

Introduction to the City

Geography/Urban and Regional Planning 305

Spring 2005

Location: 145 Birge Hall

Time: Lectures: TR 11:00-12:15PM
Discussion Sections: M 1:20PM (2221 Humanities); R 2:25 PM (2637 Humanities); W 1:20PM (55 Bascom); W 2:25 PM (2251 Humanities)

Lecturer: Max Grinnell
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Cities are fascinatingly complex places, and for millennia people have flocked to them for a host of reasons. Some people have looked to cities as a way to escape the ennui of rural existence, some have gathered in cities for economic opportunity, and many others have arrived simply to be in close contact with different groups of people. Taking “the city” as our primary unit of analysis in this course, we will attempt to explore some of the major themes and processes that affect most urban areas, along with offering some historical perspective on the trends that have created “the city” as we find it today.

If you remain at all skeptical about the increasing importance of urban areas, please consider these facts briefly:

In 1800, only 2% of the world’s population was urbanized.
In 1950, only 30% of the world’s population was urban

In 2000, 47% of the world's population was urban, and by 2030, it is estimated that 60% of the world's population will live in urban areas.

(Source: UN Habitat: Media

Centre,<http://www.unchs.org/mediacentre/backgrounders.asp>)

An equally compelling statistic is that while in 1950 there was only one conurbation with a population of over 10 million inhabitants (New York City), and that by 2015 there will be 20 urban areas with over 10 million inhabitants, most of which will be located in the developing world. Given this important fact, we will spend some time during this course considering the challenges faced by some of these megalopolises as well.

Course Format:

Lectures: A good deal of our class meetings will be devoted to lectures where material will be presented that both complements and interrogates the contentions made in the course readings. Needless to say, I welcome and strongly encourage students to ask questions during the lecture.

Guest Lectures/Presentations: As I welcome your perspectives on the urban condition, we as a class will also welcome the informed and invaluable perspectives of those persons working in the areas of urban planning, politics, in order to flesh out various perspectives on urban areas. The dates for these class visits are outlined in the syllabus (with one date still to be scheduled), and I expect that you will be in attendance and be prepared to ask questions of our guests.

Film and Audio Presentations:

We will be watching several films throughout the course of the semester that document various aspects of the urban condition in both the developed and developing world. Additionally, I have prepared a presentation of music that deals with the urban experience drawn from a diverse set of sources and musical idioms.

Discussion Sections:

These smaller breakout sessions will occur once a week (as listed in the syllabus), and they afford you the opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue with your fellow students. These sections are led by Matthew Steigman, and given the potential subject matter of these discussions (i.e., gentrification, economic

restructuring, suburbanization, social justice, etc.) Please remember that your attendance at these discussions is mandatory.

Course Readings and Expectations:

The readings for this course represent some of the works that I have found to be most helpful and representative of the wide range of material that deals with urban issues, including scholarly publications from the realms of geography, sociology, urban planning, and architecture. As I believe in offering impressions of the city from those outside of these fields, I have also included several pieces of poetry and prose. All of these readings are available electronically, and may be accessed from the MyWisc portal (<http://my.wisc.edu/portal/>).

Our textbook for the course is:

Pacione, M. (2001) *Urban Geography: A Global Perspective*, New York: Routledge.

This text is available at the Rainbow Bookstore Cooperative, located at 426 W. Gilman. Professor Pacione draws on a wide range of case studies from urban areas in the text, and in doing so, offers tangible and concrete evidence of the broad trends and processes that continue to transform urban regions. The work also addresses some of the key concepts and theories that underpin urban geography, so it is worth reading the assigned chapters carefully and with a critical eye, which brings us to:

Suggestions for reading for this course (and for any course, for that matter):

Despite living in a world of instantly available entertainment and endless distractions (just think of your cell-phone, iPod, etc.), the ability to read and think critically provides a fundamental base in a sometimes chaotic world. Of course, this skill is only enhanced through continuous use, so here are a few things you should be cognizant of as you weave your way through the textbook and other readings.

