

PLANNING AND POLICIES FOR THE CONTEMPORARY URBAN COMMUNITY

URBS 201.00

Spring 2008: Monday 10:10 – 12:40 (HW 1640)

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Office Hours by appointment

The Hunter catalog describes URBS 201 as “Exposure to human and institutional consequences of economic, social, and political forces confronting metropolitan America. Review of activities of public and private agencies dealing with urban problems”. Said another way, this class will explore the extensive and fascinating complexity of factors which shape the contemporary urban landscape - both physical and social. We will use this knowledge the focus on the challenges and issues that policy makers and planners must face as they attempt to work within such complicated contexts.

We will start with a broad historical and theoretical overview and work in towards a more fine-grained understanding. The first sections address the policy contexts of macro-structural changes such as deindustrialization, decentralization, and so called “globalization” that have resulted in uneven waves of urban transformation over the last several decades. From this point, the course will move on to focus in on specific areas of public policy such as spatial inequality, crime, environment, health, and public welfare. Attention will be given to the way in which a specific policy might succeed or fail as a result of its relationship to those complex macro and micro structures. The course will end by looking at a few actually existing policy proposals.

Throughout the course, there is a strong social justice undercurrent which critiques the ways that power and inequality take place in the contemporary city. Cities and policies are abstractly fascinating, but they are filled with real people living real lives which deserve careful and humane attention. The course seeks to challenge and deepen our understanding of the relationship between the local and the global.

All of these things come together to shape cities in very complex ways. You will have a lot of information thrown at you in this course, and the assignment structure ultimately allows you to focus on the themes that interest you and work out exactly how you think it all fits together.

REQUIREMENTS: The class consists of lectures and discussions. I am happy to lecture the whole time, but I think it would be best for all of us if we discuss as often as possible. That part is up to you – I urge you to come ready to provoke discussion, to interrupt me and share your experiences of the city and ask questions. To fully participate, you will have to closely read the relevant articles prior to arriving in class.

Assignments/Points:

25% = Class Participation + 4 reaction papers, posted at the end of each section in the course discussion/communication forum of Black Board

30% = Two short (no more than 3 pages) written assignments (each worth 15%)

15% = Three short-answer pop quizzes (each worth 5%)

30% = Final Paper

The course content is challenging. Some of the readings are dense and confusing, but filled with interesting concepts if you are willing to work them out. The course is also writing intensive, which means you will have to take writing very seriously in order to succeed. However, it is my job to make things clear and bring the concepts together. We are in that together. I promise not to be mean, I am happy to answer questions at any time, and I do not grade on a curve. The main goal here is not to make you behave or perform, but to help you learn.

There are some rules. Class participation is a big part of your grade, and make-ups for pop quizzes will not be given. You have to come to class. All papers must be typewritten (word-processed), double-spaced in standard format with a font size of 12. The short assignments can be no longer than 3 pages in length and the final paper has a ten page limit. Everything you turn in should be carefully edited to say exactly what you mean, as clearly as possible, in a way that showcases your best thinking. I can't say this enough. I am always happy to answer questions or read drafts.

Avoid late papers. Late assignments will be marked down 10% per day. A semester's grade may be lowered for tardiness, unexcused absences, or disruptive behavior. Plagiarism - presenting ideas and words without acknowledging their source - will bring a heap of trouble. Do not try it.

If you have any needs or need any resources that I should be aware of to enhance your educational experience, please let me know.

ASSIGNMENTS:

(In general, something to keep in mind: If you are wise, you will find a way to make all of these assignments relate to each other in a modular way, so that you are not faced with having to write a completely new paper from scratch at the end of term. That being said, term papers that appear to be made up of different pre-constructed chunks which do not fit well together will not receive top scores. Think ahead, think about how everything you read might fit into the ideas you are developing, work hard at the writing early and often, and edit profusely.)

