TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

PERUSALL ASSIGNMENTS
Look for exact due dates in the syllabus and on Canvas

Instructor information

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Submission

Assignments should be submitted through Perusall within Canvas. Students should develop these assignments **individually**.

Perusall 01: Population growth

– Purpose

The purpose of this assignment is to highlight the fact that we should discuss population issues using scientific theoretical framework and data to support our analysis. Students should use scientific theoretical frameworks discussed in the classroom to support their analysis and not rely on preconceptions and perceptions we might have about specific demographic subjects.

– Task

For each Perusall assignment, **your four highest quality annotations will be graded**. I recommend that you contribute more than four annotations to improve your chances of earning a good score. You should write comments distributed throughout the article or video, not only on a specific portion of the assigned material. You should also interact with other students, since a portion of your grade comes from starring in other comments and engaging in dialogues with your classmates. Your comments should be related to the topic and questions listed below.

– Topic

A consistent discussion in demographic literature is related to how rapid population growth could potentially impact natural resources, climate change, and poverty in developing countries. Some researchers emphasize the need for more improvements in agricultural production and increased concern with the environmental limitations facing a growing population. They argue that there are too many people on Earth and we would all be better off if there were fewer people on the planet. Other researchers indicate that we've overcome these challenges through a reduction in poverty, educational improvements, and the provision of food to large populations.

Based on course material, are there too many people in the world nowadays? Why? Discuss these different concerns related to population growth, transition, and evolution for current societies.

Why population composition (e.g., by age, sex, race/ethnicity, marital status, and socioeconomic status) and population changes over time are important topics for demographers?

– Main reference

Rosling, Hans. 2013. **Don't Panic: Hans Rosling Showing The Facts About Population**. Stockholm: Gapminder. (https://vimeo.com/79878808)

– Additional references

Gonchar, Michael. 2016. **Demography Is Destiny? Teaching About Cause and Effect With Global Population Trends**. New York: The New York Times. (http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2016/03/23/demography-is-destiny-teaching-about-cause-and-effect-with-global-population-trends/?_r=2)

Haberman, Clyde. 2015. **The Unrealized Horrors of Population Explosion**. New York: The New York Times Retro Report. (http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/01/us/the-unrealized-horrors-of-population-explosion.html?comments&_r=1)

Retro Report. 2015. **The Population Bomb?** New York: The New York Times. (https://nyti.ms/2jVaIqb)

Silver, Laura; Huang, Christine; Clancy, Laura. 2023. **Key facts as India surpasses China as the world's most populous country**. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center. (https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2023/02/09/key-facts-as-india-surpasses-china-as-the-worlds-most-populous-country/)

Weeks, John. 2015. **The New York Times Gets it Wrong in a Story About the Population Explosion**. Online: Weeks Population Blogspot. (http://weekspopulation.blogspot.com/2015/06/the-new-york-times-gets-it-wrong-in.html)

Weeks, John. 2016. **The New York Times Primer on Demography**. Online: Weeks Population Blogspot. (http://weekspopulation.blogspot.com/2016/03/the-new-york-times-primer-on-demography.html)

Perusall 02: Theories of demography

– Purpose

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– Topic

How are theories of demography important to explain different trends and levels of mortality, fertility, and migration? Give examples.

– Main references

Hauer, Matt. 2021. **Theories of Demography: Objection!**
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xqFsRJhgQg4)

Poston, Dudley L.; Bouvier, Leon F. 2017. **Population and Society: An Introduction to Demography**. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2nd edition. Chapter 2 (pp. 17–34).

– Additional references

American Museum of Natural History. 2016. **Human Population Through Time.**
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PUwmA3Q0_OE)

Cohen, Joel. 2012. **An Introduction to Demography (Malthus Miffed: Are People the Problem?)**. New York: Big Think. (https://youtu.be/2vr44C_G0-o)

Population Reference Bureau (PRB). 2011. **7 Billion and Counting**.
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d1dIAtvSFLM)

Perusall 03: Fertility decline

– Purpose

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– Topic

Graham (2021) aims to analyze the state of theory and explanation in contemporary demography. He focused the analysis on studies dealing with low fertility in Europe.

Discuss how the author argues that different demography conceptions and concepts to deal with fertility lead to different research approaches. How do critical theories challenge demographers to think in new ways?

Why is it important for demographers to engage with theoretical frameworks and the philosophy of social sciences? How would that approach improve explaining and understanding the demographic subject, instead of simply quantifying and describing?