- What is the main contention/argument/thesis of the work?
- What types of methods does the work utilize? (i.e. qualitative (such as long-form interviews, close readings of primary documents, participant observation), quantitative (census data, statistical analysis, etc.), or a mix of both methods)

- What type of framework supplies the foundation for the work’s primary contentions? (In the social sciences and humanities, there are a number of frameworks that inform contemporary scholarship. Some of these frameworks include logical positivism, Marxism, structuralism, communitarianism, etc.)
- How does this work interact with other materials I have read, and additionally, how does it relate to my own lived experience?

One thing that is potentially enthralling to some about the wide, wide, world of academic writing and scholarship is the ability to engage in the “marketplace of ideas”. Here people can trade informed barbs about the merits (or lack thereof) about their research, and by taking a close look at how these pieces relate to each other, you too can be part of this far-ranging conversation. I hope that you will try to do this during the course of the semester, along with bringing your own urban experiences into the mix.

Some Additional Material For Your Consideration:

Along with our readings, these sites are highly recommended as they both provide broad overviews on several trends in urban areas.

UNCHS (2004) *The State of the World’s Cities 2004/2005*, Nairobi: UNCHS
 (Excerpts available at : <http://www.unhabitat.org/mediacentre/sowckit.asp>)

Development Gateway: Slum Housing
<http://topics.developmentgateway.org/special/slumhousing>)

Grading Rubric and Assignments

Responsibilities	Percentage of Grade	DueDate
Active Participation in Discussion Section	15%	N/A
“Imagining the City” Assignment	15%	February 8
Mid-term Exam	20%	March 3
Culture and Development Paper	15%	April 7

Book Review	15%	April 21
Final Take Home Exam	20%	May 9

Active Participation in Discussion Section:

Your teaching assistant (Matthew Steigman) will be responsible for evaluating this component of your grade, so please come prepared to each and every discussion section. Also this element of the course allows you to challenge your fellow classmates' ideas about cities, and that alone should make these sessions quite appealing.

"Imagining the City" Assignment:

For your first assignment, you will be asked to provide your own informed commentary on a series of illustrations from Le Corbusier's "Plan Voisin" of 1925. Le Corbusier's vision of the modern "rational" city was an immensely powerful one that was adopted by a number of cities across the world, particularly in the decades following World War II. This assignment will require you to think critically about your own opinions about the design and purpose of cities, and I will ask that you write a well-structured and well-argued essay of 4-5 pages.

Midterm and Final Exam:

Both the midterm and the final exam will cover the course readings, lectures, guest lectures, films and will include the following components:

Identifications: Students will be asked to identify a concept or term in detail, providing information about its importance within the context of the course, along with offering some evidence about its general relevance. It is also expected that students will be able to provide some basic factual information about the concept or term in their written answer.

Short Essays: Students will be given a choice of essay questions to respond to, all of which will address various themes of the course. While the responses to these questions will be primarily graded based on their content, each response should be well-structured.

Note: The midterm will be administered during our class meeting on March 3rd and the final will be a take-home due on May 9th.

Culture and Development Paper:

Previous versions of this course have investigated timely and important topics such as the absence of a municipal swimming pool within the city of Madison. This semester I am asking that you examine how various cultural amenities are being used as development tools in and around the city of Madison. This is a subject that has garnered a great deal of attention, in no small part due to the popularity of Richard Florida's recent book, "The Rise of the Creative Class", which suggests that cities might do well to provide the types of amenities that so-called "creative class" persons desire (such as a flourishing local arts scene, informal gathering spaces, etc.) This discussion has manifested itself locally in a host of different initiatives ranging from an effort to create a wireless network to serve the entire downtown to the creation of an "Arts Corridor" along State Street extending all the way to University of Wisconsin campus proper. Your task in this assignment is to evaluate one of these types of development initiatives, and to offer a critical evaluation that details the "pros and cons" of such strategies. This paper should be 6-8 pages in length, and here are a few resources to get you thinking about this subject.

