

Barnard College
Spring 2009
Classroom: 421 Lehman

Instructor: [L. Minnite](#)
Office: 401 Lehman
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 6-8 PM

URBS V3546y JUNIOR COLLOQUIUM IN URBAN STUDIES
Contemporary Urban Problems

Course Description

During the course of the twentieth century U.S. cities (as cities elsewhere) were vastly transformed. By the century's end some were successfully managing economic restructuring and demographic change while others foundered. Through readings and discussion we will analyze the political, economic, social and cultural conditions of U.S. cities at the start of the twenty-first century. We will explore how cities are changing as they grapple with new economic and social challenges of a globalizing world. Selected topics are drawn from three areas of concern, social equity, economic growth and governance, and attend to the contemporary demographic dynamics of U.S. cities; the impact of entrenched urban poverty on housing and neighborhoods; the effects of economic globalization on the local economy; new strategies in community and economic development; the rise of the "tourist city;" the state of local democracy; and debates over regionalism. This course builds upon the fall semester's colloquium on the history of U.S. cities.

Course Requirements and Grading Policy

Grades will be based on my evaluation of your attendance, participation in class discussions (including weekly postings on *Courseworks*), completion of writing assignments, your research paper and presentation. The components of the grade break down as follows:

Class Participation (40 percent)

Each week you will write a paragraph or two drawing on the readings and **raising at least two questions for class discussion.** Failure to raise questions each week will reduce your participation grade. Please post your questions 24 hours before class in order to give me time to read through them. Overall, your postings and contributions to class discussion will count for 25 percent of your final grade.

In addition to on-going (and informed) class participation, there will be two in-class exercises. The first will be a presentation of team field research reports on urban enclaves (five points). The second will be a presentation of your research findings at an Urban Policy Summit mini-conference planned for the end of the semester which students will help design (10 points). This course is not a lecture course, and its success will depend upon students both individually and collectively initiating and engaging in critical discussion about each week's topics and readings. For this reason classroom participation is especially important and will be considered as part of your final grade.

Written Work (60 percent)

Research Paper

The major requirement of this course is an analytical policy research paper on a contemporary "urban problem" facing America's big cities (i.e., growing income inequality, public schools and diversity, fragile community life, gentrification and displacement, the housing affordability crisis, pollution, racial conflict, child poverty, deteriorating infrastructure, weak local

democracy, etc.). Although there are some limitations in the qualitative case study method, urban research has had a long and profitable association with it, as can be seen in the rich traditions of urban sociology and muckraking journalism. I encourage you to study problems besetting New York City. While some argue that New York's dominance of the American urban landscape weakens the general value of findings drawn from a single, New York case, it will be your job to place your New York case study in context in order to draw out findings of relevance for other cities. This means you will need to develop an understanding of when and how New York's "uniqueness" matters. While I would prefer you focus your research on New York, I will consider requests to write about other American cities on a case-by-case basis.

A topic statement and preliminary bibliography are due February 10th (10 points). The topic statement should be no more than 500 words. The preliminary bibliography should include at least twelve sources, annotated to indicate the significance of the work for your topic. At least four of your sources should be primary ones (i.e., newspaper accounts, oral histories or interviews, reports, legislation, court decisions, government documents and the like). You may reference books on the syllabus, but at least five of your secondary sources (scholarly books and articles related to your topic) must be new. This assignment will be graded.

If you would like feedback on a first draft, please turn it in to me by April 7th. The final paper is due the last day of class, April 28th (50 points). It should be 25 pages long and include an introductory section addressing your central question or hypothesis and why it is important; a literature review section that explains how your question relates to the larger literature on the subject (your secondary sources); your argument and its development (usually in several subsections), and a conclusion that includes the answer to the research question with which you started. Provide a complete bibliography and append any tables, charts, etc.

All written work should be typed using Times-Roman 12-point font and double-spaced. Your final essay should have a cover page with the paper's title, your name, and the date. Please center page numbers at the bottom of the page, use one-inch margins all around, and staple your essay in the upper left-hand corner. For additional formatting rules, please refer to the Chicago Manual of Style (or its shorter version, Kate Turabian's A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations).

Other Policies

Late Assignments

I strongly urge you to plan your time accordingly. Under no circumstances will I entertain changing the final due date for the policy paper. The only conditions for granting extensions will be illness or family emergencies. Papers will be downgraded by one-half grade for every three days they are late.

