Global Population Futures

Anthropology 4811 /Geography and the Environment 4911

Monday/Wednesday 8:30 to 10 am via zoom

The Zoom link is on the right side of the course website landing page (the page where the announcements are located)

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Our topic is a very timely and exciting issue – The human population has just reached a record 8 billion people! We will discuss how that came about, what the populations projections look like, which projections are more likely to be accurate and why, and what our potential futures are as a species over the next century, not just our numbers, but what our lives will be like. Our focus is more on human culture and societies rather than numerical techniques.

How this course works:

This is a fourth-year course designed to begin your transition to post-graduate work environments or graduate school. So…. no exams!!!! Instead, you will complete projects to demonstrate your learning and you are expected to discuss course material to engage in peer learning.

Students are expected to attend class with their cameras on and be prepared to participate in discussions.

Read the course schedule well in advance of the class. The slides will generally be posted before class, and these should be reviewed, and embedded activities completed BEFORE the class meets. There is also a folder for each of the four sections of the course on the course website. Check in these for the homework assignments each day. Be sure to complete the homework so you can participate in class and keep up with assignments.

Course Learning outcomes:

- Students will engage with common methods for displaying demographic information
- Students will explore demographic differences between countries and regions and examine why these differences exist
- Students will assess trends in the drivers of population – urban migration, education of women, and social or cultural factors
- Students will reflect on the social contract- Why do we live in societies? What makes a good life?
- Students will recognize themselves as social agents – they should develop the ability to recognize that they live in a particular society and culture that differs from others, and critically evaluate options in decision-making related to demographics

Date	Topic	Activities
Mon Jan 9th 8:30 to 10 1	Section 1: Introduction to Demographics and Human Population Drivers of Population size: Births, Deaths and Migration	After: short videos and questions on population pyramids and the population record of 8 billion
Wed Jan 11 2	History of the Study of Demographics Demographic Change to 20th C	
Mon Jan 16 3	Mid- 20th Century: Growth Era Overpopulation concerns Demographic Transition	
Wed Jan 18 4	Guest presentation Class discussion: Is it a good question to ask "How many people is too many?"	
Mon Jan 23 5	21st Century: 'Decline Paradigm' Canadian Case Study	Submit 3 ideas for your term paper
Wed Jan 25 6	Section 2: Tools for Communicating Demographic Information	Form groups for project
Mon Jan 30 7	1:1 meetings re term paper Group Meetings for Infographic project	
Wed Feb 1st 8	Tools for Communicating Demographic Information	
Mon Feb 6 9	Tools for Communicating Demographic Information	Submit term paper outline
Wed Feb 8 10	Section 3: Drivers of Declining Fertility Women's education, Urbanization and Cultural/Social factors	
Mon Feb 13 11	Group meeting	
Wed Feb 15 12	Group meeting	Post infographics and regional overview on web site by midnight Wednesday Post comments individually on 3 infographics plus one regional overview – By Friday Midnight
Feb 20-24 READING WEEK		
Mon Feb 27 13	Women's education and employment	Submit infographic write up to Prof and GA by midnight TUESDAY
Wed Mar 1 14	Guest Speaker	
Mon March 6 15	Urbanization	
Wed Mar 8 Drop date is March 10th	National and Cultural Factors	Submit Your Country 2050 by midnight

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Mon Mar 13 17	Section 4: The Future: The Decline Era? The Improvement Era? Implications and Responses	
Wed Mar 15 18	The Future	
Mon Mar 20 19	The Future	
Wed Mar 22 20	The Future	Submit term paper by midnight to Prof and GA
Mon Mar 27 21	Conclusions	
Wed Mar 29 22	Group meeting to 'pre-present' with peers and then finalize presentations	
Mon April 3 23	Media Presentations	
Wed Apr 5 24	Media Presentations	

Learning Evaluations

Project 1.1: Infographic and Regional Overview   20%

      Group part 5%, your infographic 10%, your write up 5%

Project 1.2: Your Country, 2050   20%

Project 2.1: Term Paper   25%

Project 2.2 Media Presentation of Term Paper Topic   15%

Web Site Posts and Responses   10%

Participation in Class   10%

Assignment Information

Project 1.1 Infographic and Regional Overview

- Students will be divided into 3 regional groups where the more interesting demographic events are happening right now (1. Sub-Saharan Africa, 2. Asia, 3. Europe (including Russia) and North America)
- Each group member will select a country in their assigned region in consultation with their group. Be sure the group covers the major countries in terms of effect on world population as well as a few countries with interesting demographic situations
- Each group member will prepare an infographic telling the demographic story of their country, graphics (To construct the info graphic, there are free software available to help you including Canva)
- Group must achieve <u>stylistic unity</u> amongst the infographics (use similar colour palette, style, font) but each infographic should be designed specifically to best illustrate its country's situation
- Group must write a regional overview (2-3 pages double spaced) to provide general introduction and any apparent themes for their region. This should be presented as a UN style report for public viewing -not just a word doc. Rather make it interesting – summary in bullet points or add colour or graphics summarizing the region. Save as a PDF
- The group regional overview and the infographics will be posted to the web page
- Each student in the class will review all the infographics on the website and provide comments for 3 of them plus on comment on one region as a whole. These comments should be constructive and thoughtful – at least 3 sentences. Please engage with the infographic and read the regional overviews.
- <u>Each group member</u> will individually submit a 4-5 page paper explaining their choices for their infographic (70% of the space or 3-4 pages) and a reflection on how it was received (30% of the space or 1-2 pages). In the reflection discuss how the draft was changed after group feedback, how the audience received the infographic vs the message you wanted to send, and a reflection on that information). The write up should cite all references used to make the info graphic which should be at least 5 academic references, plus institutional web sites like the UN, government, NGOs

