

Course Syllabus

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Population and Development in China

Common Core Course:

Course Code: UCUG1804 Credit Hours: 3

Time: Sept. 1, 2025-Dec. 5, 2025

Tuesdays: 15:00 to 17:50 Classroom: W1-101.

Catalog Description: This course aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of population growth, distribution, major demographic processes, and their relationship with economic development. Special attention is given to demographic trends and policies in China in the context of the nation's socioeconomic development.

Theme: Population and Development is an interdisciplinary field of study that examines the dynamic relationship between human population (its size, structure, distribution, and changes) and socioeconomic development.

1. Major aspects include:

- **Demographic Transition:** How shifts in birth/death rates correlate with economic growth, e.g., from high-fertility/agricultural societies to low-fertility/industrialized ones;
- **Population Growth:** Impacts on resources (food, water), environment, and infrastructure (e.g., urbanization pressures);
- **Age Structure:** Youth bulges vs. aging populations and their economic implications (e.g., labor markets, pension systems);
- **Economic and Social Development:** How they are related to population change;
- **Migration:** Rural-urban flows or international migration and development outcomes (remittances, brain drain).

2. Key Theories & Frameworks

- **Malthusian Theory:** Population growth outpaces resources ($P \propto e^{rt}$) vs. linear resource growth);
- **Demographic Dividend:** Economic growth potential when the working-age population exceeds dependents;
- **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** Links to poverty (SDG 1), health (SDG 3), and inequality (SDG 10).

3. Policy Applications

- Family planning programs (e.g., lowering fertility rates).
- Education/health investments to harness demographic dividends.
- Urban planning for megacities (e.g., housing, transport).
- Example Data (Hypothetical).

4. Interdisciplinary Links

- **Economics:** Labor supply, consumption patterns;
- **Ecology:** Carrying capacity, carbon footprints;
- **Sociology:** Gender roles, family dynamics.

Instructors:

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Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding demographic changes in China and the world- 30%;
- Learn to use basic demographic indicators and analyze trends of demographic changes- 20%;
- Apply demographic and socioeconomic theories to explain population changes and economic development in China and the world- 50%.

Competencies:

- PS02 Application of critical thinking;
- PS03 Evaluation of information and sources;
- SR03 Cultural awareness.

Evaluations:

Assessment Item	Weight
In-class test	15%


Assessment Item Weight

Final exam 52%

Written assignment 30%

Course participation 3%

Required Text:

- Charbit Y. *Population and Development Issues*. John Wiley & Sons, 2022. (Accessible online via the university library: <https://discover.hkust-gz.edu.cn/bib/99325885907626>  [.https://discover.hkust-gz.edu.cn/bib/99325885907626](https://discover.hkust-gz.edu.cn/bib/99325885907626).)


References Texts:

- Harari, Yuval Noah. *21 Lessons for the 21st Century*. Random House, 2019.
- Amartya Sen. *Development as Freedom*. Oxford University Press, 1999.

Data Sources: <https://population.un.org/wpp>

Dates	Lecture Topics	Instructors & Readings
09/02	Introduction	Lan
09/09	Population, Governance, Development, and Public Policy	Lan: Chapt. 1 The precursors; Harari.
09/16	Population and Economic Theories	Lan: Chapt. 2 Education
09/23	Population, Environment and Development (Demographic Impact on Economic Health)	Lan: Chapt. 3 Employment

