IDS 3342 | Boomers and Millennials

Course Information
- **Course Hours:** 9:05 AM - 9:55 AM / MON-WED-FRI
- **Course Meeting Location:** BEL 023
- **Credit Hours:** 3 hours
- **Prerequisites:** None

Course Description
Students consider how to define and measure generations over the 20th century in U.S. society, and put their definitions in practice using original data from public use samples of historical censuses. Changing sizes of generations, ethnic composition and educational attainment motivate exploration of parallel changes in family formation, working life, political participation, retirement, aging and health. Exploration of original data connects research and theories to personal experiences of students in the course.

Course Instructor

Elwood Carlson
Charles Nam Professor in Sociology of Population
Email: ecarlson@fsu.edu
Office: 609 Bellamy Building
Office Hours: Weekdays 8-9:00AM
Emails will be responded to within 24 to 48 hours.

Learning Objectives
The Liberal Studies for the 21st Century Program at Florida State University builds an educational foundation that will enable FSU graduates to thrive both intellectually and materially and to support themselves, their families, and their communities through a broad and critical engagement with the world in which they live and work. By the end of this course, you will be able to critically examine, interpret, and explain how personal, political, cultural, economic, and social experiences and structures shape the past and the present. You will gather and analyze data using social science methodologies to evaluate casual arguments and analyze assertions, assumptions, and explanatory evidence. You will evaluate and employ appropriate methods and technology in the collection and analysis of data.

This course has been approved as meeting the Liberal Studies requirements and thus is designed to help you become a critical appraiser of the theories of the social sciences and the facts that support them. This course has also been approved as meeting the requirements for the E-Series and thus is designed to help you become an interdisciplinary and flexible thinker; a lifelong learner; and a team builder.

This course includes a term project based on original empirical research, designed to meet the college-level writing competency. To demonstrate college-level writing competency as required by the State of Florida, the student must earn a C (2.0) or higher in the course, and earn at least a C average on this project. If the student does not earn a C average or better on the required
The project, the student will not earn an overall grade of C or better in the course, no matter how well the student performs in the remaining portion of the course. The term project also is designed to meet the university computer competency requirement. In order to receive a C- or better in the course, the student must earn at least a C- on the project. If the student does not earn a C- or better on the computer competency component of the course, the student will not earn an overall grade of C- or better in the course, no matter how well the student performs in the remaining portion of the course. The sociology department will evaluate requests from their own majors to recognize courses meeting the required computer competency skill for the discipline.

**Student Responsibilities**

You need to purchase the two required texts for this course: *Birth and Fortune* by R. Easterlin and *The Lucky Few* by E. Carlson. In addition to these books, several journal articles are assigned for syllabus weeks as shown below.

Your final course grade will be composed of three parts:

- **Responses to in-class essay questions (50% times your points/total points):** we routinely write short essay responses to a selected study question at the start of each class (0-3 points each) followed by discussion based on posted study questions about assigned readings.
- **Personal research projects (40% times your points/total points):** Based on periodic assignments shown in this syllabus, you will design research to compare and analyze temporal changes in selected social indicators for evidence of generational contrasts over the life course. You will relate this research to assigned course readings and other existing published research that you identify independently. You will use the website of the Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS-USA) for U.S. census data to construct original tabulations of relevant indicators, and use the results as evidence for your conclusions.
- **Cumulative Final Examination (10% times your points/total points).**

**Grading Policy**

Points appear in the Canvas Grade Center feature as they are earned. Students may estimate their grades at any time during the semester by consulting this record. The grade distribution for the course will be based on the total score as calculated in the example above and rounded up to the nearest whole percentage point:

- A = 90% to 100%
- B = 80% to 89%
- C = 70% to 79%
- D = 60% to 69%
- F = below 60%

**Technology Requirements**

- You will need access to a laptop or other computer that is capable of accessing the internet, so that you will be able to install and use the R program language and work with the online Integrated Public Use Microdata Samples from successive U.S. Censuses. These IPUMS samples provide the raw material for your semester project.

**Canvas Support**

Need help with Canvas? Contact FSU Canvas Support:

**Email:** help@campus.fsu.edu
University Policies

University Attendance Policy
Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

Academic Honor Policy
The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to "...be honest and truthful and... [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (For more details see the FSU Academic Honor Policy and procedures for addressing alleged violations (Links to an external site.).)

Americans With Disabilities Act
Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from the Student Disability Resource Center has been provided. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:
Student Disability Resource Center
874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice)
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
Email: sdrc@admin.fsu.edu

Free Tutoring from FSU
On-campus tutoring and writing assistance is available for many courses at Florida State University. For more information, visit the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) Tutoring Services (Links to an external site.) comprehensive list of on-campus tutoring options - email: tutor@fsu.edu. High-quality tutoring is available by appointment and on a walk-in basis. These services are offered by tutors trained to encourage the highest level of individual academic success while upholding personal academic integrity.

Syllabus Change Policy
"Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice."

Course Summary
Week 1: The Concept of a Cohort
Project Assignment: Register at Integrated Public Use Microdata Samples (IPUMS) web site and explore the web site.

Week 2: The Concept of the Life Course
Project Assignment: Download and install R and RStudio programs to read IPUMS data.

Week 3: Generations: Cohorts over the Life Course
Project Assignment: Revise and cross-tabulate IPUMS variables using RStudio.

Week 4: Generations of Childhood

Week 5: The Invention of Adolescence

Week 6: Expansion of Schooling

Week 7: The Fall and Rise of Marriage Age


**Week 8: Generations of Parents**


**Week 9: Generations at War**


**Week 10: Generations at Work**


**Week 11: Generations, Politics and Public Opinion**


**Week 12: Generations in Black and White**


**Week 13: Retiring Generations and Intergenerational Transfers**


**Week 14: Summary Perspective on Generations**


**FINAL EXAMINATION:**
- multiple-choice questions covering all assignments, project and readings
- counts for 10% of course grade