

# Economic Demography Syllabus

## Department of Economics

### ECON 2400 - Winter 2026

*Dalhousie University acknowledges that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People and pays respect to the Indigenous knowledges held by the Mi'kmaq People, and to the wisdom of their Elders past and present. The Mi'kmaq People signed Peace and Friendship Treaties with the Crown, and section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 recognizes and affirms Aboriginal and Treaty rights. We are all Treaty people.*

*Dalhousie University also acknowledges the histories, contributions, and legacies of African Nova Scotians, who have been here for over 400 years.*

#### Course Instructor(s)

Name	Email	Office Hours
Mrittika Shamsuddin	Mrittika.Shamsuddin@dal.ca	Thursday, 10am-12pm, 6214 University Ave, Room B22
Mohshinul Karim	mh698814@dal.ca	

#### Course Description

This course investigates the economic determinants and consequences of the size, growth and age structure of human populations. Topics include the economic impact of immigrants, the growing pension burden as population age, how age structure affects employment, how population growth interacts with economic growth and the causes of demographic behavior, including fertility, health, marriage and labor supply.

#### *Course Prerequisites*

ECON 1101, ECON 1102 with minimum grades of C

#### *Course Exclusions*

NA

## Course Structure

### *Course Delivery*

- This course will be delivered face-to-face.

### *Lectures*

Section 01: TR 10:05– 11:25 pm **MCCAIN 1198**

## Course Materials

### *Required Readings:*

- *Demography and Economics*, by Anya Hageman and Pauline Galoustian

*The book can be accessed here*

<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/demographyandeconomics/>

- *Other required readings will be posted in Brightspace. See below for a list by week. Videos, and podcasts per week will also be posted in Brightspace.*

## Assessment

### *Assignments*

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Weight (% of final grade)</b>	<b>Date</b>
In-class Assignments	25%	Best 5/7. In-class.
Data Assignments	20%	Best 2/ 3.
Debates	20%	Apr 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup> in class
Final Exam	35%	Scheduled by Registrar between Apr 11-27

### *In-class assignments*

- There will be 7 assignments held randomly on Thursday classes for 20/30 minutes.
- 4 of these assignments are meant to test your understanding of the concepts discussed in class. They will contain problem-solving, multiple-choice questions and short- answer questions. This will be individual work.
- The other 3 will be short reflection essays on different demographic topics.
- You will not be allowed to use your computer or internet, but you can use paper copy of your readings and lecture slides.
- There will be 12 of these assignments and your best 10 performances will be used for grade calculation.

### *Data Assignments*

- There will be three data assignments in Excel. They will be done individually at home and submitted through Brightspaces.
- Due dates: January 30<sup>th</sup>, February 27 and March 30<sup>th</sup> by 11:59 pm in Brightspace
- Best 2 grades will be taken for grade calculations.

### *Final exam*

- The final exam will be in-person and the date will be announced by the registrar. The final exam is cumulative.
- The final exam will have 5 problem-solving questions, 5 short-answer questions and 2 data questions. It is individual work.
- The final exam will be for 2 hours.
- The student can bring one 3" X 5" index card, with anything written on the card that may help them on the test. It must be submitted with the exam.

### *Debates & Reflection*

- This will be a group work, held on the last two weeks of classes (Apr 2<sup>nd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>).
- You can choose your own group of 3 but you will have to choose a topic from a given list provided (approved) by me.
- According to the rubric provided, I along with your peers will evaluate the winning team.

- 10% of the final grade will be on your performance as a group while the other 10% will be on your own performance.

Conversion of numerical grades to final letter grades follows the

Dalhousie Grade Scale

A+ (90-100)	B+ (77-79)	C+ (65-69)	D (50-54)
A (85-89)	B (73-76)	C (60-64)	F (0-49)
A- (80-84)	B- (70-72)	C- (55-59)	

### **Course Policies on Missed or Late Academic Requirements**

#### **Course Policies related to Academic Integrity**

If you miss the class assignment for any reason, there will be no retake since we will be taking your best 5 out of 7 assignments.

If you miss the final exam on medical grounds, there will be a retake scheduled on the first/second week of the next term (May). There will be no need to submit doctors' notes/SDAs.

The debates will be scheduled on a first come, first served basis.