Reaction Papers (4)

Due at the end of each section – posted in the Blackboard forums on the course site

Should be around 600 words each

4 points each

These are meant to be think pieces which help you digest and synthesize things as we move along. You need not cite or quote anything, but I will be looking for some kind of critical engagement with specific ideas and concepts from class, explored within the context of the course themes. These write-ups are short and more personal, but should still be written and edited to a high standard.

Short Written Assignments (2)

Each 3 pages (roughly 900 words) – 15 points each

#1) “Review Report” due March 10th

Pick one reading from class that you think is interesting. Summarize it, and take it apart critically. What is the main argument? What does the author add to our knowledge of the city? What are the implications of what the author is saying? Is the argument convincing? How good is the author’s writing? Does the author have a hidden (or explicit) agenda? What does the author do well? Are there key questions left unanswered or important new questions that are opened up?

#2) “Weaving Connections” due April 28th

Pick two readings from class (both different from the one used for written assignment #1). Briefly summarize each article and compare and contrast them. Analyzing how thoroughly they deal with their subject matter. In what ways do they address core themes – i.e. challenges and consequences of policy making as it is lived by real people, social justice, coming to terms with complex relationships between places and structures that connect scales (local, regional, global etc.).

Short assignments will be graded on the following criteria (which are all essential elements of a strong paper):

- 4 Points: **How well are your articles explained** and put into context? What are the arguments in each article? Where did they come from and why? What problems were the articles created to deal with?
- 5 Points: **Overall clarity and logical consistency** your argument. Does your paper follow an effective analytical-rhetorical format (state the goal, summarize, critique, conclude)? In the end, does it feel like you did what you said you were going to do in the beginning?
- 2 Points: **Critique:** Does your paper work to effectively and critically engage the article(s) and critique or affirm the authors central arguments based on your ideas and things we have learned in class?
- 2 Points: **Craft of writing:** Does the paper flow smoothly? Do new ideas appear to come out of nowhere or are they carefully situated? How well are the sources integrated into the writing? Does the paper move forward by way of block quotes and arguments introduced one after the other, or does the author attempt to paraphrase, summarize, and critique arguments from each source and weave them together so they are in fluid dialogue with each other while building up the overall argument.
- 2 Points: **Details:** grammar, punctuation, spelling, formatting, and overall quality of writing

Final Paper

No more than 10 pages (3,200 words)

30 points – Due May 20th

The final paper will require you to take ideas and concepts from class and previous assignments and put them together to make a convincing argument. The core expectation is that you will take a specific policy or relevant urban phenomenon that is discussed somewhere in the readings, explain what is and where it came from, and make a passionate, informed argument about some of its consequences. If you choose to start with a policy, it should be explained within the context of at least one phenomenon which explains why that policy was brought into being. If you choose to start with a phenomenon, it should be explained in reference to at least one policy that was created in response. While this means you have a wide variety of choices about potential topics and methods of building arguments, the paper should follow a clear structure.

Examples of policies include: welfare reform, housing subsidies, transportation plans, specific approaches to policing, regional development plans, special business districts, etc. Examples of phenomena include: deindustrialization, “globalization”, segregation, income inequality, sprawl, urbanization, etc.

I would like to see at least five sources cited from the readings we have looked at in class. In addition to this basic requirement, I encourage you to include outside readings, but it is by no means required.

Points will be awarded according to the following criteria:

5 Points: **How well is your policy or phenomenon explained** and put into context? Why is it important to think about this? Where did it come from and why? What policy problems did this phenomenon create/what phenomenon was this policy created to deal with?

10 Points: **Overall clarity and logical consistency** of argument. Does your paper clearly state and then steadily and convincingly develop a central argument? Does it employ a recognizable and effective structure in order to do so? In the end, does it feel like you did what you said you were going to do in the beginning?

5 Points: **Relevance:** How well does the paper capture and address the overall themes of the class (as indicated in the summary at beginning of the syllabus)?

