

UBNS 8000

Seminar in Urban Studies

Christopher B. Goodman, Ph.D.

cbgoodman@unomaha.edu

402-554-5905

Fall 2018. Allwine Hall 302.

Mondays 5:30pm–8:10pm.

Office Hours: By appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is considered the core seminar in the graduate program in Urban Studies. It introduces students to the interdisciplinary and scholarly examination of the factors and issues that affect the dynamics of the urban environment. It focuses on the study of cities from three broad perspectives – human community, built environment and natural systems.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The objective of this course is to:

- Introduce students to some of the major theoretical constructs, literature and scholars in urban studies
- Explore the interdisciplinary nature of urban studies
- Acquaint students with contemporary urban issues and problems such as transportation, crime, housing, environmental, political, social and economic forces

At the end of the course students should:

- Have an understanding of the multi-disciplinary nature of urban studies as a discipline
- Be able to identify the major challenges facing the urban environment
- Be knowledgeable of historical and contemporary scholars and research on the urban environment

TEXTBOOKS

There are no official textbooks for this course. All requisite readings will be distributed via Canvas or the Criss Library.

REQUIREMENTS

PARTICIPATION – 30%

As graduate students, you are all expected to participate in class discussions. The grade is based on how consistently, constructively, intelligently and articulately you contribute to the class discussion. Though you must attend in order to participate, attendance itself does not count toward the participation grade.

READING RESPONSES – 30%

You will each write an analysis of a set of topical course readings three times over the course of the semester. You will present this in class and help lead a discussion of the reading. Each paper is due on the night for which the set of readings you have chosen to write about is assigned. Beyond that, you may choose whichever set of readings you prefer.

I will provide a prompt or set of questions to be answered for each set of readings. Papers should be 4-6 pages in length. Additional instructions to follow.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM QUESTION – 10%

Students will formulate a prompt like those that appear on the comprehensive exams. This will include an outline of how the question would be answered and a reference list. This is due at the end of the semester.

GROUP PROJECT – 30%

With your classmates, you will complete a group project focused on developing a plan for the recently demolished (and stalled) City of Omaha Civic Center site (a plan + a presentation). More details about this assignment will be distributed in class.

COURSE POLICIES

COMMUNICATIONS

Course announcements will be made via email so it is imperative that you check your e-mail daily. “I didn’t get the email” is never a valid excuse. The most effect method of communicating with me is using email; however, you are also encouraged to schedule a meeting at my office or a phone call.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late assignments **WILL NOT** be accepted without a valid UNO excuse. If you have a schedule conflict on any day an assignment is due, please contact me beforehand to make arrangements for turning in your assignment early.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have or believe you have a disability that may impede your learning, please contact the Disability Services Office. I will make every effort to accommodate you in accordance with UNO policy, procedures, and recommendations. Additional information can be found at <http://www.unomaha.edu/student-life/inclusion/disability-services/students/where-to-begin.php>.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

All students at the UNO are expected to conduct their academic affairs in an honest and responsible manner. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in academic work shall be subject to disciplinary actions. Acts of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to:

- plagiarism, i.e., the intentional appropriation of the work, be it ideas or phrasing of words, of another without crediting the source;
- cheating, i.e, unauthorized collaboration or use of external information during examinations; assisting fellow students in committing an act of cheating;
- falsely obtaining, distributing, using or receiving test materials or academic research materials; submitting examinations, themes, reports, drawings, laboratory notes, research papers or other work as one's own when such work has been prepared by another person or copied from another person (by placing his/her own name on a paper, the student is certifying that it is his/her own work); or
- improperly altering and/or inducing another to improperly alter any academic record.

Additionally, graduate students are more likely to assume roles as active scholars. With these roles come added responsibilities for academic honesty. For such individuals academic honesty requires an active pursuit of truth not just an avoidance of falsehood. This pursuit includes but is not limited to:

- providing a full and complete representation of any scholarly find, be it experimental data or information retrieved from archives;
- taking care that the resources of the University (e.g., library materials, computer, or laboratory equipment) are used for their intended academic purposes and they are used in a manner that minimizes the likelihood of damage or unnecessary wear;
- assuring that one's co-workers are given due credit for their contributions to any scholarly endeavor; respecting a diversity of opinion and defending one's colleagues as well as one's own academic freedom; respecting the rights of other students who may come under the tutelage of the graduate student and being fair
- and impartial in grading and other forms of evaluation; and seeking permission from an instructor when submitting to that instructor work which the student has submitted for a course taken in the past or intends to submit for another course currently being taken.

In cases of alleged academic dishonesty, the instructor shall attempt to discuss the matter with the student and explain the sanction(s) which he/she plans to impose. In the event that the student challenges the allegation of academic dishonesty, or is not satisfied with the sanctions(s) imposed by the instructor, the student may file an appeal according to the approved appeal policies of the University of Nebraska Graduate College.

COURSE OUTLINE

Note: The readings may change somewhat given where class discussion goes. The syllabus will be updated accordingly.

INTRODUCTION OF CONCEPTS

Week 01, 08/20 - 08/24: Introduction to Urban Studies

- *Urbanized*
- [The Urban Condition Is the Human Condition](#), *Huffington Post*.

Week 02, 08/27 - 08/31: Introduction to the Built Environment

Topics: public spaces; history of urban development; persistence

- Lin, Jeffrey. 2015. [The Puzzling Persistence of Place](#). *Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia Business Review* Second Quarter.
- Warner, Sam Bass and Whittemore, Andrew H. 2012. [American Urban Form: A Representative History](#) Cambridge: MIT Press. (available as an e-book from the Criss library, skim)
- [How public spaces make cities work](#), TED.

