

DEMOGRAPHY AND ECOLOGY WRITTEN PRELIMINARY EXAM

JANUARY 4, 1999

Morning Exam

I. FERTILITY. Answer A or B:

- A. Change in fertility and change in family structure and relationships are interrelated in many ways. Discuss the ways in which at least two different theoretical perspectives on fertility change and economic development view this relationship. What do we know empirically about this relationship in a contemporary developing country of your choice?
- B. There is a tradition in fertility research to measure the "wantedness" of births, and of decomposing fertility into "wanted" and "unwanted" components. What is known about the change in "wanted" and "unwanted" fertility over the past half-century? What is the theoretical significance of this distinction? Discuss the "wantedness" of births as a conceptual problem, and as a measurement problem.

II MORTALITY. Answer A or B:

- A. One consistent finding on U.S. mortality is the so-called mortality crossover, in which whites have lower mortality risks than blacks except at older ages, where mortality risks are reversed. Compare and contrast three explanations that might account for such crossovers. Cite relevant authors as appropriate.
- B. Design a study to investigate the gender difference in life expectancy. Discuss the literature on this topic. Then describe the hypotheses you would investigate. Discuss the availability of data that you would need. If the data are available, discuss its quality and limitation. If the data are not available, discuss how you would go about collecting it. Finally, discuss the methods of analysis that you would use to test the hypothesis.

III. COMPOSITION. Answer A or B:

- A Demographers often cast social change in terms of cohort replacement and/or period change. Define, describe, and contrast these two processes. Pick two concrete demographic phenomena that in your opinion illustrates each. Explain why, using evidence drawn from the demographic research literature.
- B. Discuss trends in labor force participation by gender in the United States. In your answer, review:
 1. Factors that have been argued to affect levels and trends.
 2. The conceptualization and measurement of labor force status.
 3. The strengths and weaknesses of the available evidence.