



Sociology 496: Neighborhoods, Inequality, and Social Justice in America

Tuesdays 4-6:30
Ingraham 122

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Course Description: This course provides an introduction to the study of cities and urban life and in particular examines inequality in American cities and neighborhoods from the perspective of a social scientist. Cities are socially and politically contested spaces, and observers of urban life have sought for more than a century to understand the process of urbanization and the consequences of living in cities. Some argue that cities represent the crowning achievement of modernity; others suggest that cities are isolating and alienating, fostering anomie, rather than social cohesion. The course begins by examining the rise of the modern city, including an analysis of the dynamics of capitalist urbanization. It examines socio-spatial changes in the urban landscape beginning in the early twentieth century. From these changes, the course begins to investigate population shifts in American cities, including the massive expansion of post-War suburbs and the corresponding concentration of poverty in the city. Eventually, these processes resulted in gentrification and increased contestation over public spaces in the city.

Learning Goals: The goal of this course is to assist students in developing the tools to critically understand, evaluate and analyze twenty-first century cities. By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- Explain the importance of cities to the growth of a capitalist economy and evaluate the process of urbanization under capitalism.
- Evaluate the promise of cities to strengthen community life and the way that cities contribute to processes of social atomization.
- Consider the city as both a social and a spatial process, including ways that social processes are manifested in the physical spaces of the city.
- Point to key ideas, thinkers and concepts in the interdisciplinary study of cities, neighborhoods, and suburban life.

Some general questions that will be addressed include: How does urbanization affect human lives and interactions? How can we explain the emergence and transformation of cities and neighborhoods? Who holds power within cities, and why? How have American cities changed in the last century? What are some of the major trends and problems that are present within urban areas? Which cities will thrive in the near future, and which will decline?

Course Materials: All readings will be posted on Canvas or hyperlinked in the syllabus.

Course Requirements

Class participation, the completion of an in-class exam, one short essay, and one longer final essay are required to pass this course. Class attendance is essential and participation in discussion will be encouraged; no-one will be penalized for thinking rather than talking, but everyone will be expected to come to the class with questions arising out of the readings. Attendance and class participation will count for 10% of your grade. An in-class examination will count for 20%. One short essay will count for 30%. The final paper will count for the remaining 40%.

Final Paper. Students should pick one topic from the term to serve as the focus for writing an in-depth research paper. For this paper students are required to do additional research outside the assigned course readings, although class readings should also be included as references for the paper. The final paper should be 10-12 double-spaced pages in length, with 12 point Times New Roman font and 1 inch margins. Your bibliography/references section will not count towards the page requirement. The paper will necessarily have different sections including an introduction that discusses the phenomenon you have chosen and why it is worthwhile to think about it and a conclusion where you wrap up your argument and suggest future questions. Students are highly encouraged to meet with me to discuss their topics well in-advance of submitting their final papers. **The final paper is due Thursday May 5th at 5pm.**

Short Essay. Each student is required to complete one short essay applying course themes by using an article they find in popular media. Students should select a piece of long-form journalism – typically, a magazine article (e.g., *American Prospect*, *the Atlantic*, *New Republic*, *New Yorker*, *Harpers*, etc.) – and write a < 2,000-word analysis using tools, concepts and ideas from the course. These essays are an opportunity for students to apply course concepts to their everyday lives. **The short essay is due Thursday March 31st at 5pm.**

Late work is not accepted. All assignments must be turned in as specified. If you have a conflict on that date then turn in the assignment early. Unless specified otherwise, all written work should be: typed, double-spaced, normal 11 or 12 point font, with standard margins (1” on all sides), with page numbers. There are no opportunities for make up assignments and there are no extra credit assignments. See appropriate citation and reference style below.

In Class Exas. This will be a combination of multiple choice and short-essay questions in-class **March 22nd.**

Attendance and Participation. Regular attendance is a crucial component of this class. As noted above, it accounts for part of your grade. You should inform me if you are going to miss class. (If you anticipate a prolonged absence, you should speak to me.) If you do miss class, it is your responsibility to keep up with reading and get a copy of the notes from a classmate. If you miss more than 2 classes, your grade will likely be impacted. There will be information presented in class that is not covered in assigned readings, and you are responsible for this material whether you are in class or not. During in-class discussions, I will be looking for meaningful engagement. Students should expect to speak and be called on in class.