All work submitted for grading should be your own. Plagiarism and collaboration in assignments and final exam will be considered failure of academic Integrity and will be reported.

Any diagram or table on your assignments should be your work and not copy and pasted from any other source. You should look at the source of the data, collect the data and draw your own diagrams.

**You can use generative AI and large language models (e.g., ChatGPT) to only improve the grammar of your assignments but you are required to acknowledge your usage and submit both the commands you type and the output generated.**

If class is cancelled due to instructor illness, or if a given week's course material cannot be completed during class time for any reason, the material will be presented in videos that will be uploaded to Brightspace.

I will try my best to respond to email within 24 hours on a weekday, 48 hours on a weekend.

Health and safety: All students are required to comply with health and safety requirements on campus, and should be considerate of others' health concerns. Non-compliance may be reported under the Code of Student Conduct.

### **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe the components and dynamics of population size, structure, and distribution.
- Analyze how fertility, mortality, and migration influence population changes.

- Reflect on how individual decisions regarding fertility, marriage, labor supply, and migration impact demographic trends.
- Evaluate how demographic changes affect labor markets, economic growth, and development.
- Critically assess the outcomes of various public policies on population dynamics.
- Collect demographic data and use visual tools to analyze and identify trends.

## Course Content

Week	Date	Lesson Topic(s)	Reading/Assessment (Preliminary)
1	Jan 7	Introduction to Population Economics	<p style="text-align: center;">Ch 1</p> Rosling, Hans. "Global Population Growth, Box by Box." <i>TED Conferences</i> . [Video]. Available at: TED.
2	Jan 12	Population & Environment – The Malthusian Model and Pre-Industrial History	<p style="text-align: center;">Ch 2, Ch- 15</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lam, David. 2011. "How the World Survived the Population Bomb: Lessons From 50 Years of Extraordinary Demographic History." <i>Demography</i> 48 (4): 1231-1262.</li> <li>2. Becker, Stan. 2013. "Has the World Really Survived the Population Bomb? (Commentary on 'How the World Survived the Population Bomb: Lessons From 50 Years of Extraordinary Demographic History')." <i>Demography</i> 50 (6): 2173-2181.</li> <li>3. Lam, David. 2013. "Reply to Stan Becker, 'Has the World Really Survived the Population Bomb? (Commentary on 'How the World Survived the Population Bomb: Lessons from 50 Years of Extraordinary Demographic History')." <i>Demography</i> 50 (6): 2183-2186.</li> <li>4. Oreskes, Naomi. 2023. "Eight Billion People in the World Is a Crisis, Not an Achievement." <i>Scientific American</i>. Available at: <a href="#">Scientific American</a>.</li> </ol>
3	Jan 19	Demographic Data	<p style="text-align: center;">Ch 3 – Ch 7, Ch 14 &amp; 15</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Schwabish, Jonathan A. 2014. "An Economist's Guide to Visualizing Data." <i>Journal of</i></li> </ol>

			<p><i>Economic Perspectives</i> 28 (1): 209–34.</p> <p>2. Doing Economics (Unit 4)  <a href="https://books.core-econ.org/doing-economics/book/text/04-01.html">https://books.core-econ.org/doing-economics/book/text/04-01.html</a></p>
4	Jan 26	Human Capital & Labor Supply– Health & Education	<p>1. Raj Chetty &amp; John N. Friedman &amp; Nathaniel Hendren &amp; Maggie R. Jones &amp; Sonya R. Porter, 2026. "<a href="#">The Opportunity Atlas: Mapping the Childhood Roots of Social Mobility</a>," <a href="#">American Economic Review</a>, American Economic Association, vol. 116(1), pages 1-51, January</p> <p>2. Hilary Hoynes, Emilia Simeonova, Marianne Simonsen, 2016, "Health and the labor market – New developments in the literature," <i>Labour Economics</i>, Volume 43</p> <p>3. Frennette, Marc. 2023. High school academic performance and earnings by postsecondary field of study, Statistics Canada</p> <p>Data Assignment 1 – Due by Jan 30th, 11:59 pm</p> <p>Ch 8 – 10</p>
5	Feb 2	Crisis & Mortality	<p>1. Rosling, Hans. "HIV: New Facts and Stunning Data Visualizations." <i>TED Conferences</i>. [Video]. Available at: TED.</p> <p>2. NPR. 2023. "A Bad Economy Can Be Good for Your Health." <i>NPR</i>. Available at: NPR.</p> <p>3. Case, Anne, and Angus Deaton. 2022. "The Great Divide: Education, Despair, and Death." <i>Annual Review of Economics</i> 14 (1): 1-21.</p>
6	Feb 9	Family Structure & Marriage	<p>Ch 23 &amp; 24</p> <p>1. Cezar Santos, Michèle Tertilt, How families matter for understanding economic inequality, <i>Oxford Open Economics</i>, Volume 3, Issue Supplement_1, 2024, Pages i678–i683,</p>