Statement on Academic Honesty

In this class we will analyze the thoughts, arguments, and evidence of others. This work will be critical in helping you to develop your own ideas and arguments. Plagiarism occurs when you present someone else's ideas, arguments or evidence as your own without attribution or acknowledgement. Plagiarism occurs in, but is not limited to, the following instances: copying or paraphrasing someone else's writing without acknowledgement; using someone else's facts or ideas without acknowledgement; or submitting someone else's work. Plagiarizing undermines the very foundation of our academic community

and thus cannot and will not be tolerated.

Reading Schedule

The following books have been ordered at Book Culture, 536 West 112th Street:

James DeFilippis, Unmaking Goliath: Community Control in the Face of Global Capital (New York: Routledge, 2004)

Richard Florida, Cities and the Creative Class (New York: Routledge, 2002)

Miriam Greenberg, Branding New York: How a City in Crisis Was Sold to the World (New York: Routledge, 2008)

Eugenie L. Birch and Susan M. Wachter, eds., Growing Greener Cities: Urban Sustainability in the Twenty-First Century (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008)

All other required readings listed below are available through *Courseworks*.

I) Introduction

Jan. 20 **Introduction**

Jan. 27 **An urbanizing world**

Assignment:

Mike Davis, "The Urban Climacteric," from Planet of Slums (New York: Verso, 2006), 1-19

Robert Beauregard, "Representing Urban Decline: Postwar Cities as Narrative Objects," Urban Affairs Quarterly 29(2): 187-202

Peter Hall and Ulrich Pfeiffer, "The Millennial Challenge," chapter 1 in Urban Future 21: A Global Agenda for Twenty-First Century Cities (New York: Routledge, 2000)

II) What is an 'urban problem?'

Feb. 3 **Political economy perspectives on the city**

Assignment:

Paul E. Peterson, City Limits (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), chapters 1-3

Harvey L. Molotch, "The City as A Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place," American Journal of Sociology 82(2): 309-332

David Harvey, "The Right to the City," New Left Review 53 (October 2008): 23-42.

Allen J. Scott, "The Resurgent Metropolis: Economy, Society and Urbanization in an Interconnected World," International Journal of Urban and Regional Research 32(3): 548-564

Recommended:

Lewis Mumford, "Commercial Expansion and Urban Dissolution," chapter 14 in The City in History

Julia Beckett, "The 'Government Should Run Like A Business' Mantra," American Review of Public Administration 30(2): 185-204

Feb. 10 The city as community

Assignment:

Karl Polanyi, "Our Obsolete Market Mentality," Commentary 3(1947): 109-117

Robert J. Sampson, "What Community Supplies," in Ronald F. Ferguson and William T. Dickens, Urban Problems and Community Development (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1999), 241-279

Richard Sennett, "The Myth of the Purified Community," from The Uses of Disorder (New York: Knopf, 1970)

Recommended:

Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, "The Moral Economy of Communities: Structured Populations and the Evolution of Pro-Social Norms," Evolution and Human Behavior 19: 3-25

** * Topic statement and preliminary bibliography due (500 words) * **

III) The U.S. Context

Feb. 17 Local autonomy and structural constraints

Assignment:

James DeFilippis, Unmaking Goliath, Introduction and chapter 1

Recommended:

Gerald E. Frug, "The City as A Legal Concept," Harvard Law Review 93(6): 1059-1154

Feb. 24 Ghettos, neighborhoods and enclaves

Assignment:

Louis Wirth, The Ghetto, excerpt

Anthony Downs, "What Is A Neighborhood?" chapter 2 in Neighborhoods and Urban Development (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1981)

Mark Abrahamson, Urban Enclaves: Identity and Place in the World, 2nd ed. (New York: Worth Publishers, 2006), chapters 1 and 11

Recommended:

Jane Jacobs, "The Uses of City Neighborhoods," chapter 6 in The Death and Life of Great American Cities (New York: The Modern Library, 1993 [1961])

Alan Gilbert, "The Return of the Slum: Does Language Matter?" International Journal of Urban and Regional Research 31(4): 697-713

Barry R. Chiswick and Paul W. Miller, "Do Enclaves Matter in Immigrant Adjustment?" City and Community 4(1): 5-35

Jan Lin, "Globalization and the Revalorization of Ethnic Places in Immigration Gateway Cities," Urban Affairs Review 34(2): 313-339

