

GEOGRAPHY 1602

Introduction to Urban Studies

Syllabus

Instructor: Sig Langegger, PhD
Day/Room: Tuesday/2-216 and Thursday/2-216
Time: 4:10 -6:00 pm

Office Hours: Monday 10:00 – 12:00 and Thursday 10:00 – 12:00
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DESCRIPTION

What is a city? Why do some prosper while others decay? What do concepts like suburbanization, gentrification, and urban revitalization mean? How do cities focus market forces, government policies, entrepreneurial creativity, and community organizing? What do these concepts mean to the millions of people living out their everyday lives in cities? In this course, using the perspectives provided by urban sociology, urban geography, and urban planning, we will explore these questions. We will explore the city as a way-of-life, how various urban ways-of-life produce urban spaces, and how urban policies and urban planning facilitate or frustrate these social production processes. Through the course of the semester students will come to appreciate the city as humankind's greatest and most enigmatic invention.

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course students will:

1. come to understand how different social, cultural, economic, political, and infrastructural factors and forces facilitate and/or frustrate urban development patterns.
2. gain insight into how social problems manifest spatially within cities.
3. be comfortable using sociological and geographical terminology in written and oral communication.
4. have garnered a overview of urban studies research methodologies.
5. be able to think, write, and argue critically about urbanization. That is, using appropriate evidence, you will be able support or challenge models and theories presented in this course.

STRUCTURE OF COURSE

This course is structured around Gottdiener and Hutchinson's *The New Urban Sociology*. Each week we will grapple with a chapter from this text. Students will be assessed by their performance on four (4) unannounced quizzes, their participation in class discussions, the submission of weekly discussion questions, a midterm exam, and a final exam.

READINGS

Mark Gottdiener and Ray Hutchinson, *The New Urban Sociology* (4th Edition) Boulder, CO; Westview Press 2011

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Participation	10%
Discussion Questions	10%
Pop Quizzes	20%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	35%

GRADING POLICY

I do not grade on a curve. Furthermore, I insist that grades are *earned*; they are not *given*. The grade each student's earns on each assignment and her/his final grade will reflect individual performance.

Students will be assessed on their participation in "Special Topic" discussions. Each Tuesday, aside from the first day of class, students must submit an insightful and relevant question about the assigned reading. Pop quizzes test students' knowledge of reading material. All material covered in assigned readings and during lectures is likely to show up on either the mid-term or the final exam.

All grades are final, unless students can prove finding a gross grading error. No extra credit will be offered.

GENERAL POLICIES

Academic Honesty.

Plagiarism is the use of another person's words or ideas without crediting that person. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and may lead to failure on an assignment, in the class, and dismissal from the University.

Students are responsible for being attentive to or observant of University of Colorado Denver and International College Beijing policies about academic honesty as stated in the University's Student Code of Conduct.

Attendance.

This course is structured around class discussion. Therefore attendance and participation of each student is vital for all students' learning outcomes. Not only is attendance required, it contributes toward your final grade. For exceptions to this policy, please refer to the University's policies on excused absences, emergency absences, and religious observances.

Students with Disabilities.

If you require accommodations, please alert me of your needs on the first day of class so that I, working within University of Denver and International College Beijing policies, may adequately provide them.

Civility and Classroom Decorum.

Silence all cell phones, beepers, etc. during class.

Unless being used as a part of a class exercise or to take notes, please close laptop computers.

This course is based in large measure on critical thinking and class discussion. Disagreement is part and parcel of these processes. Colleagues can disagree *and* maintain respect for each other and one another's views. I insist that we strive to learn from the differences that manifest while debating the merit of theoretical and empirical evidence by maintaining an atmosphere of civility during discussions.

SCHEDULE

Introduction to Urban Studies

February 26th

- Lecture: Studying Cities

February 28th

- Lecture: Urbanism and Urbanization

The City as a Way of Life

March 5th

- Lecture: *The New Urban Sociology* (Chapters 1 and 2)
- Due: Discussion question

March 7th

- Special Topic: The Spirit of Cities and the Spirit of Cooperation

The Rise of Urban Sociology

March 12th

- Lecture: *The New Urban Sociology* (Chapter 3)
- Due: Discussion question

March 14th

- Special Topic: Thinking like a sociologist

Contemporary Urban Studies

March 19th

- Lecture: *The New Urban Sociology* (Chapter 4)
- Due: Discussion question

March 21st

- Special Topic: The Rodney King Riots and Social Justice in Los Angeles

Urbanization in the United States

March 26th

- Lecture: *The New Urban Sociology* (Chapter 5)
- Due: Discussion question

March 28th

- Special Topic: The Industrial Revolution, immigrant labor, and labor reform

Suburbanization and Globalization

April 2nd: 4:00 – 8:00 pm

- Lecture: *The New Urban Sociology* (Chapter 6)
- **April 9th make-up lecture:** Community Organizing and Organizing Community
 - To be held directly after the suburbanization and globalization lecture
- Due: Discussion question for Chapter 6

***April 4th**

- **No Class – Tomb Sweeping Day**

Community vis a vis the City

*April 9th

- No Class: Make-up Lecture to be presented April 2nd in Room 2-216 directly after the lecture on globalization and suburbanization

*April 11th

- Midterm Exam

Urban and Suburban Culture

April 16th

- Lecture: *The New Urban Sociology* (Chapter 7)
- Due: Discussion question

April 18th

- Special Topic: Social justice and urban farming (Video: The Garden)

Minority Settlement Patterns

April 23rd

- Lecture: *The New Urban Sociology* (Chapter 8)
- Due: Discussion question

April 25th

- Reading: *New York Times* Good Racist People
- Special Topic: Chicago's "black belt" (Video: Deep Blues)

Poverty, Crime and Housing

Sunday, April 28th

- Lecture: *The New Urban Sociology* (Chapter 9)
- Due: Discussion question

May 2nd

- Special Topic: Homelessness

Urbanization in Developed Nations

May 7th

- Lecture: *The New Urban Sociology* (Chapter 10)
- Due: Discussion Question

May 9th

- Special Topic: Kyoto & Beijing, New Delhi & and Cairo

Urbanization in the Developing World

May 14th

- Lecture: *The New Urban Sociology* (Chapter 11)
- Due: Discussion question

May 16th

- Special Topic: Slums, Shantytowns, and Favelas (Video: Slum Survivors)

Urban Policy and Urban Planning

May 21st

- Lecture: *The New Urban Sociology* (Chapter 12)
- Due: Discussion question

May 23rd

- Special Topic: Civil society and urban planning (Video: Jane Jacobs versus Robert Moses)