

**Urban Policy and the Future of the American City**

Political Science PSC 8286.80 / Sociology SOC 6252.80

Monday 6:10-8:00

Phillips Hall, Room 348

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Like most arenas of social and political life, cities possess mixed possibilities. For some they are places of refuge, fresh starts, and, expanded opportunity. For others they are places of exclusion, discrimination, and exploitation. Cities are clearly contested terrain. In one corner are those who see city spaces as locations of capital accumulation and the privileges associated with that dynamic, while in a different corner are those who assert a broad “right to the city” and seek broader inclusion for all residents. As we look toward an evolving future for American cities, we want to understand the forces at work, how they intersect and interact, and what conditions and policy strategies may best serve the causes of inclusion and social justice. For the marginalized to assert a “right to the city” is a significant move, but what puts strength behind such a claim in a world of conflict and struggle? What can contribute to a city life that is both *workable* and fair?

**Learning Outcomes**

As a result of completing this course students will develop their abilities to:

1. critically analyze key social science concepts
2. write for, and communicate with, academic and general mainstream audiences
3. apply social science concepts to key urban policy issues

**Readings**

***Books which can be purchased from the GW bookstore***

Bruce Katz and Jennifer Bradley. 2013. *The Metropolitan Revolution: How Cities and Metros Are Fixing Our Broken Politics and Fragile Economy*. Washington DC: The Brookings Institution.

Edward Glaeser. 2011. *Triumph of the City: How Our Greatest Invention Makes Us Richer, Smarter, Greener, Healthier, and Happier*. New York: The Penguin Group.

Manuel Pastor Jr., Chris Benner, and Martha Matsouka. 2009. *This Could Be The Start Of Something Big: How Social Movements For Regional Equity Are Reshaping Metropolitan America*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Michael B. Katz. 2012. *Why Don't American Cities Burn?* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Maia Bloomfield Cucchiara. 2013. *Marketing Schools Marketing Cities: Who Wins and Who Loses When Schools Become Urban Amenities.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Michelle Alexander. 2010. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness.* New York: The New Press.

Alan Ehrenhalt. 2012. *The Great Inversion and the Future of the American City.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

***Articles and book chapters available via Blackboard***

Beilenson, Peter L. and Patrick A. McGuire. 2012. "Medicalize or Legalize," *Tapping Into the Wire: The Real Urban Crisis.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Leavitt, Jackie, Tony Roshan Samara and Marnie Brady. 2009. "Right to the City: Social Movement and Theory," *Poverty & Race* 18 (5): 3,4,12-15.

Albright, Len, Elizabeth S. Derickson, and Douglas S. Massey. 2013. "Do Affordable Housing Projects Harm Suburban Communities? Crime, Property Values, and Taxes in Mount Laurel, NJ." *City & Community.* 12 (2): 89-112.

Mele, Christopher. 2013. "Neoliberalism, Race and the Redefining of Urban Redevelopment." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research.* 37: 598-617.

Alperovitz, Gar. 2011. "America Beyond Capitalism," *Dollars & Sense* November/December.

Leinberger, Christopher B. 2008. "The Next Slum?" *The Atlantic.*

Hyra, Derek. 2014 "The Back to the City Movement: Neighbourhood Redevelopment and Processes of Political and Cultural Displacement." *Urban Studies*  
<http://usj.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/07/17/0042098014539403>.

Siegel, Fred. 2012. "Trading Places," *The New York Times* (August 10).

Winders, Jamie. 2012. "Seeing Immigrants: Institutional Visibility and Immigrant Incorporation in New Immigrant Destinations," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 641 (May): 58-78.

Massey, Douglas S. 2008. "Assimilation in a New Geography," in Douglas S. Massey (ed) *New Faces in New Places: The Changing Geography of American Immigration.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Garea, Susan, and Sasha Alexandra Stern. 2010. "From Legal Advocacy to Organizing: Progressive Lawyering and the Los Angeles Car Was Campaign," in Ruth Milkman, Joshua Bloom, and Victor Narro (eds) *Working for Justice: The L. A. Model of Organizing and Advocacy.* Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Bloom, Joshua. 2010. "Ally to Win: Black Community Leaders and SEIU'S L.A. Security Unionization Campaign," in Ruth Milkman, Joshua Bloom, and Victor Narro (eds) *Working for Justice: The L. A. Model of Organizing and Advocacy*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Meyerson, Harold. 2013. "The Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy: A New Model for American Liberalism?" *American Prospect* (August 6).

## **Grades and Assignments**

Grades will be based on three papers with each paper accounting for one-third of the final grade. Students are expected to complete all the readings before the week they are listed in the schedule and come prepared to discuss them. Each week a selection of students will be assigned to launch the discussion by giving a ten minute reaction to questions that will be provided in class the previous week. But each student is expected to come prepared each week to engage in a vibrant and critical discussion of the readings for that week, along with connections with the readings from previous weeks. This is a seminar that depends on engaged discussion and debate among all participants. If you have to miss any class for any reason, you are required to bring a 2-3 page paper the following week responding to the readings for the week you missed which will be distributed to everyone in the class.