5 Points: **Craft of writing:** Does the paper flow smoothly? Do new ideas appear to come out of nowhere or are they carefully situated? How well are the sources integrated into the writing? Does the paper move forward by way of block quotes and arguments introduced one after the other, or does the author attempt to paraphrase, summarize, and critique arguments from each source and weave them together so they are in dialogue with each other and the argument.

5 Points: **Details:** grammar, punctuation, spelling, formatting, and overall quality of writing

Here are a few ideas about possible structures: Contrast and compare two or three different urban policies within the context of the phenomenon they were meant to deal with; Deeply situate one policy within its broader socio-economic and historical context; Look deeply at one phenomenon and argue whether policy attempts to deal with it have been successful or not; Take two or three different phenomena, explain how they might be inter-related, and discuss some of the policy implications.

Some writing tips:

1. Generally avoid use of the first person singular, "I" or the familiar you, unless you are deliberately experimenting with a qualitative narrative or basing part of your argument on a structured personal experience (talk to me if you want to learn more about that).
2. Avoid the use of colloquialisms e.g., "a lot of," "got to be." Avoid cliches, e.g., "life is a bowl of cherries," "six in-one hand a half-dozen in the other."
4. Avoid contractions, e.g., "didn't," "couldn't," "I'm," etc – write them out, "did not", "could not", etc.
6. Spell check is grate, butte it dose knot cache sum misspellings (get it?).
7. Underline book, newspapers, and journal titles, e.g., The New York Times, The Song of Solomon
8. Enclose the titles of articles in quotations, e.g., "Resources and Urban Growth."
9. If you quote a source, be sure to cite the author, year of publication, and page number, then list references alphabetically at the end of the paper in a uniform format.
10. Please include a cover sheet with your name and class.

CONTENT: Readings indicated should be read for the class period under which they are listed. Things could change, but changes will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard.

Section I. What kind of policy for what kind of city?

January 28 – Getting started

Course Introduction and outline –
Clarification of terms
Preliminary thinking about Cities and Policies
“The Evolution of the American City” interview from the Urban Institute

February 4 – Conceptualizing the City

Clarification of Terms Continued

Amin A 2007 Rethinking the Urban Social *City* 11 100-114

Davidoff P 1965 Advocacy and Planning In Policy pp 421-432 in LeGates and Stout 1996 *City Reader*

February 11 – Histories of Urban Policy

Beauregard R 2001 Federal Policy and Postwar Urban Decline: A Case of Government Complicity? *Housing Policy Debate* 12 129-151

Drier P Mollenkopf J, and Swanstrom T 2001 The roads not taken: How Federal Policy Promoted Economic Segregation and Suburban Sprawl pp 92-132 in *Place Matters: Metropolitcs for the Twenty-first Century* University of Kansas Press

Utt R What to Do About the Cities *Heritage Foundation Backgrounder No. 1216* September 1, 1998

2 entries for “Planning” in **Pile S and Thrift N** 2000 *The City A-Z*. London: Routledge

February 18 – No Class

II. Urban Processes: Perpetual, Historical, and Contemporary

Post reactions to the first section in Blackboard by Feb. 25th

February 25 – The city as a process

Savage M and Warde A 1993 Cities and Uneven Economic Development pp. 311-329 in LeGates and Stout 1996 *City Reader*

Harvey D 1996 Cities or urbanization? *City* 1 38-61

March 3 – Political Economy

Eisinger P 1998 City Politics in an Era of Federal Devolution *Urban Affairs Review* 33 308-325

Logan J and Molotch H 1987 The city as a growth machine from *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*

First Written Assignment Due by March 10

March 10 - Deindustrialization

Lever W F 1991 Deindustrialisation and the Reality of the Post-industrial City *Urban Studies* 983 - 999

Soja E Morales R and Wolff G 1983 Urban Restructuring: An Analysis of Social and Spatial Change in Los Angeles *Economic Geography* 59 195-230

March 17 – Globalization: One thing or many?