		Ren:
		Chapt. 6. Poverty and Inequalities;
		葛剑雄《中国人口发展史》 11-15 章
09/30	Factors Affecting Population in China's History (Food and Disease)	何炳棣《明初以降人口及其相关问题1368-1953》 James Z. Lee and Feng Wang. <i>One Quarter of Humanity: Malthusian Mythology and Chinese Realities, 1700-2000</i> . Harvard University Press, 2001. 何炳棣《美洲作物的引进、传播及其对中国粮食的影响》
10/03	National Holiday	
10/07	National Holiday	
		Ren:
10/14	Factors Affecting Population in China's History (War and Disasters)	Chapt. 8. Migration and Remittances and Development 曹树基李玉尚《鼠疫：战争与和平中国的环境状况与社会变迁1230-1960》，山东画报出版社，2006.
10/21	1) Economic Development vs Development as Freedom. 2) In-Class Test (one hour)	Lan: Chapter 10, Population Policies; Conclusion: Is Population Really the Problem?
	How can societies balance population dynamics with equitable development?	
10/28	(For example: Nigeria's youth bulge requires job creation, while Japan's aging population needs elder care solutions, China's aging needs).	Discussion Sessions and Presentations: Chaired by Ren and Lyu
11/4	Healthy Aging: Sports Participation Among Older Adults in China	Lyu: Yang, S., Zhang, Q., Zhao, A., & Lyu, D. (2025). Social activities and different intensities of physical activity

among older adults in China: a population-based cohort study. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 13, 1530895. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2025.1530895> 
(<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2025.1530895>)

"健康老龄化背景下老年人体育发展研究". 张蕾. 中国纺织出版社有限公司. 2023-09. ISBN: 9787522911014

Xiong.

11/11 **Populations Issues in Contemporary China (1): Marriage**

Cherlin, A. J. (2004). "The deinstitutionalization of American marriage." *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 66(4), 848-861.

Xiong.

11/18 **Populations Issues in Contemporary China (2): Fertility**

Bergsvik, J., Fauske, A., & Hart, R. K. (2021). "Can policies stall the fertility fall? A systematic review of the (quasi -) experimental literature." *Population and Development Review*, 47(4), 913-964.

The Economist: "The stunning decline of the preference for having boys" (2025). <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2025/06/05/the-stunning-decline-of-the-preference-for-having-boys>

Xiong.

11/25 **Populations Issues in Contemporary China (3): Migration**

12/02 **Final Examination**

Final Examination: Lyu

Instructors:





蓝志勇教授现任国际行政科学学会 (IIAS) 学术委员会委员, 并曾于世界银行、联合国社会事务与公共管理部、经合组织 (OECD)、亚洲开发银行及中国多地政府等机构担任顾问及客座讲师。同时担任国家自然科学基金项目评审专家、“复旦管理学奖”评委, 并获得美国公共管理学会 (ASPA) 主席奖。

熊婉茹博士是香港科技大学 (广州) 社会枢纽城市治理与设计学域的助理教授。她于普林斯顿大学人口研究所获得人口学博士学位。她的研究兴趣包括生育、婚姻与家庭、人口迁移及人口预测。她的研究运用定量方法, 探讨社会人口环境与个体在迁移、婚姻、生育和居住安排等方面决策之间的动态关系。

吕东焯博士在香港科技大学（广州）教育科学学院担任通识教育基柱讲师，他于马德里康普顿斯大学应用传播系获得博士学位（CUM LAUDE）。近年来，他广泛关注社会科学领域的媒体、文化与政策，以第一/通讯作者身份在《Sport in Society》《Movimento》等国内外核心学术期刊上发表多篇文章。他鼓励学生坚持独立思考，并通过身体力行的方式深刻理解社会大变革背景下的多元文化现象。

任致均博士在香港科技大学（广州）教育科学学院担任通识教育基柱讲师，他于威斯康星大学麦迪逊分校历史系获得博士学位，并曾于首尔国立大学、复旦大学、浙江大学担任访问研究员及访问讲师。任致均博士的研究主要围绕全球史视角下的中国与亚洲互动，其多篇中英文论文、译著及书评发表于国际学术期刊。

Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
Tue Oct 28, 2025	 In-Class Reflective Test (Oct.28)	due by 4:40pm
Tue Nov 18, 2025	 Writing Assignment: Research Report or Book Review (Nov. 18)	due by 11:59pm
Tue Dec 2, 2025	 Final Exam (Dec. 2)	due by 6pm
	 Roll Call Attendance	