

2020 Census Engagement Project Lesson Plan

*Lesson Plan for Engaging High School Students with the
2020 Census*

*UCLA's Asian American Studies 191C
Taught by Professor Natalie Masuoka*

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THE 2020 CENSUS

Created by UCLA's
2020 Census Engagement Project



Introduce the presentation and the importance of the Census, tying it to its importance for yourself and your students in order to demonstrate the impact of the Census in a more personal way.

Outline

1. What Is the Census?
2. Why Does the Census Matter?
3. Barriers to Overcome with the Census
4. Census Timeline
5. How to Fill out the Census
6. Resources



Ask the students how many of them know what the Census is and if any of them want to share with the class what the Census is.

What is the Census?

According to **Article 1, Section 2** of the Constitution...

"[An] Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct."



The Census is a constitutionally mandated headcount of the U.S. population that is done every 10 years by the federal government. Every person residing in the United States can and should be counted, regardless of citizenship status or country of origin.

What is the Census?

A constitutionally mandated headcount by the federal government to be taken every 10 years & counts each person living in the U.S.

The Census collects/asks for the following information:

- o Name
- o Age
- o Birth
- o Race
- o Ethnicity
- o Sex
- o Relationship to person responding
- o Number in household (even non-family)



Contrary to popular belief, you do not need to completely fill out the information within the Census. For example, you can choose to put "Person 1" instead of your full name. If you feel uncomfortable identifying your sex and/or you do not identify as the binary sexes listed, you can also choose to not answer. However, a census worker might visit your household to follow-up if needed (but this is unlikely). Also, despite what the Trump administration was attempting, there will not be a citizenship question on the 2020 Census.

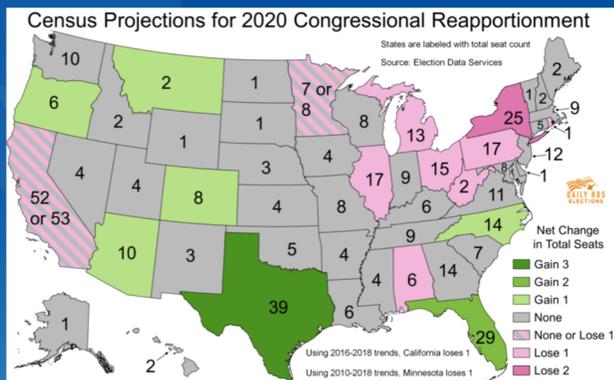
Why Does the Census Matter?

Census 2020 will determine the political power distribution until 2030

| Representation | Funding | Policy |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congressional apportionment and redistricting • State Representation in the House • 2020: California is at-risk of losing a seat in the House | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicaid • SNAP • Foster Care • Education Programs • Child Welfare Programs • Affordable Housing • Job Training • Transportation • Programs for Seniors and Veterans • Head Start • School Lunches | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public policies use Census data • Enforce laws, regulations, and policies against discrimination |



The Census is important because it determines the distribution of political power for the next decade, until 2030.



The number of seats that each state has in the House is based on the state's population, as determined by the Census count. The shape of the House districts are also impacted by the number of people counted in each area.

California is projected to lose a seat in the House after the 2020 census. This means that our state will likely have one fewer vote in the House for the next 10 years.

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Based upon Census information, approximately \$883 billion of federal funds are distributed nationally each year. These funds go toward crucial social programs, such as Medicaid, affordable housing, education, and public transportation.

In general, the information collected by the Census determines the distribution of funding and resources.



More importantly, the Census impacts educational funding allocations, such as school lunches and Title I.

For example, if you're throwing a party, you want to get an accurate count of who's coming in order to provide the right amount of food, seats at the table, and other planning details. If you fail to count everyone, some people will not get to eat or participate in the activities.

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Census responses help create statistics about particular groups, especially race and ethnicity. This helps federal agencies monitor compliance with anti-discrimination provisions, such as those in the Voting Rights Act (VRA) and the Civil Rights Act.

Policy Example: Voting Rights Act of 1965



For example, the VRA prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or membership in a language minority group. Race and ethnicity data available for the American Community Survey (the modern Census long-form), as well as data from the Census we all fill out. Also, if enough people are identified as being part of a language minority (which would hinder political participation), the VRA requires election materials in those languages.