- **TURN OFF YOUR PHONES.** If your phone rings in class—or if any devices make a noise—you will be asked to leave.
- **BE PUNCTUAL.** Being late more than once counts as an absence. If you know you will be late to a particular class email me beforehand.
- **BE RESPECTFUL.** Do not interrupt other students.

Grading: Class attendance and participation count for 10% of your grade. The in-class exam counts for 20%. The short essay counts for 30%. And your final paper counts for 40%.

A range	Excellent work. Demonstrates superior ability to creatively and <i>appropriately organize</i> and express ideas, and provides comprehensive and thoughtful responses.
B range	Good work. Demonstrates good organization and expression of ideas, and provides solid responses.
C range	Fair work. Demonstrates moderate skill in organization and expression of ideas, and provides acceptable responses.
D-F range	Marginal to Unacceptable work. Demonstrates little to no clear ability to organize and express ideas in an understandable manner, and provides incorrect or incomplete responses.

COURSE OUTLINE*

* Changes may be made to the syllabus during the semester, including the schedule and readings below. If changes need to be made, they will be announced both in class and by Canvas, so please read Canvas emails carefully.

Jan 25

Introduction: What is a city? How can we study it?

Readings

W.E.B. Du Bois. *The Philadelphia Negro*

William B. Helmreich. 2013. *The New York Nobody Knows: Walking 6,000 Miles in the City*.

Link: [*The New York Nobody Knows*](#).

Feb 1

Capitalism, Industrialization, and the Rise of the Modern City

Readings

Fredrich Engels. “The Great Towns.”

Peter Hall. “City of Dreadful Night: Reactions to the Nineteenth-Century Slum City: London, Paris, Berlin, New York, 1880-1900.”

Georg Simmel. “The Metropolis and Mental Life.”

Louis Wirth. “Urbanism as a Way of Life.”

Feb 8

Communities and Cities in the Present

Readings

Sarah Gaby and Neal Caren. "Occupy Online: How Cute Old Men and Malcolm X Recruited 400,000 US Users to OWS on Facebook."

Claude S. Fischer. "The Subcultural Theory of Urbanism: A Twentieth-Year Assessment."

Barry Wellman and Barry Leighton. "Networks, Neighborhoods, and Communities Approaches to the Study of the Community Question."

Feb 15

Economic Restructuring, Neighborhoods, Spatial Change

Readings

Ernest W. Burgess. "The Growth of the City: An Introduction to a Research Project."

John R. Logan and Harvey L. Molotch. "Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place."

Andrew Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk and Jeff Speck. *Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream*. Chapters 1-3.

Feb 22

Segregation and Concentrated Poverty

Readings

William Julius Wilson. "Cycles of Deprivation in the Ghetto Underclass Debate."

Doug Massey and Nancy Denton. "The Missing Link" and "The Continuing Causes of Segregation."

Jacob Faber. "We built this: Consequences of new deal era intervention in America's racial geography."

Elijah Anderson. "The Code of the Streets." *The Atlantic*, May. Link: ["The Code of the Streets."](#)

March 1

Segregation and Concentrated Poverty II

Readings

Paul Jargowsky. *Concentration of Poverty in the New Millennium: Changes in the Prevalence, Composition, and Location of High-Poverty Neighborhoods*.

Kendra Bischoff and Sean Reardon. ["Residential Segregation by Income, 1970-2009."](#)

Michael B. Katz. "Why Don't American Cities Burn Very Often?"

Mario Small. "No Two Ghettos are Alike."

March 8

Gentrification and its Discontents

Readings

Neil Smith. "Gentrification, the Frontier and the Restructuring of Urban Space."

Jackelyn Hwang. "While Some Things Change, Some Things Stay the Same: Reflections on the Study of Gentrification."

Lance Freeman. *There Goes the Hood: Views of Gentrification from the Ground Up*.