Project 1.2 Your Country, 2050

- What do you predict for the demographics of your country from the infographic assignment in the next few decades? Consider key factors effecting population size and change: female education, urbanization/internal migration and specific cultural and political factors (including population policies), immigration/emigration
- Example things to cover:
    - What will be the major cities? What will be the main economic drivers of different parts of the country?
    - Produce a population pyramid for 2050. Compare to current pyramid. Explain reasons for different generational sizes.
    - Produce a graphic to illustrate internal movements or immigration effects on different parts or cities of your country and explain them

- o Provide a section on the state of the country (economics, health, quality of life) ex. economics – what will be the major industries? What will be the state of their natural resources and infrastructure (including water, agriculture, renewable and non-renewable resources), manufacturing (production of goods) and service industries (including education, health and tourism)?
- Provide 5-7 formal academic references for the material on your country and cite the infographic or regional overview for material on comparators. Additional references can be web sites, pod casts or other information
- At least 2 illustrations – figures, charts, maps etc. (be sure to cite these if you don't make them yourself)
- 1000 words. References and figures are in addition to the 1000-word limit

Project 2.1 Individual Term Paper – Theme is Population Futures

- The goal of this assignment is to develop a reasoned idea of what the future holds for a particular demographic topic in 2050
- Critically examine the topic: assess its current state, provide examples or case studies of the topic and the outcomes of them. Provide a reasoned argument for what will happen with your topic by 2050
- Step 1: Explore the resources on the class web site and on the internet in general to help you find something of interest
- Step 2: Submit a list of 3 topics with 2 academic references each. For each provide a short paragraph (3-6 sentences) explaining your interest and how you might proceed
- Step 3: Consult with teaching team and decide on your topic
- Step 4: Submit a paper outline on your chosen topic (include subtopics and points for each paragraph) using at least 5 academic references
- Step 5: Submit Final paper -should be 1500 words with 7-10 academic references and other references as appropriate
- Step 6 is the next assignment – the media presentation – see below

Example Topics

- Select one category of how to deal with a declining population: pronatalist policies, immigration, automation, or some other? And explore the various examples of it and what the outcomes have been. Assess the usefulness and caveats of the action and project how useful that action will be in 2050 for select countries (Canada- immigration, Japan – automation) or if you determine that policy is a poor choice, what will they have to supplement that action with? (Japan accepting immigrants from ….? Canada – a baby boom?)
- Ways that older people are staying in the economy, or contributing to child rearing (use case studies where that is happening and new ideas for how older people might contribute -then project into the future how this ideas might develop
- Development challenges that affect the demographic transition of a certain country or region: health, sanitation, education, governance, economics (ex. desertification, climate change, wars?)

- Effects of changing demographics on economics, internal migration, ethnic groups, conservation of natural resources – what are the different generations (Boomers, X,Y, Milleniums), what is their size and how do those affect your chosen topic? – more information on this from USA, so might need to focus on just USA or maybe Canada
- Differences in ethnic demographics - For example, you could select one ethnic group in a multi-ethnic country and examine how their demographic history compares to the rest of the country (White Americans are sometimes concerned about Hispanic or black 'overfertilty'-as are many Europeans or other areas with high immigration. But to what degree is immigrant or minority high fertility even true? What might the future be? Or you could examine ethnic groups more broadly – what trends do we see among immigrant and minority communities compared to the wider society? Or even: Why does one ethnic group have a persistently high or low birth rate regardless of where they live?
- Declining fertility in men (sperm counts have declined by 50% since 1970s) – will population fall further as a result of this?
- Shrinking countries where people are emigrating or being relocated due to declining population (what will Korea or Eastern Europe look like in 2050?)
- Imagine a new world park resulting from the depopulation of a region. Where would it be? Consider all the parameters of creating such a park and explore why this site is the most likely and what would be done to make it into a park or protected area
- A war that has broken out due to demographic issues – what are they, where, why?
- Assisted Dying or reduced care for the elderly. What are the ethical, financial and cultural questions and issues around this topic? When does it become statistically significant that we are intentionally lowering our life expectancy? (esp Canada, UK, Netherlands)
- Loneliness is becoming the most common disease in aging countries– how are different societies dealing with it? Where is it at the lowest rate? Why? What lessons can we learn from them? How can we plan for a future with more elderly people?
- A hypothetical Baby boom – What is causing it? Where is it? -Covid caused reduced births in many countries, but some, including some Nordic Countries like Iceland experienced a baby boom.
- Nigeria becomes the largest country by population – What is going on there in 2050?
- Looming cultural or national extinction – what is a group doing to preserve some legacy of themselves?

Project 2.2 Media Presentation

Present a 12-minute media report on your term paper topic. Imagine it is 2050 and you are presenting this topic to a general audience. You can pick your medium – for example: a news report, a pod cast, a video blog, a documentary…
Your presentation should be engaging and informative. Visuals are strongly encouraged. You can have actors to play invited guests on your pod cast, video. You can create animations etc.

- 50% for creativity
- 50% for content