Madison Magazine: The Creative Class

http://www.madisonmagazine.com/index.php?xstate=view_story&story_id=135612

Development Gateway: Culture and Development

<http://topics.developmentgateway.org/culture>

(This site provides a wide range of material that addresses the role of cultural in various development initiatives throughout the developed and developing worlds.)

Book Review:

The experience of reading an entire book and having the opportunity to offer your own personal reflections and criticisms is one that I hope you will enjoy. I've selected a number of books that range from enduring classics on urbanism (such as the thought-provoking *Communitas* by Paul and Percival Goodman) to a book which remains very controversial, namely *Unheavenly City Revisited* by Edward Banfield which addresses the urban "crisis" that affected many American cities in the late 1960s and early 1970s) All of these books are available for purchase at the Rainbow Cooperative Bookstore, and they are also on reserve at the Geography Library. You will be asked to write a 5-7 page critical book review, and I will give you the particulars of this assignment later in the semester. You may choose a book for review from the following:

Banfield, Edward (1972) *Unheavenly City Revisited*, New York: Waveland Press.
[Reissued in 1990]

Davis, Mike (2001) *Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the U.S. Big City*, New York: Verso. (Note: The Rainbow Bookstore was unable to acquire this title, but I have placed it on reserve at the Geography Library, and you are welcome to purchase it online or at a “bricks and mortar” bookstore)

D’Eramo, Marco (2003) *The Pig and the Skyscraper: Chicago: A History of Our Future*, New York: Verso.

Duneier, Mitchell (2000) *Sidewalk*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Friedmann, John (2002) *The Prospect of Cities*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Joyce, Patrick (2003) *The Rule of Freedom: Liberalism and the Modern City*, New York: Verso.

Massey, Douglas S. and Nancy A. Denton (1994) *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press. ((Note: Once again, the Rainbow Bookstore was unable to acquire this title, but I have placed it on reserve at the Geography Library, and you are welcome to purchase it online or at a “bricks and mortar” bookstore)

Class email list:

As with most classes on this campus, there is a class email list which I will use to communicate various upcoming events of note, both in regards to the class meetings and to point out other important resources, lectures on campus, and so on. If you are not receiving these emails, please make sure to update your current email address at the MyWisc website.

A final note on plagiarism, cheating etc...

I hope that we don’t have to deal with such unpleasantness, so here’s a quick reminder of the University of Wisconsin’s official policy on the subject:
<http://www.wisc.edu/students/conduct01.htm>

Course Readings and Schedule

Week One (January 18 & 20):

What We Talk About When We Talk About Cities: An Introduction

Textbook: Chapters 1 & 2 (Urban Geography text, hereafter referenced as UG)

E-reserves: "91 Revere Street", "The Public Garden", "Buenos Aires" (from *Life Studies*; "The Stranger", "Crowds", "Widows", "Get High", "Let's Beat up the Poor!" (from *The Parisian Prowler*)

Week Two (January 25 & 27):

Historic Patterns and Trends of Urbanization

Textbook: Chapters 3 & 4 (UG)

E-reserves: *The City as Symbol* (Paul Wheatley); *Archaeology and the Chinese City* (Wheatley); *The Significance of Traditional Yoruba Urbanism* (Wheatley); *Metropolitan Perceptions and the Emergence of Modernism* (Raymond Williams); "First Light", "The Sun", "Parisian Dream", "Ragpickers' Wine" (all from *Complete Poems* by Charles Baudelaire)

Week Three (February 1 & 3):

Urban Structure and Organization

Textbook: Chapters 7, 8 & 9 (UG)

E-reserves: *Expolis: The Restructuring of Urban Form* (Edward Soja); *The City and the Car* (Sheller); "Paleotechnic Paradise: Coketown" (from *The City in History* by Lewis Mumford)

Week Four (February 8 & 10):

Contemporary Urban Political Economy

Textbook: Chapters 20 & 29 (UG)

E-reserves: *The City as a Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place* (Molotch); *'Best Places': Interurban Competition, Quality of life and popular media discourse* (Eugene McCann)