			2. Marek Louzek (2022) An economic approach to marriage, <i>Journal of Applied Economics</i> , 25:1, 300-315, DOI: 10.1080/15140326.2022.2034469
7	Feb 16	Winter Study Break	
8	Feb 23	Fertility	<p>Ch 11-Ch 13</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>de Silva, Tiloka, and Silvana Tenreyro. 2017. "Population Control Policies and Fertility Convergence." <i>Journal of Economic Perspectives</i> 31 (4): 205-228.</li> <li>Doepke, Matthias, Anne Hannusch, Fabian Kindermann, and Michèle Tertilt. 2023. "The Economics of Fertility: A New Era." In <i>Handbook of the Economics of the Family</i>, Vol. 1 (1).</li> <li>Dubner, Stephen J. 2015. "Why Do People Keep Having Children?" <i>Freakonomics Radio</i> Podcast. <a href="#">Link</a>.</li> </ol> <p>Data Assignment 2 – 27<sup>th</sup> Feb, by 11:59 pm</p>
9	Mar 2	Migration	<p>Ch 20-Ch 22</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clemens, Michael A. 2022. "Migration on the Rise, a Paradigm in Decline: The Last Half-Century of Global Mobility." <i>AEA Papers and Proceedings</i> 112: 257–61.</li> <li>Jia, Ning, Raven Molloy, Christopher Smith, and Abigail Wozniak. 2023. "The Economics of Internal Migration: Advances and Policy Questions." <i>Journal of Economic Literature</i> 61 (1): 144–80.</li> <li>World Bank. 2023. <i>World Development Report 2023: Migrants, Refugees, and Societies</i>. Washington, DC: World Bank. Chapters 1-4.</li> </ol>
10	Mar 9	Migration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>World Bank. 2023. <i>World Development Report 2023: Migrants, Refugees, and Societies</i>. Washington, DC: World Bank. Chapters 5-9.</li> <li>Foged, Mette, Linea Hasager, and Giovanni Peri. 2024. "Comparing the Effects of</li> </ol>

			<p>Policies for the Labor Market Integration of Refugees." <i>Journal of Labor Economics</i> 42 (S1): S335-S377.</p> <p>3. Card, David. 2001. "Immigrant Inflows, Native Outflows, and the Local Labor Market Impacts of Higher Immigration." <i>Journal of Labor Economics</i> 19 (1): 22-64.</p>
11	Mar 16	Population Aging	<p>Ch 16 and 17</p> <p>1. Maestas, Nicole, Kathleen J. Mullen, and David Powell. 2023. "The Effect of Population Aging on Economic Growth, the Labor Force, and Productivity." <i>American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics</i> 15 (2): 306–32.</p> <p>2. Ferede, Ergete, and Bev Dahlby. 2023. "The Effect of Population Aging on Economic Growth in Canada." <i>Fraser Institute</i>. Available at: <a href="https://www.fraserinstitute.org">Fraser Institute</a>.</p>
12	Mar 23	Population & Economic Growth	<p>1. Pianta, M. (2020). Technology and Work: Key Stylized Facts for the Digital Age. In: Zimmermann, K. (eds) <i>Handbook of Labor, Human Resources and Population Economics</i>. Springer, Cham. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-57365-6_3-1">https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-57365-6_3-1</a></p> <p>2. Calvino, F., Spiezia, V. (2020). The Digital Transformation and Labor Demand. In: Zimmermann, K. (eds) <i>Handbook of Labor, Human Resources and Population Economics</i>. Springer, Cham. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-57365-6_19-3">https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-57365-6_19-3</a></p> <p>Data Assignment 3 – March 27<sup>th</sup> by 11:59 pm</p>
13.	Mar 30		Debates
14.	Apr 6	Apr 7 - Debate Apr 9 - No class	