Barriers to Overcome

- 2020 Specific:
 - Digital Literacy
 - Internet Access
 - Linguistic Access
- Confidentiality
- Census undercount
 - Hard-to-Count Populations



This year is the first time that the Census is available online. However, the Census online form creates challenges for communities with little-to-no internet access and those who are more likely to have digital literacy issues. Another barrier to overcome is linguistic access. About 54% of Los Angeles speaks a language other than English at home. An additional barrier is overall distrust in government, which includes fear and anxiety about the confidentiality of the Census. For example, some people are afraid that because they have to record the number of people in their household, Census workers will release that information to their landlords. However, all the information provided in the Census is completely confidential and protected, because of laws such as Title 13 (which guarantees your information will be kept confidential and cannot be used against you in any way), and extensive cyber-security protections. Additionally, there are certain groups within the population that are at risk of being undercounted. These sociodemographic and other groups are considered “hard-to-count.”

Hard-to-Count Populations

- Young children
- College students
- Highly mobile persons
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- Non-English speakers
- Low-income persons
- Persons experiencing homelessness
- Undocumented immigrants
- LGBTQ persons
- Persons with mental or physical disabilities
- Persons living in non-traditional housing



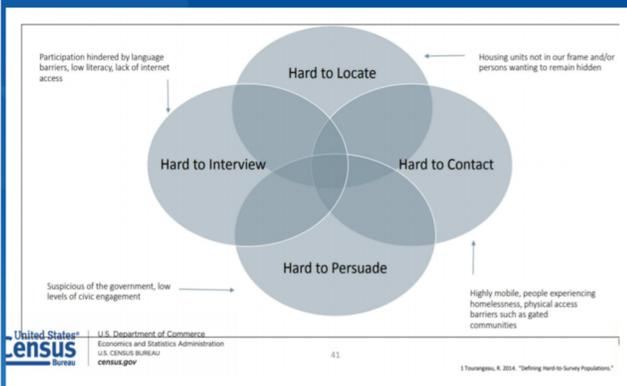
These populations are considered to be “hard-to-count,” meaning that they are traditionally undercounted when the Census is totaled. The students will discuss why they think some of these groups may be hard to count in the next slide. Emphasize the importance of counting these communities (particularly people of color) on the census, as these marginalized groups are the ones that need the resources census data provides, yet they tend to have the lowest count rates.

Think, Pair, Share

Why wouldn't these populations be willing or able to participate in the Census? What makes them hard-to-count?

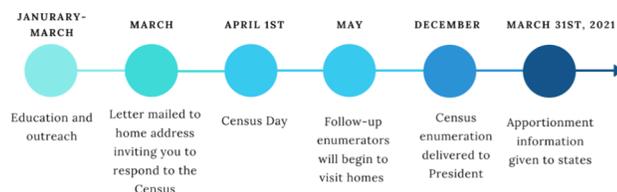


Have the students partner up and come up with potential reasons and debrief their answers as a large group. After reading this question aloud, go back to the previous slide to allow students to view the hard-to-count list while talking with their partners.



Go through each "hard to" group, explain the potential reasons why (as indicated on the slide), connecting them to examples of hard-to-count populations. Also, emphasize the overlap in these and the fact that while these groups are deemed "hard to count," they are paramount to an accurate count and should not be brushed aside because of this designation.

Census Timeline



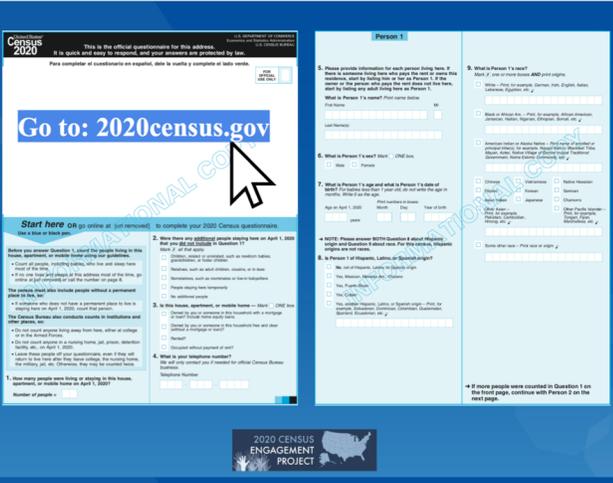
The period between January and March 2020 is for education and outreach efforts to share the importance of the Census. In March, letters with special links and codes associated with the address will be mailed to residences to invite households to participate in the Census. If you lose the code, you can still fill out the Census online without one. The initial letter will be followed by several reminder letters. The Census Bureau predicts the form to take a maximum of 10 minutes. April 1st is the official Census Day, so expect lots of advertising around this date. Despite the emphasis on this day, you can fill out the Census starting mid-March and after April 1st. In May, if you haven't responded online or over phone, enumerators (official Bureau staff) will follow up. People will only receive paper forms from enumerators if they have not self-respond. However, it is highly encouraged that people fill out the Census before May because of limited physical forms. There is a specific concern with the limited number of printed forms in LA County.

