**Chapter Exercises**

**Chapter 17: Population, Urbanization, and the Environment**

1. Read carefully through the arguments of Malthus, Simon, and Marx in this chapter. Divide the class into groups, assign one of the thinkers to each group, and prepare a discussion on the problems and prospects of global population growth. Consider the following questions (and add some of your own): *What are the benefits and consequences of continued growth of the global population? Can these thinkers shed light on the unevenness of global population growth today? Should growth or the unequal division of resources globally be of greater concern for countries and communities? What effect would a more equitable division of resources have on population growth?*

2. In this chapter, we talked about contemporary problems of e-waste and its safe disposal. Ask a sample of friends or family how they decide when to replace an “old” mobile phone or personal computer. Ask them as well what they did with the old device or what plans they have for the device. Does your sample offer any insight into the problem of e-waste? Does it offer any ideas for solutions to the problem?

3. Take a tour of your nearest grocery store. Walk through the store and look at the packaging of the food and note in what country it was produced and manufactured. Pay particular attention to the origins of such perishable items as fruits, vegetables, and fresh seafood and meat. How many different countries are involved in the production of the food available to you in the grocery store? Are these countries wealthier or poorer countries? What do you think the social and environmental costs and benefits are of creating this global system of food production?

4. Form two groups with your classmates and prepare a debate about the societal impact of undergoing the second demographic transition. Have one group of students debate from the functionalist perspective, arguing about the impact of the second demographic transition on social solidarity and order. Have the other group of students argue from the conflict perspective, arguing about the impact of the second demographic transition on systems of power and equality. Do the perspectives agree or disagree on the positive or negative consequences of such a transition? Do they think society would ultimately benefit or suffer as a result of this demographic shift?