

**URBS 201**  
**Introduction to Urban Studies**  
**Fall 2008**  
**M/W/F: 1:00-1:50**

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**Course Description**

This class is designed to introduce students to the discipline of urban studies through an analysis of key concepts, theories, and contemporary case studies. Students will be exposed to the diverse issues and problems encountered by urbanized areas and their inhabitants. The course is divided into three sections. In the first section we examine the evolution of cities historically and ideationally, looking at competing ideas of urban life and urban populations. In the second section we examine the role of planning and zoning as tools to shape urban spaces and create a particular kind of urban “place.” In the final section we examine how the relationship between political forces and market forces constrain cities in the United States. We also consider contemporary efforts to rethink key concepts and develop new responses to the conditions that plague cities.

**Course Objectives**

As an introductory urban studies class, this course should help you learn:

- Fundamental concepts and theories that help explain how social, economic, political, and spatial dimensions of cities shape the experience of urban populations.
- To analyze and critically evaluate major debates and issues in urban studies that citizens struggle with (and urbanists try to inform).
- How the course materials (e.g. the facts and theories) apply to real world events through applied assignments and analysis of case studies.

### **Required Materials:**

- Richard Legates and Frederic Stout (Editors), *The City Reader* (Fourth Edition)
- ACAD Readings:

Many of the readings will be marked (ACAD). These readings are in the Goldberg/Public folder at the Academic Departments Program. To get to [Acad Dept Pgm](#) you can select Start, Run and enter \\fileserv1\Acad\_Dept\_Pgm in the Run window. You will need to get here often, so, create a shortcut (With the [Acad Dept Pgm](#) volume window open, drag the folder icon in the Address bar to your desktop. It will automatically create a shortcut on your desktop.).

To access a reading:

Go to Acad\_Dept\_Pgm

Open: Poli\_Sci

Open: Goldberg\_Arielle

Open: Public

Open: URBS 201

### **Required Assignments:**

**Participation and Short Assignments (20%):** Students are expected to attend class, be on time, and be prepared to discuss the readings. Note that participation is a function not only of attendance, but also the quality of contributions. Even on days that I do not take formal attendance, I do take note of who attends and who does not, as well as who is participating and who is not. Please come prepared with comments/questions that you wish to discuss in class.

**Journal (20%):** Each student is required to keep a journal in which s/he will write (read as type!) one single-space page (1 ½ max) for 10 of the 16 weeks on the syllabus. For each of these weeks you should consider a concept or a point of interest to you in the readings and seek to explore that interest in Memphis. Five of the journal entries must be based on field observations that you conduct off-campus, preferably in the neighborhood about which you are writing your paper. The other five should include analysis of a relevant and contemporary newspaper article. You may choose an article about Memphis politics, e.g. from the *Commercial Appeal* or from a major newspaper, such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, etc. The article must have a clearly identifiable urban focus. Your submission should indicate that you have read and reflected upon the assigned readings. These assignments must be turned in at the **beginning of class**, which means you need to do the readings far enough in advance that you can complete your field observations. **You must complete five of your journal entries (half the total) by the Fall break—October 17—and the remaining five after the break.**

**Midterm (20%):** The midterm exam will include short answer and essay questions.

### **Analysis of a Neighborhood (20%)**

Each student will be assigned to a neighborhood of Memphis and will complete a 5-7 page double-space analytical report on that district. Students will present their findings and conclusions during the last two days on the syllabus. There will be several assignments throughout the semester that will lead up to your final paper.

**Final Exam (20%):** The final exam will include short answer and essay questions.

## Grading Scale

88-89 =	B+	93-100 =	A	90-92 =	A-
78-79 =	C+	83-87 =	B	80-82 =	B-
68-69 =	D+	73-77 =	C	70-72 =	C-
		60-67 =	D	0-59 =	F

## Special Circumstances:

If you have any kind of special circumstances, such as a disability or illness, or if you are involved with a university activity that requires you to miss class, let me know as soon as possible. This information is confidential. All students attending Rhodes College with documented disabilities are eligible and encouraged to apply for services with the Office of Student Disability Services (<http://www.rhodes.edu/disability>). Please see me for information, or contact Melissa Butler McCowen at 843-3994. Please provide me with a copy of the accommodation granted by the Office as early as possible.

Rhodes also has a variety of academic support services including:

- Peer tutors
- A Writing Center (315 Palmer Hall and on line at: <http://www.rhodes.edu/writingcenter>)
- Workshops in study skills assistance (contact the Office of Student Academic Support at 843-3433 for more information)

I strongly encourage you to take advantage of these services, and to take advantage of each other as study partners for this course. If you find yourself desiring or needing any of these forms of academic support, contact me at any time and I will do what I can to help.

## Academic Honesty:

Quite simply, any type of academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. You are responsible for knowing the **Rhodes College Honor Code**, and its rules and regulations concerning these matters. Please read them carefully in the Rhodes College Honor Council Constitution at:

<http://www.rhodes.edu/Rhodes/CampusCommunity/PoliciesandProcedures/Student-Handbook.cfm>. In any case, **ignorance of the law is not an excuse**. Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be referred immediately to the Honor Council.