Sharon Zukin. *Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change*.

Sharon Zukin. "Gentrification in Three Paradoxes."

SPRING BREAK!

March 22 (IN CLASS QUIZ)

Housing Insecurity

Readings

Matt Desmond. "Eviction and the Reproduction of Urban Poverty."

Brian J. McCabe and Eva Rosen. *Eviction in Washington, DC: Racial and Geographic Disparities in Housing Instability*.

Nikole Hannah-Jones. "[Living Apart: How the Government Betrayed a Landmarks Civil Rights Law](#)." *Propublica*.

March 29

Migration and Immigration

Readings

Philip Kasnitz, John H. Mollenkopf, Mary C. Waters, and Jennifer Holdaway. *Inheriting the City: The Children of Immigrants Come of Age*. (Chapters 2 and 11).

Isabel Wilkerson. *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*.

Alejandro Portes and Robert Manning. "The Immigrant Enclave: Theory and Empirical Examples."

April 5

Neighborhood Effects

Readings

Jens Ludwig et al. "Neighborhood Effects on the Long-Term Well-Being of Low-Income Adults."

Patrick Sharkey. 2013. *Stuck in Place: Urban Neighborhoods and the End of Progress toward Racial Equality*. (Chapters 2 and 5).

Richard V. Reeves and Allegra Pocinki.. "[Space, place, race: Six policies to improve social mobility](#)."

April 12

The Rise and Fall of Violent Crime

Readings

Franklin E. Zimring. *The Great American Crime Decline*.

Steven D. Levitt. "Understanding Why Crime Fell in the 1990s: Four Factors That Explain the Decline and Six That Do Not."

Patrick Sharkey, Gerard Torrats-Espinosa, and Delaram Takyar. "Community and the Crime Decline: The Causal Effects of Local Nonprofits on Violent Crime"

April 19

Urban Threats, Climate Change, COVID

Readings

Hilary Angelo and David Wachsmuth. "Why does everyone think cities can save the planet?"

Emily Badger. "[Covid didn't kill cities. Why was that prophecy so alluring?](#)" *New York Times*

Eric. Klinenberg. "Adaptation: How Can Cities Be Climate-Proofed?" *The New Yorker*, December 31. Link: "[How Can Cities Be Climate-Proofed?](#)"

April 26

Politics, Change, and the Right to the City

Readings

Gordon MacLeod and Martin Jones. "Renewing Urban Politics."

Katherine Einstein et al. "Who participates in local government? Evidence from meeting minutes."

Peter Marcuse. "From critical urban theory to the right to the city."

March 3

The Future of Cities

Readings

Loïc. Wacquant. "Urban Marginality in the Coming Millennium."

Next City. *The Just City Essays: 26 Visions for Urban Equity, Inclusivity and Opportunity*.
(Pick a couple of these essays to read.)

CITATION RULES FOR SOCIOLOGY:

All students are required to follow ASA rules for format and style when writing papers for sociology classes. Below we give examples for both in-text citations and the bibliography page.

If you have any questions, please ask -- or you can Google “ASA style guide” to find links to several on-line postings that provide additional detail on rules for citing.

A. In-text citations

You must cite the original author if you pull in either exact phrases or sentences, or if you use essentially the same ideas, concepts, or research findings -- even if paraphrasing. That is, even if you rewrite the author’s words, you must still cite the original author as the source of the ideas.

- When referencing work in the body of a paper, you must always include (a) the author name, and (b) the year of publication. Example:

In her study of men in “women’s professions,” Williams (1995) demonstrates that men are not disadvantaged by their gender minority status in the same way that women often are in predominantly male workplaces.

- You can also cite multiple authors who draw on the same ideas, who have similar findings on a similar topic. Example:

Men in “women’s professions” often feel their masculinity is called into question by outsiders (Williams 1995; Cross and Bagilhole 2002).

- Whenever you draw on a new idea, concept, or finding, you must use internal citations with author’s names and years of publications. However, if you are discussing the same article or author in a series of sentences, you only need to provide a citation the first time. Example:

Miller (1997) demonstrates how the military men in her study engage in gender harassment of their women superiors. She illustrates several forms of this gender harassment, including foot-dragging and rumor spreading.