Due: "Imagining the City" Assignment (February 8)

Week Five (February 15 & 17):

The "Sustainability" of Urban Regions: Competing Visions

Textbook: Chapters 5, 6, 26, & 27 (UG)

E-reserves: *Environmental Justice and the Sustainable City* (Haughton); *Urban Food Systems and the Poor in Developing Countries* (Smith); *The Environment and the Entrepreneurial City: Searching for the Urban "Sustainability" Fix in Manchester and Leeds* (Aidan While, Andrew E.G. Jonas & David Gibbs)

Film: *Salaam Bombay*

Week Six (February 22 & 24):

Creating the Competitive City

Textbook: Chapters 14 & 16 (UG)

E-reserves: *Business Improvement Districts, Planning and Urban Regeneration* (Lloyd);

A Place for R&D? The Singapore Science Park (Yeung & Phillips)

Presentation: Alan Fish (Associate Vice Chancellor of Facilities and Planning Management, University of Wisconsin-Madison) and Mark Bugher (Director, University of Wisconsin Research Park)

Week Seven (March 1 & 3):

Review and Midterm

(No Readings)

Week Eight (March 8 & 10):

Ethnicity and the Urban Experience

Textbook: Chapter 18 (UG)

E-reserves: "The Fastest Runner on Sixty-First Street" (James T. Farrell); *Re-imagining the Global: Relocation and Local Identities in Cairo* (Ghannam)

Week Nine (March 15 & 17):

The Culture of Cities

Textbook: None

E-reserves: *Barcelona: The Making of a Cultural City* (Dodd); *Urbanism as a Way of Life* (Louis Wirth); *Heritage as Knowledge: Capital or Culture* (Graham)

Film: TBA

Week Ten:

Spring Break

Week Eleven (March 29 & 31):

Poverty and Housing: Challenges for the City

Textbook: Chapters 11, 13, 15, & 25

E-reserves: *Everyday Geography of Poor Elderly Hotel Tenants in Chicago* (Rollinson); *Social Networks in Time and Space: Homeless Women* (Rowe);

Presentation: Panel discussion on the homelessness situation in Madison

Week Twelve (April 5 & 7):

Economic Restructuring and Cities

Textbook: Chapter 12 & 24(UG)

E-reserves: *When Work Disappears* (William Julius Wilson)
Due: Culture and Development Paper (April 7)

Week Thirteen (April 12 & 14):

Social Justice and the City

Textbook: Chapter 17 (UG)

E-reserves: *Justice, Politics, and the Creation of Urban Space* (Fainstein); *The City as a Moral Universe* (Tuan); *The People's Radio of Vila Nossa Senhora Aparecida* (Schelling)

Presentation: Mayor Dave Cieslewicz, City of Madison

Week Fourteen (April 19 & 21):

Creating, Controlling, and Understanding Urban Places I

Textbook: Chapter 19 (UG)

E-reserves: *The Metropolis and Mental Life* (Simmel); *Space, Place and Gender* (Massey); *Systematic Social Observation of Public Spaces: A New Look* (Sampson); *New Urbanism and its Discontents* (MacCannell)

Due: Book Review (April 21)

Film: *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*

Week Fifteen (April 26 & 28):

Creating, Controlling, and Understanding Urban Places II

Textbook: Chapter 19 (UG)

E-reserves: *The Cumulative Texture of Local Urban Culture* (Suttles); *The Ordinary City* (Amin and Graham); *Chicago's Other Suburbs* (Harris); *Gated Communities in Santiago: Wall or Frontier?* (Salcedo); *Types of Gated Communities* (Grant); *Theorising Urban Playscapes: Producing, Regulating and Consuming Youthful Nightlife City Spaces* (Chatterton and Hollands); *Domestication by Cappuccino or a Revenge on Urban Space?* (Atkinson)

Week Sixteen (May 3 & 5):

Prospects for Urbanity and Review for Final Exam

Textbook: Chapter 30 (UG)

Week Seventeen (May 9):

Final Exam due

