HSF2009 - *Boomers and Millenials: Changing Generations*

Fall 2015 / Professor Carlson

Office Hours: TBA

e-mail to ecarlson@fsu.edu (*use FSU email accounts!*)

**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 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. Team-based exploration of original data connects research and theories to personal experiences of students in the course.

**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.

**Certifications:**
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 (see weekly assignments below) 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 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.

**Americans with Disabilities Act:**
Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disabilities Resource Center, and (2) bring a letter to the instructor during the first week of class, indicating the need for and type of accommodation requested. This should be done during the first week of class. All audio tracks from lecture videos and instructions for the group project are available as printed text files for persons who document a hearing disability. The University may be able to provide access, depending on available resources, to readers who can read some materials aloud for persons who document a visual disability; course materials are not available in Braille at this time. 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, web site [http://disabilitycenter.fsu.edu](http://disabilitycenter.fsu.edu).

**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.” (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at [http://dof.fsu.edu/honorpolicy.htm](http://dof.fsu.edu/honorpolicy.htm).) Violations of these principles, including collusion with other students to mis-use the conditional access features of the Blackboard course site, giving or taking answers to test questions, submitting the work of others as your own, or allowing your own work to be submitted as the work of others may lead to a failing grade on an assignment, to a failing grade in the entire course, or in egregious cases to formal disciplinary action by the university.

**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. 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. Missed scores will be coded initially to "unexcused absence" in all cases, and converted to excused absences upon presentation of a valid written excuse. For official university activities, students must make arrangements with the university unit taking them away from class to supervise proctored quizzes and other graded in-class activities in order to receive credit for such activities.
Components of Course Grade:

Your final course grade will be composed of three parts:

- Responses to in-class essay questions (40% of course grade),
- Personal research projects (50% of course grade), and
- Cumulative Final Examination (10% of course grade).

Points appear in the Blackboard 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 = 87% to 100%
- B = 75% to 86%
- C = 63% to 74%
- D = 50% to 62%
- F = below 50%

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' comprehensive list of on-campus tutoring options at http://ace.fsu.edu/tutoring or contact 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.

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**READING LIST INSTRUCTIONS:** A few of the assigned readings listed below appear with titles as direct links (in color). For these readings, you may click on the highlighted title to see the assigned reading on your screen. However, most of the readings are available through a web archive called JSTOR, to which FSU has an expensive annual subscription. Your visits to the JSTOR site to read course assignments will help to demonstrate the importance of this valuable resource (already paid for with your tuition dollars) to the university. To find each reading in JSTOR, go to the FSU web site (www.fsu.edu) and choose "libraries" from the Key Links item near the middle of the page. On the Libraries main page, choose "Find a Database" from the left-side menu and type JSTOR into the field on the right. When you click "Go" you should see an entry highlighted in yellow for JSTOR. (You may have to log into the FSU site with your FSU username and password at some point.) Clicking this highlighted entry should take you to the JSTOR "advanced search" page. Type in the name of the author (first name and then last name, no punctuation) in the first blank field, select "author" from the pull-down box to the right of this field, click on "articles" in the "NARROW" section below, and type the date of the publication in both the "From" and "To" boxes to the right of the "articles" option. Then click on the SEARCH button to find all articles by that author from that year. The assigned reading should be one of the displayed options. Click on "Article PDF" below the correct citation to open the article as an
Week 1: The Concept of a Cohort


Week 2: The Concept of the Life Course


Week 3: Generations: Cohorts over the Life Course

- PROJECT: Register at Integrated Public Use Microdata Samples (IPUMS) web site and explore the web site.

Week 4: Generations of Childhood

- PROJECT: Obtain samples from decennial censuses with specified variables; complete assignment to post frequency counts of key variables.

Week 5: The Invention of Adolescence

• PROJECT: Construct tables showing changing living arrangements for children and young adults across censuses; prepare and present team reports.

Week 6: Expansion of Schooling

• PROJECT: Examine school enrollment patterns for successive generations from census data; prepare and present team reports.

Week 7: The Fall and Rise of Marriage Age

• Richard Easterlin. 1980 Birth and Fortune Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapter 3 - "Marriage and Childbearing")
• PROJECT: Calculate singulate mean age at marriage (synthetic measure) across censuses; prepare and present team reports.

Week 8: Generations of Parents

• PROJECT: Calculate tempo and quantum of childbearing for generations; prepare and present team reports.

Week 9: Generations at War

• PROJECT: Evaluate military service and veteran status for generations across censuses; prepare and present team reports.

Week 10: Generations at Work
• Richard Easterlin. 1980. *Birth and Fortune* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapter 4 - "Women's Work")
• PROJECT: Calculate employment rates for generations across censuses; examine variations in the life-course trajectory of labor force participation; prepare and present team reports.

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

• Elwood Carlson. 2008. *The Lucky Few* New York: Springer Publishers. (Chapter Seven - "At the Heart of the Silent Majority")
• PROJECT: Explore possibilities for tracing generational differences in opinion using the General Social Survey; prepare and present team reports.
• BEGIN CONSULTATIONS FOR FINAL PAPER

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

• PROJECT: Trace changes in the proportions of different race/ethnic groups across successive generations using census data; prepare and present team reports.

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

• PROJECT: Calculate dependency ratios for young and old dependents across censuses and trace the passage of small and large generations through the life course; prepare and present team reports.

**Week 14: Aging, Health and Extinction of Generations**

• PROJECT: Synthesize a summary of the life-experience of two contrasting generations using data from previous weeks.
• FINAL PAPER DUE at end of Week 14

FINAL EXAMINATION

• on-line exam with multiple-choice questions covering all weeks of the course covering project and readings
• counts for 10% of course grade