for Students with Special Needs: Students with a disability should provide a Faculty Notification Letter from Student Disability Services at the start of the semester. The SDS is available online at http://sds.cornell.edu and can be reached by phone at 607-254-4545.
Course Coverings & Readings:
All readings are available on the course Canvas page.
*Please bring your computers to class every day. We will use them for in-class activities.

Important Due Dates
Data assignment #1 due 6/5/24
Data assignment #2 due 6/12/24
Data assignment #3 due 6/19/24
Final project due June 26th at 5pm (Ithaca time)

TOPIC I: DEMOGRAPHY & IMMIGRATION (PROFESSOR HALL)
WEEK OF MAY 27

Day 1: The Demographic Approach

Topics Covered:
1) Course Introduction
2) Demographic Approaches to Public Policy
3) European Demographic Context
4) Course Project Introduction

Readings:
Read the following news articles prior to the first day of class. Come to class prepared to discuss how the population “problems” are defined in each article, why they have become public and political issues, and what debates are unfolding around potential responses to these demographic trends.


Day 2: People on the Move: Patterns and Explanations for Migration
Give some thought to type of international migration that you may be familiar with. This could be your own or your family’s migration journey, one that you’ve observed (US-Mexico migration), or one that you have read about (Ukrainians to Poland).

Topics Covered:
1) Patterns of Global Migration and Trends in International Migration
2) Explaining why people move
3) In-class activity: Immigration Flows

Readings:

**Day 3: European Immigration**

Topics Covered:
1) Policy Issues in European Migration
2) Borders and Migration Control
3) Comparative Immigration Policy Regimes

Readings:

**Day: Regulating Immigration, Policy Regimes, and Assimilation**

Topics Covered:
1) Refugee and Asylum Policy
2) Integrating Immigrants

Readings:
• ADDITIONAL READINGS TBA
TOPIC 2: DEMOGRAPHY, INEQUALITY, & PUBLIC POLICY (PROFESSOR TACH)
WEEK OF JUNE 3

Day 5: Extremism and Nativism

Topics Covered:
- Immigration and National Security
- Extremism and Social Isolation
- Demography and the Emergence of the Far Right

Readings:

Day 6: Poverty and Social Exclusion in Europe

Topics Covered:
1) The meaning and measurement of poverty and social exclusion
2) Absolute versus relative poverty standards
3) Reasons for cross-national differences: Demographic, economic, and political
4) Country Selection & Data Activity: Basic Demographic Profiles

Readings:
2) “How Poor are the Poor?” New York Times March 25, 2015.
3) The EU’s Europe 2030 Strategy, pages 9-12

Day 7: Welfare States, Redistribution, and Social Inclusion

Topics Covered:
1) What is a welfare state?
2) European varieties of welfare states
3) Recent welfare state developments in Europe: Redistribution, social inclusion, and retrenchment
Day 8: Aging and Social Insurance Policy

Topics Covered:
1) Social Insurance Policies for Aging
2) Demographic Challenges to Social Insurance Policies

Readings:
2) Additionally, come to class with your tables for the Data Exercise completed so we can go over them and answer any questions that may have come up.

TOPIC 3: THE FAMILY IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE (PROF SASSLER)

Day 9: Transition to Adulthood: Leaving & Returning Home

Topics Covered
1) Introduction to Family Demography
2) What does it mean to be “an adult”? Demographic vs. Psychological measures. **Be prepared to discuss this, from YOUR perspective. How do YOU define adulthood?**
3) How do economic conditions shape the transition to adulthood?
4) In-Class Activity with OECD data: Variations in proportions of young adults residing with family of origin, by country

Readings:
2) Drew DeSilver. 2016. “Millions of young people in U.S. and EU are neither working nor learning.” Pew Research Center (http://pewrser.ch/1PUPwJ4)
4) **For a little context:** Richard Fry, Jeffrey Passel, & D’Vera Cohen. “A majority of young adults in the U.S. live with their parents for the first time since the Great Depression.” Pew Research Center.
**Day 10:** New Families/No Families? Union Formation

**Topics Covered**
1) Changes in union formation patterns → marriage, cohabitation: factors affecting increasing prevalence of cohabitation, in Europe and, specifically, Italy.
2) **Where does marriage fit?**
3) Challenges posed by changing gender role expectations

**Readings:**

**Day 11: Fertility in Comparative Perspective**

**Topics Covered**
1) Fertility Decline: Causes and Consequences
2) How low can we go? And can fertility patterns change (i.e., rise)?
3) Guest Lecture TBD

**Readings:**
1. Massimo Livi-Bacci. 2001. “Too Few Children and Too Much Family,” *Daedalus* 130(3):139-155. This is a classic article, written by an Italian Demographer, talking about the issues facing Italy with regards to fertility. While it is somewhat dated, the issues remain the same:

More news coverage (this is short, but nicely summarizes our previous days’ readings).

**Day 12: Work-Family Balance**

**Topics Covered**
1) The expansion of the paid labor force
2) Social policies designed to facilitate employment and family life
3) New frontiers in gender (in)equity?

Readings:

**Day 13: Final Paper Roundtable**

**Class Schedule:**
Rather than holding class, Professor Sassler will be available for one-on-one meetings in the morning to discuss your final paper. Should you want to discuss, please come prepared to workshop the population controversies you have selected to write about for your final paper. Come with at least an outline and your data, and we can talk.

**Readings:**
None