Week 03, 09/03 - 09/07: *Labor Day – No Class*

Week 04, 09/10 - 09/14: Introduction to the Human Community

Topics: urban social problems; life in cities

- [Urban and Rural Problems](#) in *Social Problems: Continuity and Change*, Ch 14.
- Sassen, Saskia. 2010. [The city: Its return as a lens for social theory](#) *City, Culture and Society* 1: 3-11.

Week 05, 09/17 - 09/21: Introduction to Natural Systems

Topics: What does nature does for humanity; intro to sustainability

- Emma Marris. 2016. [Nature is Everywhere - we just need to learn to see it](#), TED Talk.
- [How many people can our planet really support?](#), BBC Earth.
- [Our Common Future, From One Earth to One World](#) (read intro, skim the rest)
- [HBR: Why Sustainability Is Now the Key Driver of Innovation](#)

TOPIC AREAS

Week 06, 09/24 - 09/28: Urbanization

Topics: urbanization; defining a city

- Scott, Allen J., and Michael Storper. 2015. [The Nature of Cities: The Scope and Limits of Urban Theory](#). *International Journal of Urban & Regional Research*, 39 (1): 1-15.

- [The tale of Broadville and Narrowtown: Why we need a global, people-based definition of cities and settlements](#)
- [No, 8 in 10 People Don't Live in Urban Areas. Not Yet.](#) The City Fix.

Week 07, 10/01 - 10/05: City Government

Topics: city government; urban politics; representation; decision-making

- Nelson, Kimberly L. and Stenberg, Carl W. 2018. "Managing Local Governments in a Dynamic World" in *Managing Local Government: An Essential Guide for Municipal and County Managers*, Chapter 1.
- Nelson, Kimberly L. and Stenberg, Carl W. 2018. "Types, Functions and Authority of U.S. Local Governments" in *Managing Local Government: An Essential Guide for Municipal and County Managers*, Chapter 3.
- Burns, Nancy. 1994. "Private Values, Public Institutions" in *The Formation of American Local Governments: Private Values in Public Institutions*, Chapter 1.
- [Why the world needs charter cities](#), TED.

Week 08, 10/08 - 10/12: Land Use & Urban Design

Topics: urban planning; sprawl; urban design; public spaces

- Ewing, Reid and Shima Hamidi. 2015. [Compactness versus Sprawl: A Review of Recent Evidence from the United States](#). *Journal of Planning Literature* 30 (4): 413 – 432.
- [Retrofitting Suburbia](#), TED.
- Yglesias, Matthew. 2012. [The Rent Is Too Damn High: What To Do About It, And Why It Matters More Than You Think](#). New York: Simon and Schuster.

Week 09, 10/15 - 10/19: Semester Break – No Class

Week 10, 10/22 - 10/26: Transportation

Topics: cars; public transportation; bicycles; pedestrians

- [What Snow Can Teach Us About Creating Better Public Spaces](#), Slate.
- [The Walkable City](#), TED.
- Cervero, Robert. 1998. "Transit and the Metropolis: Finding Harmony" in *The Transit Metropolis: A Global Inquiry*.
- Newman, Peter and Kenworthy, Jeffrey. 1999. "Traffic Calming" in *Overcoming Automobile Dependence*.

Week 11, 10/29 - 11/02: Housing & Education

Topics: housing markets; school districts; redlining; covenants; affordable housing; neighborhood effects

- [Mapping Prejudice](#)
- [Mapping Inequality](#)
- von Hoffman, Alexander. 2016. [To Preserve Affordable Housing in the United States: A Policy History](#) Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies.
- Barrett, Nathan et al. 2017. [What are the sources of school discipline disparities by student race and family income?](#) *Education Research Alliance for New Orleans*.

Week 12, 11/05 - 11/09: Crime & Poverty

Topics: disorder; crime; poverty; neighborhood effects

- Wilson, William J. 2012. "Social Change and Social Dislocations in the Inner City" in *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy*, Chapter 2.
- Wilson, William J. 2011. [Being Poor, Black, and American: The Impact of Political, Economic, and Cultural Forces](#) *American Educator*. Spring.
- Sampson, Robert J. 2012. "Broken Windows' and the Meanings of Disorder" in *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*, Chapter 6.

Week 13, 11/12 - 11/16: Inequality & Social Equity

Topics:

- Bullard, Robert. 1990. "People-of-Color Environmentalism" in *Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class, and Environmental Quality*
- Jargowsky, Paul. 2015. [Architecture of Segregation: Civil Unrest, the Concentration of Poverty, and Public Policy](#) *The New Century Foundation*
- Florida, Richard. 2017. "Winner-Take-All Urbanism" in *The New Urban Crisis*, Chapter 2.

Week 14, 11/19 - 11/23: Climate Change/Urban Sustainability I

Topics: environmentalism; sustainability

- [Let's prepare for our new climate](#), TED.
- Keivani, Ramin. 2010. [A review of the main challenges to urban sustainability](#) *International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development* 1(1-2): 5-16.
- Rosenzweig, Cynthia, et al. 2018. [Urban Climate Change Science, Impacts and Vulnerabilities: State-of-the-Art Findings and Key Research Gaps](#) *Commissioned Paper 6, Cities & Climate Change Science Conference*

Week 15, 11/26 - 11/30: Climate Change/Urban Sustainability II

Topics: community resiliency; adaptation; planning

- [The route to a sustainable future](#), TED
- Meerow, Sara and Mitchell, Carrie L. 2017. [Weathering the storm: The politics of urban climate change adaptation planning](#) *Environment and Planning A: Economy & Space* 49 (11): 2619-2627.
- Broto, Vanesa Castán and Bulkeley, Harriet. 2013. [A survey of urban climate change experiments in 100 cities](#) *Global Environmental Change* 23 (1): 92-102.

Week 16, 12/03 - 12/07: Group Project Presentation