– Main reference

Graham E. 2021. "Theory and explanation in demography: The case of low fertility in Europe." **Population Studies: A Journal of Demography**, 75(1): 133–155. (https://doi.org/10.1080/00324728.2021.1971742)

– Additional references

Jacobs, Andrew; Paris, Francesca. 2023. **Can China Reverse Its Population Decline? Just Ask Sweden**. New York: The New York Times. (https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/09/upshot/china-population-decline.html)

Stevenson, Alexandra; Wang, Zixu. 2024. **China Told Women to Have Babies, but Its Population Shrank Again**. New York: The New York Times. (https://www.nytimes.com/2024/01/16/business/china-birth-rate-2023.html)

Yoo S.H. 2022. "Total number of births shrinking faster than fertility rates: Fertility quantum decline and shrinking generation size in South Korea." **Asian Population Studies**, 1–22. (https://doi.org/10.1080/17441730.2022.2054090)

Perusall 04: Fertility and COVID-19

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– Topic

Based on the course material and discussions during our lectures, what do you expect will be the effect of the coronavirus pandemic on fertility trends and levels in the next few years?

You should utilize frameworks of predicting fertility and proximate determinants of fertility (available in lecture slides from Bongaarts 1978, 1982) to support your analysis. You can discuss the effects of the pandemic on different fertility indicators, such as age-specific fertility rates and total fertility rate.

– Main reference

Adelman, Sarah; Charifson, Mia; Seok, Eunsil; Mehta-Lee, Shilpi S.; Brubaker, Sara G.; Liu, Mengling; Kahn, Linda G. 2023. **State-specific fertility rate changes across the USA following the first two waves of COVID-19**. Human Reproduction, 38(6): 1202–1212. (https://doi.org/10.1093/humrep/dead055)

Perusall 05: Mortality and COVID-19

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– Topic

Based on the course material and discussions during our lectures, what do you expect will be the effect of the coronavirus pandemic on mortality trends and levels in the next few years?

You should also discuss possible effects of the pandemic on life expectancy, including contextual and broader socioeconomic and cultural effects, as well as more immediate factors.

– Main reference

Schöley J., Aburto J.M., Kashnitsky I., Kniffka M.S., Zhang L., Jaadla H., Dowd J.B., Kashyap R. 2022. "Life expectancy changes since COVID-19." **Nature Human Behaviour**, 6: 1649–1659. (https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-022-01450-3)

Perusall 06: Internal migration and COVID-19

– Purpose

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– Topic

Based on the course material and discussions during our lectures, what do you expect will be the effect of the coronavirus pandemic on internal migration trends and levels in the next few years?

– Main references

Frey, William H. 2023. **Americans' local migration reached a historic low in 2022, but long-distance moves picked up**. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution. (https://www.brookings.edu/articles/americans-local-migration-reached-a-historic-low-in-2022-but-long-distance-moves-picked-up/)

Rogers, Luke; Perry, Marc; Spell, Lindsay. 2023. **Domestic outmigration from some urban counties slowed, smaller gains in rural counties**. Washington, DC: Census Bureau. (https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2023/03/domestic-migration-trends-shifted.html)

Perusall 07: International migration and labor markets

– Purpose

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– Topic

Based on the course material, what are the major effects of immigration of low skilled workers on the U.S. labor market?

Explain whether previous public policies intended to deal with undocumented immigrants in the U.S. were based on scientific studies or general perceptions about immigration.

How previous public policies affected migration patterns and composition of the population by race/ethnicity and nativity in the United States?

Do differences between immigrants and the U.S.-born population in terms of educational attainment, labor market skills, health outcomes, crime rates, as well as other socioeconomic and demographic outcomes justify negative perception about immigrants? Why?

– Main references

Amaral, Ernesto F.L. 2024. **Lecture on International Migration**.
(https://www.ernestoamaral.com/docs/soci312-24spring/Lecture09.pdf)

Yale School of Management. 2017. **Prof. Mushfiq Mobarak: Does Immigration Create Jobs?**
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-o3xQ0B0ZMo)

Perusall 08: International migration model

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– Topic

Discuss Figure 1 of the proposal "Development of a Computer Model of International Migration to the U.S." This figure is a summary of a proposal developed by the professor to estimate models to explain international and internal migration in the United States.

– Main reference

Amaral, Ernesto F.L. 2024. **Development of a Computer Model of International Migration to the U.S.** College Station: Texas A&M University.

Perusall 09: Population distribution

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– Topic

Population is not equally distributed around the world. Spatial distribution of the population has been changing over time. This assignment helps you understand how the inhabitants of the world are distributed, as well as how most of us have become urban residents rather than rural residents.

Why is spatial distribution an essential topic to understand human populations? What are some of the consequences of population distribution? Describe some of the main ways that rural areas differ from urban areas around the world and in the U.S.

Explain the differences between population explosion and population implosion. Give examples of how these two processes are occurring simultaneously.

– Main reference

Poston, Dudley L.; Bouvier, Leon F. 2017. **Population and Society: An Introduction to Demography**. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2nd edition. Chapter 14 (pp. 365–385).