## University Policies and Statements

### Recognition of Mi'kmaq Territory

Dalhousie University would like to acknowledge that the University is on Traditional Mi'kmaq Territory. The Elders in Residence program provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel, and support. Visit or e-mail the Indigenous Student Centre at 1321 Edward St or [elders@dal.ca](mailto:elders@dal.ca). Additional information regarding the Indigenous Student Centre can be found at: [https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/communities/indigenous.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html)

### Internationalization

At Dalhousie, 'thinking and acting globally' enhances the quality and impact of education, supporting learning that is "interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, global in reach, and orientated toward solving problems that extend across national borders." Additional internationalization information can be found at: <https://www.dal.ca/about-dal/internationalization.html>

### Academic Integrity

At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility, and respect. As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all the work you do. The University provides policies and procedures that every member of the university community is required to follow to ensure academic integrity. Additional academic integrity information can be found at: [https://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/academic-integrity.html](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html)

### Accessibility

The Student Accessibility Centre is Dalhousie's centre of expertise for matters related to student accessibility and accommodation. If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course (online or in-person) that result in barriers to your inclusion, please contact the Student Accessibility Centre ([https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/academic-support/accessibility.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility.html)) for all courses offered by Dalhousie with the exception of Truro. For courses offered by the Faculty of Agriculture, please contact the Student Success Centre in Truro (<https://www.dal.ca/about-dal/agricultural-campus/student-success-centre.html>)

### Conduct in the Classroom – Culture of Respect

Substantial and constructive dialogue on challenging issues is an important part of academic inquiry and exchange. It requires willingness to listen and tolerance of opposing points of view.

Consideration of individual differences and alternative viewpoints is required of all class members, towards each other, towards instructors, and towards guest speakers. While expressions of differing perspectives are welcome and encouraged, the words and language used should remain within acceptable bounds of civility and respect.

### **Diversity and Inclusion – Culture of Respect**

Every person at Dalhousie has a right to be respected and safe. We believe inclusiveness is fundamental to education. We stand for equality. Dalhousie is strengthened in our diversity. We are a respectful and inclusive community. We are committed to being a place where everyone feels welcome and supported, which is why our Strategic Direction prioritizes fostering a culture of diversity and inclusiveness (Strategic Priority 5.2). Additional diversity and inclusion information can be found at: <http://www.dal.ca/cultureofrespect.html>

### **Student Code of Conduct**

Everyone at Dalhousie is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. The Code of Student Conduct allows Dalhousie to take disciplinary action if students don't follow this community expectation. When appropriate, violations of the code can be resolved in a reasonable and informal manner - perhaps through a restorative justice process. If an informal resolution can't be reached, or would be inappropriate, procedures exist for formal dispute resolution. The full Code of Student Conduct can be found at:

[https://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/policies/student-life/code-of-student-conduct.html](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/student-life/code-of-student-conduct.html)

### **Fair Dealing Policy**

The Dalhousie University Fair Dealing Policy provides guidance for the limited use of copyright protected material without the risk of infringement and without having to seek the permission of copyright owners. It is intended to provide a balance between the rights of creators and the rights of users at Dalhousie. Additional information regarding the Fair Dealing Policy can be found at:

[https://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/policies/academic/fair-dealing-policy-.html](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/fair-dealing-policy-.html)

### **Originality Checking Software**

The course instructor may use Dalhousie's approved originality checking software and Google to check the originality of any work submitted for credit, in accordance with the Student Submission of Assignments and Use of Originality Checking Software Policy. Students are free, without penalty of grade, to choose an alternative method of attesting to the authenticity of their work and must inform the instructor no later than the last day to add/drop classes of their intent to choose an alternate method. Additional information regarding Originality Checking Software

can be found at: [https://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/policies/academic/student-submission-of-assignments-and-use-of-originality-checking-software-policy-.html](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/student-submission-of-assignments-and-use-of-originality-checking-software-policy-.html)

### **Student Use of Course Materials**

Course materials are designed for use as part of this course at Dalhousie University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as books, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law. Copying this course material for distribution (e.g. uploading to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law.