Writing assignments for this class do not lend themselves to a formula or numerical scale for grading purposes. The papers will be evaluated as follows: "A" papers are those that meet the specified requirements, demonstrate a sophisticated knowledge of the appropriate literature, exhibit sound reasoning supported by the readings and other evidence, are well organized and clearly written, and offer an innovative, creative approach to the subject matter. "B" papers are responsive to the requirements, demonstrate knowledge of the appropriate literature, are supported by evidence in addition to the author's opinions, and are well organized and clearly written. "C" papers are responsive to most but not all of the basic requirements, demonstrate some familiarity with appropriate literature though not necessarily a particularly thorough knowledge of that material, and are coherently written. "D" papers do not address some of the critical points of the assignment, do not demonstrate an adequate knowledge of the readings, and are not well organized or clearly written. "F" papers fail to address key parts of the assignment, reflect a misunderstanding of key readings, are not well organized, and are not clearly written.

### *First paper*

Drawing on the assigned readings for the course, respond to the following questions: (1) What makes it difficult for cities to be workable and economically sustainable while also being open, inclusive, and fair – that is, why is there tension between these aims? (2) How well are these dual aims reconciled in practice? Which aims are often shorted and how? Your paper should fall in the range of 2000-3000 words. Incorporate concrete examples in your paper as you develop your argument. The required readings and class discussion should provide ample material for your paper. Though not necessary, you can draw on additional materials (citing the source). In any case, do not make short shrift of the required readings.

### *Op Ed/Blog*

The second paper is a 700 word op/ed to be prepared for publication in a daily newspaper or blog. Select any topic related to the issues discussed in the course. Your op/ed might be on the same topic as your final paper though this is not required. You should distribute the paper to all members of the class before October 24 and submit it on October 27.

### *Final Paper*

Revisit the theme of tension between city workability/economic sustainability on the one side and on the other side fairness/inclusion/social equity .Consider that the readings have expanded the analytical horizon to include metropolitan regions, immigration, and complex demographic trends. What empowering measures and strategies would make for a sound balance between workability and fairness? Your paper should fall roughly in the range of 3000-4000 words. As with your first paper, the assigned readings and classroom discussion should be ample for writing this paper. Again you may draw on additional material (citing sources), but that is not necessary. In any case do not make short shrift of the required readings.

A one page outline of your final paper is due on October 20. That paper should provide an overview of the core concepts that you will be addressing. This is not meant to lock you in. Your paper may well evolve over the balance of the semester. But it is important for you to begin thinking seriously about your final paper before the last few weeks of the semester.”)

### **Academic Integrity**

All examinations, papers, and other graded work products and assignments are to be completed in conformance with The George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity (<http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>). It is important that the work you do for the course be your own, original work. Students cannot submit the same or similar papers to more than one class without permission of instructors of all the classes. Failure to provide proper citations and attribute thoughts, words, or ideas to their original source may constitute plagiarism and will make you liable for sanctions from the instructor and/or university.

### **Support for Students Outside the Classroom**

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)  
202-994-8250  
Rome Hall, Suite 102  
<http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/>

A student in need of accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact Disability Support Services in to establish eligibility and arrange for accommodations.

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER (UCC)  
202-994-5300  
2033 K Street NW, Suite 330  
<http://counselingcenter.gwu.edu/>

The University Counseling Center offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include:

- crisis and emergency mental health consultations
- confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals

### **Security**

In the case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter in the Marvin Center by the 21<sup>st</sup> Street entrance. To sign up for electronic campus advisories go to: <http://campusadvisories.gwu.edu/>. The GW emergency phone number is 202-994-6111.

## SCHEDULE

8/25	Introduction – Past, Present, and Future of Urban Policy	
9/1	No class – Labor Day	
9/8	Competing Narratives	Katz, Glaeser (1,2,3,7,9, Conclusion)
9/15	The New Racism?	Alexander, Beilenson and McGuire
9/22	Marketing Whose City?	Cucciara, Leavitt et al.
9/29	Neoliberalism and Urbanism	Hyra, Alperovitz, Leinberger, Mele, Albright et al.
10/6	Student presentation of first paper	
10/13	Back to the City?	Ehrenhalt, Siegel
10/20	Immigration <i>Outline of final paper due</i>	Winders, Massey, Garea and Stern, Bloom
10/27	Op Ed/Blog – circulated by 10/24, to be discussed in class	
11/3	Organizing for Justice	Pastor, Meyerson
11/10	A Metropolitan Revolution?	Katz and Bradley
11/17	Student presentations of final paper	
11/24	Student presentations of final paper	
12/1	Student presentations of final paper, conclusions, and course evaluation	
12/12	Final paper due	