CALIFORNIA'S POPULATION (Seminar)

Office: Social Ecology I room 205, 949.824.6990, chew@uci.edu.
Office Hours: Tuesdays 2-3, Wednesday 2-4, and by appointment.
EEE: EEE features and uci.edu e-mail accounts will be used extensively.

What this course is about:

This course has two goals. The first goal is to understand, explore, and critique the contention, set forth in Myers's *Immigrants and Boomers*, that California's future has been thrown into jeopardy by a political reality that lags behind the state's demographic transformation. The second goal is to embark on a whirlwind population tour of the state's 58 culturally and geographically diverse counties. The prevalent images of California emanate from its major population centers. At best, these images are merely partial. At worst, they provide misleading, even pernicious models for scholarship and social policy. Our tour of the state is meant to restore balance to those images.

Students who complete this course should be able (1) to explain the importance of demographic change in California's past, present, and future; (2) to infer social narratives from demographic data; and thus (3) to use demographic data in characterizing the State's regions and communities; and finally (4) to effectively incorporate simple numeric data into narrative communication.

This course is not a formal introduction to demography but rather, emphasizes data *selection* (choices for marking important concepts), and data *interpretation* plus *communication* (how to decode them for yourself and for an audience).
Prerequisites:

(1) A curiosity about California's population that is strong enough to motivate persistence in wrangling with numeric data.
(2) You should already use a standard spreadsheet program, such as MS Excel.

Required Texts:


3. A state map (15 to 20 miles per inch) clearly showing county boundaries, roads and highways, cities, towns, and hamlets. Auto Club (AAA) maps work well.


5. U. S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov. The principal search engine for small areas is American FactFinder—from the Census Bureau home page, click on “Data.”

Invaluable Background


3. Selected episodes from California’s Gold or Visiting (Huell Howser /KCET c. 1990-2011) will be shown in seminar; many are available at the library. Web site: www.calgold.com.

Grading /Seminar Requirements:

| Student-moderated, reading-based discussion | 30 % |
| Blogs 1-4 with associated commentary and discussion | 50 % |
| Blog 5 | 20 % |
| **Total** | **100 %** |

- The principal work comprises a series of blogs that integrate (at different scales, and across a variety of locales) numeric and personal or qualitative data toward an evaluation of Myers’s thesis about the unraveling—and the potential for re-building—the “intergenerational contract.”

Individual blogs will feed into a collective enterprise wherein working groups will divide their focus among California’s dozen regions.

- **Completion of EEE’s course evaluation during 10th week is integral to seminar participation.**

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Starr, Ch.1 (Place and first people)
Starr, Ch.2 (The Spanish Colonial Era)
Starr, Ch.3 (Mexican California)
Starr, Ch.4 (Striking it rich: the establishment of an American state)
Starr, Ch.5 (Regulation, railroad, and revolution)
Starr, Ch.6 (The higher provincialism: American life in an emergent region)
Starr, Ch.7 (Creating the infrastructure of a mega-state)
Starr, Ch.8 (Labor through the Great Depression and beyond)
Starr, Ch.9 (War and peace: garrison state and suburban growth)
Starr, Ch.10 (Seeking utopia through science and technology)
Starr, Ch.11 (Art and life on the Coast of Dreams)
Starr, Ch.12 (Ecumenopolis: forging a world society)
Starr, Ch.13 (Arnold! Stewardship or squandered legacy?)

Myers, pp. 1-15 (Ch.1, Introduction)
Myers, pp. 19-35 (Ch.2, Knowing and making the future)
Myers, pp. 36-63 (Ch.3, Demographic Transition in California and the U.S.)
Myers, pp. 64-84 (Ch.4, A dismal future? Outlook in the early transition period)
Myers, pp. 85-101 (Ch.5, California turnaround: a renewed basis for optimism)
Myers, pp. 102-119 (Ch.6, Immigrant mobility: support for a more hopeful future)
Myers, pp. 123-150 (Ch. 7, The political lag during the transition)
Myers, pp. 151-176 (Ch. 8, An evolving social contract with many strands)
Myers, pp. 177-196 (Ch.9, Rediscovering the intergenerational social contract for the 21st century)
Myers, pp.199-224 (Ch.10, Growing the new skilled workforce and middle class taxpayer base)
Myers, pp. 225-245 (Ch.11, Sharing the American Dream: the linked interests of older home sellers and younger home buyers)
Myers, pp. 249-260 (Ch.12, Conclusion: steps toward building a more hopeful future)

30-Day Sunset: Unclaimed student material will be held for 30 calendar days following the final exam before recycling. Inquiries concerning exams, projects, or grades must be initiated within that 30-day period.