Sassen S 2002 Locating cities on global circuits *Environment and Urbanization* 14 13-30

Conradson D and Latham A 2005 Transnational urbanism: Attending to everyday practices and mobilities *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31 227-233

MacLeod G Raco M and Ward K 2003 Negotiating the Contemporary City: Introduction *Urban Studies* 40 1655 – 1671

If you are feeling brave and ambitious have a look at:

Dear M and Flusty S 1998 Postmodern urbanism *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 88 50–72

March 24 - No Class

Wednesday March 26 – Monday Schedule – Conception, Representation, and Imagination

Simmel G 1903 The Metropolis and Mental Life

Healey P 2002 On Creating the 'City' as a Collective Resource *Urban Studies* 1777 - 1792

Baeten G 2004 Inner-city Misery *City* 8 235-241

Entries for “Dreams” and “Inner City” in **Pile S and Thrift N** 2000 *The City A-Z*. London: Routledge

III. Policies, Winners, and Losers

Post reactions to the second section in Blackboard by the 31st

March 31 – Spatial Patterns, inequality, and sustainability

Corburn J 2004 Confronting the Challenges in Reconnecting Urban Planning and Public Health *American Journal of Public Health* 94 541-546

Clifton K 2004 Mobility Strategies and Food Shopping for Low-Income Families: A Case Study *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 23 402-413

Downs A 2005 Smart growth: Why we discuss it more than we do it *Journal of the American Planning Association* 71 367-380

Newman P 2006 The environmental impact of cities *Environment and Urbanization* 18 275-295

Have a look at:

Epstein H Ghetto Miasma: Enough to make you sick?
New York Times Magazine October 12, 2003

April 7 – Spatial Patterns, inequality, and sustainability (continued)

Wacquant L and Wilson WJ 1989 The Cost of Racial and Class Exclusion in the Inner City *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 501 8-25

Thompson JP Urban Poverty and Race pp. 13-32 in *Breaking Away: The Future of Cities*

BondGraham D 2007 The New Orleans that Race Built: Racism, Disaster, and Urban Spatial Relationships *Souls* 9 4-18

April 14 – Crime, Policing, and (dis)order

Wilson J and Kelling G Broken Windows: Police and Neighborhood Safety *Atlantic Monthly* Volume 249, No. 3; 29-38 March 1982

Smith N 1998 Giuliani Time: The Revanchist 1990's *Social Text* 57 1-20

Also have a look at:

Parenti C “The ‘New’ Criminal Justice System: State Repression from 1968 to 2001” *Monthly Review* July, 2001

April 21 – Spring Break

Second Written Assignment Due April 28th

April 28 – Privatization of the Public Good

Smith N Class struggle on Avenue B: the Lower East Side as Wild Wild West in *The New Urban Frontier* New York: Routledge 1996, 3-29

Mitchell D and Staeheli L Clean and Safe? Redevelopment, Public Space, and Homelessness in downtown San Diego in **Smith N and Low S** eds 2006 *The Politics of Public Space* Routledge: New York

Berman M “A Times Square for the New Millennium: Life on the Cleaned-up Boulevard” *Dissent* Winter 2006

Thumb through: **New York State Scholar Practitioner Team** 2002 The Impact of Welfare Reform on Two Communities in New York City *Kellogg Foundation Report*

IV. Re-working the urban future

***Post reactions to the third section in Blackboard by the 5th ***

May 5 – City of Tomorrow?

Lake R 2006 Recentering the city *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 30 94-97

UN Habitat 2002 Sustainable Urbanisation: Achieving Agenda 21

The second half of class will be spent on a clinic/advice for the final paper. **A Example readings will be posted on BlackBoard.** Come to class with questions.

May 12 – New York’s official Policy on the Future of this city

New York City 2030 Plan – In Class Debate

+ concluding remarks

Appendix: Edilia, or ‘Make of it what you will’ 257-281 in **Harvey D** 2000 *Spaces of Hope* Berkeley, University of California Press

Post reactions to the fourth section in Blackboard by May 12th

Final Papers due shortly before grades are due – I will give you as much time as possible, and will let you know