Note: In the second sentence, there is no citation for the year, as you provided it in the previous sentence. However, if you discuss Miller later in the paper, you will provide the year again to make clear you are discussing the same article.

- When quoting directly, you must also include the page(s) the quote is found on, and enclose the quote in parentheses. Example:

According to Tran (2002:34), the “way of the way is the way.”

- For citations with four or more authors, use “et al.” rather than list all author names in-text. Example:

Research has documented elevated infant mortality rates among children born to teenage mothers (Jackson et al. 1992).

- Do not use titles of books and articles in your paper, or the author’s first name. Rather, use

the author's last name and internal citations to give the year of the publication. Example:

INSTEAD of: *Virginia Valian, in her 1999 book Why So Slow: The Advancement of Women, shows that women in professional occupations often advance more slowly than their men counterparts.*

USE: *Valian (1999) shows that women in professional occupations often advance more slowly than their men counterparts.*

B. Bibliography page

A bibliography page lists all sources cited in the paper. The page should follow the basic format of author, year of publication, title of publication, publisher, and if an article, the volume and page numbers. Here are some examples from a sample reference page:

Anderson, Maya. 1978. *Ever Heard of Hip Hop?* New York: Oxford University Press.

Brown, Susan, Amy L. Anderson, and Scott Jones. 2007. "Cohabitation in the United States." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 32(3):111-125.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2006. "Cigarette Use Among High School Students – United States, 1991-2005." *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports* 55:724-726.

Cleary, Paul D., Lawrence B. Zaboriski, and John Z. Ayanian. 2004. "Sex Differences in Health over the Course of Midlife." Pp. 37-63 in *How Healthy Are We? A National Study of Well-being in Midlife*, edited by O.G. Brim, C.D. Ryff, and R.C. Kessler. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

****Note that all authors after the first author have their first names listed first.**

U.S. Census Bureau. 2002. "Hispanics Growing Fast." Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved March 30, 2007. (<http://www.census.gov/hispanic.html>).

Williams, Genia. 1997. "The Lonely Way." *American Journal of Sociology* 42:37-64.

Zenia, Genco. 2007. Personal Interview. Conducted April 2, 2007.

****Only include if person gives permission to be cited by name.**

Teaching & Learning Data Transparency Statement

The privacy and security of faculty, staff and students' personal information is a top priority for UW-Madison. The university carefully evaluates and vets all campus-supported digital tools used to support teaching and learning, to help support success through [learning analytics](#), and to enable proctoring capabilities. View the university's full [teaching and learning data transparency statement](#).

Privacy of Student Records & the Use of Audio Recorded Lectures Statement

View [more information about FERPA](#).

Lecture materials and recordings for this course are protected intellectual property at UW-Madison. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in this class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, you are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or have lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities. Students are also prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.

Other Resources:

- [University Health Services](#)
- [Undergraduate Academic Advising and Career Services](#)
- [Office of the Registrar](#)
- [Office of Student Financial Aid](#)
- [Dean of Students Office](#)

Course Evaluations

Students will be provided with an opportunity to evaluate this course and your learning experience. Student participation is an integral component of this course, and your confidential feedback is important to me. I strongly encourage you to participate in the course evaluation.

UW-Madison uses a digital course evaluation survey tool called [AEFIS](#). For this course, you will receive an official email two weeks prior to the end of the semester, notifying you that your course evaluation is available. In the email you will receive a link to log into the course evaluation with your NetID.

Evaluations are anonymous. Your participation is an integral component of this course, and your feedback is important to me. I strongly encourage you to participate in the course evaluation.

Students' Rules, [Rights & Responsibilities](#)

Diversity & Inclusion Statement

[Diversity](#) is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-

Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

Academic Integrity Statement

By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary action include, but is not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Statement

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA. (See: [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#))

[Academic Calendar & Religious Observances](#)

You can use the link above to provide your students with information about the current and future academic calendars, along with the university's religious observance policy.