Where do I fill out the Census?

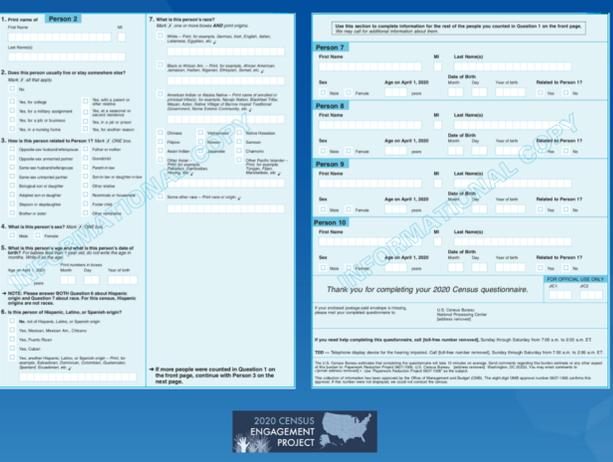
- Self-Response Period (starts in March)
 - Invitation to respond mailed out
 - Internet: 2020census.gov
 - Phone available in 12 languages
- Census Action Kiosks
 - Public spaces, like libraries, city hall, recreation and park centers, etc.
- Non-response Follow-Up Period (starts in May)
 - Mail/Paper Form
 - Census Enumerators



As mentioned before, there is a self-response period starting in March where people can fill out the Census online or over the phone. This is expected to take at most 10 minutes, please emphasize that filling out the Census is EASY and fast. For both those options, the Bureau has 12 language options. The paper forms are only available in English and Spanish only. In addition, Census Action Kiosks are available in public spaces with at least one computer or tablet with internet access for residents to comfortably and securely fill out the Census questionnaire online. Some City of LA locations include: Libraries, City Hall, Recreation and Park Centers, Work Source/Youth Source Centers, and the Department on Disability Office. Again, there will be letter reminders and enumerators who will follow-up with paper forms in-person.



Notes on the questions on the Census:
 They can be honest with how many people live their as of April 1st, this information will not be shared. They can put “Person 1” instead of their name if they feel uncomfortable. The Census only has “male” or “female” boxes for sex, use this to start a conversation about the institutionalization of the gender binary if you would like. Emphasize that you can also mark one or more boxes for the race question.



This slide shows the same question for “Person 2,” which would be the same for each following person on the Census. The only new additional question is, “How is this person related to Person 1?”

What can YOU do?

1. **Fill out the Census** for your household or ensure someone in your household fills it out 
2. **Tell others** about the importance of the Census & encourage participation
 - o Be the “Trusted Messenger”
 - o Be an advocate for yourself and your community
 - o Incorporate information into community events
3. **Speak on issues or concerns** that the Census will impact that your intended audience will care about
 - o Frame the Census as relevant and impact on their everyday life
4. Let community members know ways they can get **language assistance**
5. **Volunteer** for organizations providing questionnaire assistance



The main reason for this presentation is not only to educate you about what the census is, but also to empower you to spread this message. Tell community members about ways to get language assistance, including volunteers with local organizations who offer more diverse language assistance for the 2020 Census. You can also volunteer to be a Census Ambassador for LA County or be an enumerator (a paid opportunity with the Census Bureau) if you’re 18 years or older.

Myth or Fact?

The Census will include a question about citizenship.

MYTH: Despite the current administration's attempts, there will be no question asking about citizenship status and undocumented and other non-citizen residents should still complete the Census.



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Myth or Fact?

The Census will never ask for donations, credit card information, or social security number.

FACT: The Census will not ask for any of these. You can also verify Census workers are legitimate through the Census Bureau's website.



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Myth or Fact?

