

Demographer studies the fastest growing state

# Texas population predicted to surpass N.Y.

by Tom Dobrez

**Battalion Reporter**  
If recent population trends continue, it won't be long before Texas passes New York and becomes the second largest state in the country, a demographer at Texas A&M University says.

Dr. R.L. Skrabanek, sociological professor here since 1949,

says, "It is a sure bet Texas will pass New York in total number of people before 1990."

Texas, the nation's fastest growing state, has grown from the sixth largest state in 1960 to third in 1982.

Skrabanek, who has written close to 200 articles on population, said the main reason of

growth is migration from other states. Texas is experiencing growth comparable to that of California in the 1960s, he said.

According to the 1980 Census, Texas added 3 million people to its total population during the 1970s. Of this number, 1.8 million had migrated from other states. The other 1.2 million is attributed to immigration and more births than deaths, Skrabanek said. On the whole, the '70s migration accounted for 60 percent of the total population increase.

The 1970 figures show a bigger population increase than the decade before. During the 1960s, Texas' total population increased by 1.6 million people. This accounted for only 21,000

new residents, 13 percent of whom migrated from other states.

Estimates released by the Bureau of Census on the 1980 population trends show little or no decline in Texas' growth, Skrabanek said. In the fifteen-month period between May 1980 to July 1981, Texas added over 500,000 people to its population. Skrabanek said that so far in the '80s, Texas has added more people than all 22 Northern states combined.

Skrabanek said that Texas' current rate of increase combined with New York's decrease in the '70s will mean Texas' population will exceed New York's in a matter of a few years. As of July 1, 1981, Texas' popu-

lation was 14.8 million people while New York reported 17.6 million. The nation's population leader is California with 24.2 million people.

But Texas' total numbers aren't the only census statistic showing a significant change, Skrabanek said. The average age of persons living in Texas has increased in the past 80 years. In 1900, the median age of Texans was 19, but now the average is 28.2. Skrabanek said this is due to the decrease in the number of births between the years 1961 and 1976, and the increase in life expectancy. The national average age is 30.

Skrabanek said although the number of families has remained constant, the size of the

family has decreased in Texas and across the nation.

Another area of significant change in population demographics lies in the ratio of females to males. In 1870, there were 115 males for every 100 females. But today, there are 97 males to every 100 females. Texas figures are very close to the nation's figures on male to female ratios. Skrabanek said there are more females than males in America and Texas because the life expectancy gap between men and women has increased. On the average, women live eight years longer than men. The gap was only two years at the beginning of the century.

The 1980 Census also revealed significant data concern-

ing population distribution. For the first time since 1930, the number of people living in rural areas across the country has not decreased. In Texas, rural population has increased. Skrabanek said that for the first time in many years, the rural areas of the state are sharing in the population growth as well as the cities.

Even though Texas is experiencing rapid growth in both rural and city areas, Skrabanek said he doesn't see it becoming the nation's population leader. "California continues to increase at a rate comparable to Texas and its big lead in numbers makes it hard for me to see Texas surpassing California in my lifetime," he said.

## Aggie study group plans Austin trip

by Connie Edelman

**Battalion Reporter**  
Texas A&M University's Student Government Legislative Study Group and other student leaders will be traveling to Austin Tuesday, the day of the general election.

As part of the trip, sponsored by the Association of Former Students, the group will be attending the winning candidates' victory celebrations.

The group, formed last year by the Student Senate, was created to help represent Texas A&M's interests in state government.

Student leaders Mike Lawshe and Fred Billings said that the

group wants the University to have an impact on state legislation and needs students to help do it.

Lawshe, the director of the legislative group, said they work closely with the student body, Texas A&M administration, the Association of Former Students and — they hope — the Legislature.

The group plans to gather information and do research on upcoming bills concerning higher education, faculty raises and tenure, a possible tuition increase and the possibility of a student serving on the Texas A&M System Board of Regents.

## University on way to United Way goal

by Angie Kerr

**Battalion Reporter**  
With one week of fundraising to go, Texas A&M University is halfway to its \$100,000 United Way goal.

Dr. Malon Southerland, assistant vice president for student services, said the University would reach its goal.

"I feel that we have had a very outstanding beginning and middle period to the campaign," he said. "The key to any drive of this nature will be the concluding efforts by all of those that are assisting, and in particular, the individuals who are making plans to participate and make a gift."

So far, Texas A&M has collected \$51,260.23. Employees have been surprisingly generous, Southerland said. The College of Business Administration

employees pledged \$8,245 — a \$26 per capita gift. And 142 employees in the division of Student Services have given \$3,537.12 — a \$11.23 per capita pledge.

Athletic Department employees have given \$1,078.50 — a per capita pledge of \$9.80.

The Residence Hall Association raised \$385 at their annual "Almost Anything Goes" competition on Oct. 14. Several dorms have been collecting change as well.

Mosher Hall raised \$760 from dorm fundraisers, including car washes and slave sales.

RHA President Stacy Graf said she's delighted with the dorms' response.

"With just a little encouragement from RHA the individual dorms just ran away with it," she said.

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