"Symposium on the Ghetto," City and Community 7(4): 347-398

Peter Marcuse, "The Enclave, the Citadel, and the Ghetto: What Has Changed in the Post-Fordist U.S. City," Urban Affairs Review 33(2): 228-264

*** * Enclave presentations * ***

IV) Social Equity

Mar. 3 Housing, homelessness, and gentrification

Assignment:

Rob Rosenthal and Maria Foscarinis, "Responses to Homelessness: Past Policies, Future Directions, and a Right to Housing," in Rachel G. Bratt, Michael E. Stone, and Chester Hartman, eds., A Right to Housing: Foundation for a New Social Agenda (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), 316-339

Debate on gentrification between J. Peter Byrne, and John A. Powell and Marguerite Spencer in the Howard Law Review 46(3): 405-432

Recommended:

Kim Hopper, "Homelessness Old and New: The Matter of Definition," Housing Policy Debate 2(3): 757-813

Mindy Thompson Fullilove, "Psychiatric Implications of Displacement: Contributions from the Psychology of Place," The American Journal of Psychiatry 153(12): 1516-1523

Mar. 10 Community development: the community ownership idea

Assignment:

James DeFilippis, Unmaking Goliath, chapters 2 - Epilogue

Recommended:

Charles M. Tiebout, "A Pure Theory of Local Expenditures," The Journal of Political Economy 64(October): 416-424

SPRING BREAK (March 16-23)

V) Economic Growth

Mar. 24 The 'creative class' debate

Assignment:

Richard Florida, Cities and the Creative Class (New York: Routledge, 2005), chapters 3-9

Steven Malanga, "The Curse of the Creative Class," City Journal (Winter 2004)

Recommended:

Jamie Peck, "Struggling with the Creative Class," International Journal of Urban and Regional Research

Michele Hoyman and Christopher Faricy, "It Takes a Village: A Test of the Creative Class, Social Capital, and Human Capital Theories," Urban Affairs Review 44(3): 311-333

Mar. 31 Tourism

Assignment:

Miriam Greenberg, Branding New York, Introduction, Prologue, chapters 1, 5-8

Apr. 7 'Greening' the city

Assignment:

Eugenie L. Birch and Susan M. Wachter, eds., Growing Greener Cities, Introduction, chapters 1, 5, 10, 13, 17, 18 and 19

Recommended:

Ebenzer Howard, Garden Cities of To-Morrow, edited with a Preface by F.J. Osborn, Introductory Essay by Lewis Mumford (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1984 [1965])

Greg LeRoy and Philip Mattera, "Uncle Sam's Rusty Toolkit: How Proven State and Local Reforms Can Make Federal Economic Development Programs Better for Taxpayers, Workers, and the Environment" A Report by Good Jobs First (Washington D.C., 2008)

Kate Gordon and Jeremy Hays, "Green Collar Jobs in America's Cities," A Report by Apollo Alliance and Green For All, et al. (2008)

Raquel Pinderhughes, "Green Collar Jobs: An Analysis of the Capacity of Green Businesses to Provide High Quality Jobs for Men and Women with Barriers to Employment," A Cast Study of Berkeley, California (2007)

*** * Policy research paper drafts due (optional) * ***

VI) Governance

Apr. 14 The regionalism debates

Assignment:

David Rusk, Inside Game, Outside Game: Winning Strategies for Saving Urban America (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1999), excerpt

Peter J. Dreier, John H. Mollenkopf and Todd Swanstrom, Place Matters: Metropolitcs for the Twenty-First Century (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2001), excerpt

David L. Imbroscio, "Shaming the Inside Game: A Critique of the Liberal Expansionist Approach to Addressing Urban Problems" Urban Affairs Review 42(2): 224-248

Recommended:

The Brookings Institution, "Blueprint for American Prosperity: Unleashing the Potential for a Metropolitan Nation" A Report by the Metropolitan Policy Program (Washington, D.C., 2008)

Radhika K. Fox, Sarah Treuhaft and Regan Douglass, "Shared Prosperity, Stronger Regions: An Agenda for Rebuilding America's Older Core Cites," 2nd ed., A Report by PolicyLink and the Community Development Partnerships Network (2006)

"Promoting Regional Equity: A Framing Paper," A Report by PolicyLink and The Funders Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities (2002)

Apr. 21 Urban Policy Summit

Apr. 28 Urban Policy Summit

*** * Policy research paper due * ***