If you fill out the census, any government agency and your landlord will have access to your personal information.

MYTH: Only aggregate (not personal) level data is released to other government institutions - it is illegal for any Census Employee to share any personal data.



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Myth or Fact?

The person filling out the Census is required to write down each individual's full name on the form.

MYTH: You can actually just put "Person 1, Person 2, etc." if you are concerned about privacy.



MYTH: You can put "Person 1, Person 2, etc." instead of providing your full name if you are concerned about privacy.

Myth or Fact?

You can use a cross street if you don't have a current street address.

FACT: Also, if you have moved recently use the address you lived in on April 1st.



FACT: It is not required to specify a particular address; inputting a cross-street is acceptable. Also, if you have moved recently, you should use the address you lived in on April 1st.

Census Resources

- [Census.LACity.org](https://www.census.lacity.org)
 - Social media toolkit
- [CountUsIn2020.org](https://www.CountUsIn2020.org)
- [2020CensusEngagement.org](https://www.2020CensusEngagement.org)
 - Other UCLA campaigns: high schools, college students, LGBTQ folks, community colleges, first-generation and undocumented students
- **Census Goodwill Ambassador program** (for 18+)
 - City of LA recruit volunteers to assist with outreach [census.lacity.org/outreach-resources/volunteer](https://www.census.lacity.org/outreach-resources/volunteer)
- Finding a location to **host a community event** for 25+ people contact Mayor.LAcensus2020@lacity.org



Census.LACity.org is the Los Angeles City Census website, and it provides community news regarding the Census. CountUSIn2020.org is the Census website from Asian Americans Advancing Justice organization. They have blogs about how to engage specific Hard-to-Count communities, fact sheets in various Asian languages, webinars, and podcasts. 2020CensusEngagement.org is the website for an undergraduate class about the 2020 Census. It includes additional resources for various projects specific to certain populations. The Census Goodwill Ambassador Program, put on by the LA Mayor's Office, is a program that trains community volunteers to engage in Census outreach efforts in the local community.

I'M COUNTING

- MYSELF
- MY LOVED ONES
- _____

**ON THE
2020 CENSUS**

NAME _____



REMEMBER TO

- TELL YOUR FRIENDS & FAMILY
- SHARE WHAT YOU LEARNED TODAY
- FILL OUT THE CENSUS: www.2020census.gov



additional resources:
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**CENSUS DAY:
APRIL 1ST**



These are pledge cards, which you can access on the UCLA Census class page on [2020censusengagement.org](https://www.2020censusengagement.org) (under the second generation project) or at the end of this lesson plan. On the left card, have your students write a person or community they are going to tell about the Census and their name on the pledge card (left), and give them the return card to take home (right). You can also hang the cards with extras to encourage others to pledge!

Example discussion questions for your students to discuss with each other or their families

- 1) Why is the Census important to me and my loved ones?
- 2) How do I fill out the Census?
- 3) Who should I share this information with?
- 4) What are some common fears around the Census and how can I overcome them?

How does presenting this to your high school class particularly impact second generation immigrants, since that is our goal population?

This presentation is applicable to all high school students; however, we especially wanted to reach second generation immigrants, since they are the students who tend to be the political messengers for their parents and families to start these conversations. We wanted to work with teachers because often they are trusted messengers within their communities and students can take these messages home too.

I'M COUNTING



MYSELF



MY LOVED ONES



I'M COUNTING



MYSELF



MY LOVED ONES



ON THE 2020 CENSUS



NAME

United States[®]
Census
2020

ON THE 2020 CENSUS



NAME

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Census
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I'M COUNTING



MYSELF



MY LOVED ONES



I'M COUNTING



MYSELF



MY LOVED ONES



ON THE 2020 CENSUS



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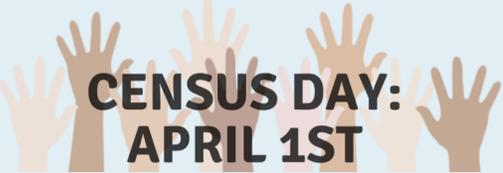
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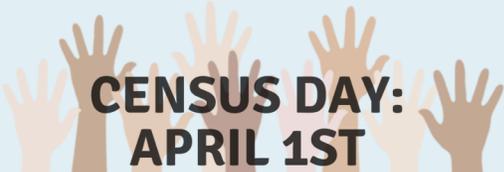
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