Population, Health, and the Life Course
Summer 2023 Qualifying Examination

There are three pairs of questions listed below. Each participant is expected to answer a total of three essays, selecting one for each set.

Set One. Answer A or B

A. Please describe the trends that point to a "second demographic transition."
- In detail, what is meant by that term?
- What are the central defining elements? How are they measured?
- Critically discuss some of the key reasons (discussed in the literature) the second demographic transition might be seen either as a cause for concern, or as a sign of progress?

B. Timing and patterns of family formation have changed markedly in the past 50 years, particularly in economically developed regions.

- Summarize the fundamental shifts in union formation since the 1970s in the literature.
- Highlighting one or two shifts you find most important and explain why you find them important.
- Compare and contrast the core economic and socio-cultural theories in the literature used to explain these shifts in the literature.

Set Two. Answer C or D

C, In your view of the literature, what specific life course processes made older adults more vulnerable to COVID-19 morbidities and mortalities?

- Among older adults, how did within age racial and ethnic differentials exacerbate health inequalities?
- Employing an intersectionality approach, include discussions concerning historical context, developmental timing, linked lives, race, class, geography, and healthcare access as drivers of differential outcomes during the height of the COVID pandemic?

D. What does the term, deaths of despair refer to specifically?

- What do scholars say are the root causes of deaths of despair?
- What do we know about variations in deaths across race and class in the U.S.?
- Please outline two public health strategies to improve population health in this area.

Set Three. Answer E or F

E. How well suited are present theoretical and methodological approaches to addressing the migration challenges connected to global climate change?

- Can climate led migration movements be adequately assessed using the theoretical framings at hand?
- To maximize insights into climate migration, what modifications in our framing and understanding of migration need to be altered?
- Support your answers with a brief discussion of migration in a specific region (ideally at the national or subnational region) likely to experience climate related migration within the next 5 years. Highlight the importance of theoretical framing and methodological approaches to understanding climate migration in this area.

F. Select a specific area within population (demography), health, or the life course that has experienced change over the past three decades (specific areas, such as the rate of contraceptive acceptance, abortion rates, desired family size, age at sexual debut, life expectancy, changing rates of an infectious disease, changing patterns of vaccine hesitancy, onset of chronic illness, age at marriage, age at retirement, age at school completion, or something similar).

- Examine the change in your specific area from the perspectives of age, period, and cohort effects. Make the definition of each type of effect clear in your answer.
- There remain methodological challenges in specifying APC (age, period cohort) models. Summarize what you believe to be the most important 2-3 core challenges discussed in the literature.
- How do these challenges relate to your specific area selected in step one above?
- What are the implications of these challenges (see point above) for the kind of data collection and modeling approaches best suited to analyzing the specific area of change you selected above?