



Course information 2018–19

SC3160 Population and society

This course deals with the inter-relationship between the demographic characteristics of a society (fertility, mortality and migration) and their economic and social context. The causes of demographic change and their consequences are examined. The focus of the course is comparative, both across time and between developed and less developed societies. It provides an up-to-date and comprehensive account of global population trends and processes.

Aims and objectives

The objectives of the course are to:

- introduce you to key theoretical debates in population studies
- introduce you to key concepts and approaches to understanding demographic change
- describe and evaluate the substantive evidence out of which theories about population change have emerged
- describe how societies change in response to population change and vice versa.

Essential reading

For full details please refer to the reading list.

- Livi-Bacci, M. *A concise history of world population*. (Oxford: Blackwell)
- Lutz, W. *The future population of the world. What can we assume today?* (London: Earthscan)
- Rowland, D. *Demographic methods and concepts*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Trovato, F. (ed.) *Population and society: essential readings*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Learning outcomes

At the end of this course and having completed the essential reading and activities students should be able to:

- evaluate the main theoretical and empirical issues in population studies
- explain and interpret basic demographic data
- critically analyse processes of contemporary population change and their policy implications.

Assessment

This course is assessed by a three-hour unseen written examination.

Students should consult the appropriate *EMFSS Programme Regulations*, which are reviewed on an annual basis. The *Regulations* provide information on the availability of a course, where it can be placed on your programme's structure, and details of co-requisites and prerequisites.

Syllabus

This is a description of the material to be examined. On registration, students will receive a detailed subject guide which provides a framework for covering the topics in the syllabus and directions to the essential reading

This course makes use of diverse historical and theoretical perspectives to illustrate and analyse the relationships between population and society. Individual topics are addressed through a combination of theoretical understanding, knowledge of substantive processes and evidence, and policy implications.

Topics covered are:

- the relationship between population size and available resources, including an assessment of Malthusian and neo-Malthusian perspectives and their opponents;
- social, biological and economic influences on population growth rates;
- the demographic and health transitions;
- HIV/AIDS;
- fertility decline and the role of family planning programmes;
- the changing characteristics of the family;
- population ageing and its social and economic consequences;
- theories of, and trends in, migration and urbanisation.