

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
School of Continuing Studies
Liberal Studies Program

Spring 2010

BLHS 285

**INTRODUCTION TO URBAN ANALYSIS AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT**

Wednesdays, 6:15 pm - 8:55 pm

Intercultural Center 118

Professor Joseph M. Palacios
Ph.D. Sociology, UC Berkeley
E-Mail: jmp32@georgetown.edu
202-905-7340

Office Hours: By appointment before or after class

OVERVIEW AND GOALS OF THE COURSE:

In this course we introduce urban analysis and community development by exploring key concepts, themes, and perspectives used in this field. The course is designed to combine both classroom learning and active learning that enables students to experience the city and apply the course materials to the city to enhance student learning. A set of urban experiences is employed to guide students through a series of urban interactions that will help introduce students to the underlying structures that shape social interactions. The city will be the context through which students will be able to test the concepts, theories, and findings presented in the course readings and lectures. The purpose is to become acquainted with urban analysis and community development as an interdisciplinary academic field that helps improve the lives of people living in cities and, in the long run, the students' own lives and their communities.

The primary learning goals for the course include:

- To improve your understanding of the social organization of the city;
 - To introduce you to the diversity and variable living conditions that exist in the city;
 - To provide you with some theoretical tools to help you understand urban development and change;
 - To provide you with the conceptual tools to help you to understand the effects of urban social structures on influencing life chances, particularly those that hinder opportunities for the poor and marginalized;
 - To introduce you to community organizations that promote social justice;
 - To develop your sense of agency through applying conceptual tools and research methods to contribute to social change;
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- To provide you with safe, challenging experiences that enable you to become more confident city dwellers and more effective advocates for social change;
- To further your commitment to social justice by providing you with a rewarding experience based on your contributions to and/or analysis of such endeavors.

The course begins with an overview of the development of U.S. cities and the structural roots of urban problems. We then move to an examination of the growth and development of cities and some of the classical theories of the city. We next focus on the problems of the poor and minorities in urban areas. Then we turn to how these communities have worked to organize and overcome these structural forces to empower themselves and alter their opportunities. Next, we turn to specific urban problems, such as transportation and congestion, housing and urban decay, and urban street life. We examine urban political systems to learn more about the challenges and opportunities for local politics to address these problems. We then employ a comparative perspective, to examine urban issues in a global context. We complete our survey of urban challenges and opportunities with group reports on the progress and impacts of our collaborative work this semester.

Course Requirements and Expectations

Requirements: Grades for the course will be based on class participation, a mid-term exam, a second exam near the end of the course, four reading summaries (2-3 pages each), and a group or individual project report and presentation based on the second exam. The participation grade will be based on class attendance, participation in class discussion, and the quality of your substantive contributions to classroom discussions (10%). Exams will each count for 30 percent of the course grade. All students will take the same exams and the materials to be tested on will be taken from the course readings and class assignments. The exams will be take homes and they will be adequately discussed in class to prepare for them. The following chart summarizes the grading scheme for the course:

Course component	
Participation: includes attendance, participation, and quality contributions to class discussion	10 %
Midterm: based on readings and class presentations	30%
Second exam: based on readings and class presentations	30%
Discussion Notes:	5% each * 4 = 20%
Project Presentations based on	10 %

Readings: The readings assigned below are required. There will be other materials, such as Blackboard reserve articles and handouts, assigned as well. You should complete the reading assignments PRIOR to the class for which they are assigned and come to class

prepared to discuss and apply the readings. The required texts for the course, available at the bookstore, are:

Lin, Jan and Christopher Mele. 2005. *The Urban Sociology Reader*. New York: Routledge.

Wilson, William J. 2009. *More Than Just Race: Being Black and Poor in the Inner City*. New York: Norton & Company.

Other Expectations: In order to maximize the opportunity for everyone to learn, and in the interest of fairness to everyone (each student, the teaching assistant, community partners, the instructors), I present here a set of expectations about classroom and course behavior. Please let me know if you believe any of these to be unreasonable and we can discuss them further. Some of these expectations are matters of simple courtesy, such as turning off cell phones and other potentially disruptive devices upon entering the classroom; and showing up on time and being prepared to start when the class is scheduled to start. Other policies, such as the make-up exam and late paper policies below, are designed to maintain fairness and equity among students and to not create unreasonable additional burdens for me.

Conducive classroom learning environment: Please arrive in the classroom and be prepared to begin on time. Please turn off your cell phone, pagers and other electronic devices. Please use proper, civil, respectful language when addressing others (students, instructors, outside guests) in the classroom. Please listen to one another first, in order to understand the other's perspective, before trying to rebut or refute the other. Remember, we are all learners, with something to gain from the class, **and** we are all teachers, sharing our experiences and insights with others.

We will be using Blackboard and e-mail in the course to facilitate communications. It is your responsibility to check the course postings in Blackboard and your e-mail regularly. Please be sure that your Georgetown netid account is working properly and that you are using it, or forwarding your email appropriately to another account that you use regularly. I am not able to accommodate problems that you have with your GU email account—or send messages to you through another account—as your netid is the only address that Blackboard can access.

