Basics of Population Geography
Population

• The number of people within a given geographic area
Demography

• The study of population characteristics
  – Looks at spatial distributions of people by age, gender, occupation, fertility, health, etc...
Physiological Density

• The amount of people divided by the amount of arable land
  – Ex. USA is 445 per square mile, Egypt is 6,682 per square mile

• The higher the physiological density the greater the pressure the people put on the land to produce food
Agricultural Density

• Is the ratio of the number of farmers to the amount of arable land
  – USA has 2 farmers per square kilometer, China is 145 farmers per square kilometer
Overpopulation

• Refers to the over-exertion of resources given a population’s need in a specific area.
Mapping Data – Population Pyramids

Poorer Countries, 2010

Wealthier Countries, 2010
Mapping Data – Population Cartogram Map
Mapping Data – Population Density Map
The Demographic Transition Model

• Uses Crude Birth Rate and Crude Death Rate to calculate population growth at different stages of development
Thomas Malthus (1766 – 1834)

- English Economist
  - 1766-1834
  - Considered to be father of Demographics
  - Made observations of England’s working class during industrial revolution
Population vs. Resources

• For stages 1-3 resources exceed population, then as population exceed resources this leads to “misery”
* Population exceeds food supply and is kept in check by war, famine, or disease. It then drops below the food supply. As the population recovers, so the cycle continues.

* Red line is population, blue line is food production
Negative Checks

* Here, as population starts to approach the limits of the food supply, so growth slows. Malthus says this slowing is caused by delayed marriage.

* Red line is population, blue line is food production
Neo-Malthusians

2. Neo-Malthusians Robert Kaplan and Thomas Fraser expanded Malthus’ ideas to more than just food, but to also include energy resources:

- Argue wars and civil violence will increase as food, clean air, fuel, and suitable farmland become more scarce.
20th Century Thought

- Esther Boserup
  - Optimistic view of population growth
    - As population approached crisis the world would respond with assistance spawning economic growth and new technologies

- Julian Simon
  - Population growth spurs economic development
    - More people means more ideas
* Boserup argues that as the population approaches the limits of the food supply, that food supply increases as new technology improves yields.