Students will be working in groups to undertake some of the work for this course. Group dynamics can be challenging at times, but it is nevertheless important that you learn how to operate effectively in groups. This means that each person has to be responsible and accountable to the whole group. It requires a clear discussion of how responsibilities are to be divided up, products to be produced, deadlines set for producing materials, and how information will be shared and integrated into a final product. Developing the communication and interpersonal skills, as well as the conflict resolution and mediation skills, to operate effectively in groups is an important secondary goal for the course, as this is a critical life skill that you will need to function effectively in most work settings.

Below is a tentative list of assignments. Please note that these are subject to change, either through class or email announcements or Blackboard postings.

WEEK **TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

#1 20 Jan	Introduction and course overview
#2 27 Jan	CONTEXT OF COURSE: Read Chapters 1 and 2 of <i>More Than Just Race</i>
#3 3 Feb	CONTEXT OF COURSE: Read Chapters 3, 4 and 5 of <i>More Than Just Race</i>
#4 10 10 Feb	Urbanism And Community Read and discuss TEXT: Part 1: 1. Introduction 2. Community and Society Ferdinand Tonnies 3. The Metropolis and Mental Life Georg Simmel 4. Urbanism as a Way of Life Louis Wirth 5. Urbanism and Suburbanism as Ways of Life: A Reevaluation of Definitions Herbert Gan 6. Theories of Urbanism Claude Fischer (pages 7-58)
#5 17 Feb	The Form and Function of Cities Read and discuss TEXT: 7. Introduction 8. Human Ecology, Robert Park 9. The Growth of the City: An Introduction to a Research Project, Ernest Burgess 10. The Natural Areas of a City, Harvey Zorbaugh 11. Sentiment and Symbolism as Ecological Variables, Walter Firey 12. The City as a Growth Machine, John Logan and Harvey Molotch 13. Los Angeles and the Chicago School: Invitation to a Debate, Michael Dear (pages 59-116)
#6 24 Feb	Inequality and Social Difference 14. Introduction 15. The Cost of Racial and Class Exclusion in the Inner City, Loic J. D. Wacquant and William Julius Wilson 16. Segregation and the Making of the Underclass, Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton 17. Urban Outcasts: Stigma and Division in the Black American Ghetto and the French Urban Periphery, Loic J. D. Wacquant 18. The Immigrant Enclave: Theory and Empirical Examples, Alejandro Portes and Robert D. Manning 19. Men Without Property: The Tramp's Classification and Use of Urban Space, James Duncan (pages 117-172)
#7 3 March	MIDTERM REVIEW WILL BE DISCUSSED AND HANDED OUT
SPRING BREAK: 6-15 March	
#8 17 March	Gender And Sexuality 20. Introduction 21. City Spatial Structure, Women's Household Work, and National Urban Policy, Ann R. Markusen 22. 'Race', Space, and Power: The Survival Strategies of Working Poor Women. Melissa R. Gilbert 23. Gender and Space: Lesbians and Gay

	Men in the City, Sy Adler and Johanna Brenner 24. Freeing South Africa: The 'Modernization' of Male-Male Sexuality in Soweto, Donald L. Donham (pages 173-218)
#9 24 March	MIDTERM EXAM DUE IN CLASS Globalization and Urban Change 25. Introduction 26. The World City Hypothesis, John Friedmann 27. The Urban Impact of Economic Globalization, Saskia Sassen 28. Power in Place: Retheorizing the Local and the Global, Michael Peter Smith 29. City Life: West African Communities in New York, Paul Stoller and Jasmin Tahmaseb McConath 30. Globalization and the Revalorizing of Ethnic Places in Immigration Gateway Cities, Jan Lin (pages 219-274)
EASTER BREAK: 31 March - 5 April (No class due to travel plans)	
#10 7 April	Culture and the Urban Economy 31. Introduction 32. Whose Culture? Whose City? Sharon Zukin 33. Cities and the Creative Class Richard Florida 34. Looking at Themed Environments Mark Gottdiener 35. Globalization, Culture and Neighborhood Change Christopher Mele (pages 275-316)
#11 14 April	Urban Exclusion and Social Resistance 36. Introduction 37. Chinatown, Part Two?: The 'Internationalization' of Downtown Los Angeles Mike Davis 38. Fortified Enclaves: The New Urban Segregation Teresa P. R. Caldeira 39. Urban Social Movements - Local Thematics, Global Spaces Pierre Hamel, Henri Lustiger-Thaler and Margit Mayer 40. Glocalizing Protest: Urban Conflicts and Global Social Movements Betina Kohler and Markus Wissen (pages 317-354)
#12 21 April	COURSE REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF FINAL EXAM
#13 28 April LAST CLASS	FINAL EXAM DUE IN CLASS PROJECT PRESENTATIONS