## Other Classroom Rules

- Turn cell phones off before you come to class.
- Make every effort to be on time for class and to stay until class is over, without getting up to leave unless there is an emergency.
- Other than mathematical errors or clarifying questions, if you have questions about your performance on an assignment, address these to me privately, not in class.
- All assignments are due at the beginning of class. I do not accept e-mailed papers, except under special circumstances. **Late papers are penalized one letter grade per day and a half letter grade if turned in after the beginning of class.** Be aware that delays due to traffic, parking difficulty, or computer or printer problems are to be anticipated and are not considered a valid excuse for late papers.

**Course Schedule and Reading Assignments**  
**Subject to Change!**

**PART I: INTRODUCTION AND EVOLUTION OF CITIES**

**Week 1: Introduction and the Interdisciplinary Approach to Urban Studies**

**August 27:** Introduction & Review of the Syllabus

**August 29: No Class: Out of Town at APSA Conference**

- Richard LeGates, “Prologue” (CR)
- *When the Levees Broke*

**Week 2: Urbanization and the City as “Concept”**

**September 1: Labor Day-No Class**

- *When the Levees Broke*

**September 3: Urbanization**

- Kingsley Davis, “The Urbanization of the Human Population” (CR)

**September 5: Citizenship and Community in the City**

- H.D.F Kitto, “The *Polis*” (CR)
- Polo, Battuta, Diaz, and Durer, “First-Person Accounts of Great Cities” (CR)
- **Assignment:** Describe your city; draw a picture of it.

**Week 3: Community and Culture: Anti-Urbanism**

**September 8:**

- Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (ACAD)
- Judd and Swanstrom, “The Breakdown of Community” (ACAD)

**September 10**

- Friedrich Engels, “The Great Towns” (CR)

**September 12: The Urban Culture**

- Louis Wirth, “Urbanism as a Way of Life” (CR)
- Selection of neighborhoods

## **PART II: THE IMPORTANCE OF PLACE AND SPACE**

### **Week 4:**

#### **September 15: The Structure and Organization of Cities**

- Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess, “The Growth of the City: An Introduction to a Research Project” (CR)
- Chauncy D. Harris and Edward Ullman, “The Nature of Cities” (ACAD Folder)

#### **September 17: Why Do Cities Look the Way They Do? Zoning and Planning**

- TBA
- [http://www.dpdgov.com/\(404mhtvmvvhb5ohmrmk01nvrl\)/RS/RS\\_content.aspx?id=340](http://www.dpdgov.com/(404mhtvmvvhb5ohmrmk01nvrl)/RS/RS_content.aspx?id=340)
- **Assignment:** What kinds of land use/zoning exist in your neighborhood?

#### **September 19: Planning and Planners**

- Lewis Mumford, “What is a City?” (CR)

### **Week 5:**

#### **September 22: Competing Visions of the Modern City**

- Le Corbusier, “A Contemporary City” (CR)

#### **September 24: The Social Function of Parks and Architecture**

- Frederick Law Olmsted, “Public Parks and the Enlargement of Towns” (CR)
- Ebenezer Howard, “Author’s Introduction” & “The Town-Country Magnet” (CR)

#### **September 26: Contested Space, Contested Culture**

- Sharon Zukin, “Whose Culture? Whose City?” (CR)
- **Field Trip to Overton Park**

### **Week 6: From Urban Neighborhoods to Suburbs**

#### **September 29: Neighborhoods!**

- Jane Jacobs, “The Uses of Sidewalks: Safety” (CR)

#### **October 1: Federal Urban Policy: The Suburban Revolution and Beyond**

- Kenneth T. Jackson, “The Drive-in Culture of Contemporary America” (CR)

#### **October 3: Rethinking the Suburbs**

- Robert Fishman, “Beyond Suburbia: The Rise of the Technoburb” (CR)

**Week 7: Revisiting Classifications**

**October 6: Urban Governance: Cities, Counties**

- E. Terrence Jones, Chapters 1 & 2, *The Metropolitan Chase* (ACAD)
- **Assignment:** Who lives in your neighborhood? What are some of the basic demographics?

**October 8: Recap**

- Ross and Levine, “The Evolution of Cities and Suburbs” (ACAD)

**October 10: Midterm**

**PART III: URBAN PROBLEMS AND RESPONSES**

**Week 8:**

**October 13: Understanding Poverty: The “Underclass” Argument**

- William Julius Wilson, “From Institutional to Jobless Ghettos” (CR)
- **Assignment:** What kinds of amenities/resources are available in your neighborhood?

**October 15: Political Jurisdictions and Governance: What Do Cities Do?**

- Ross and Levine, “Formal Structure and Leadership Style” (ACAD)

**October 17: Exercising Political Power: Agenda Setting and Service Delivery**

- John Mollenkopf, “How to Study Urban Political Power” (ACAD)

**Week 9:**

**October 20: No Class-Fall Recess**

**October 22: No Class-Fall Recess**

**October 24:**

- Adolph Reed, “The Black Urban Regime” (ACAD)

**Week 10: Cities by Whom and for Whom?**

**October 27: Civic Engagement**

- Sherry Arnstein, “A Ladder of Citizen Participation” (CR)

**October 29: Design for Whom? New Urbanism**

- **Field trip to Mud Island?**
- Duany and Plater-Zyberk, “The Neighborhood, the District, and the Corridor” (CR)

**October 31: Design for Whom? Gendered Space**

- Dolores Hayden, “What Would a Non-sexist City Be Like? Speculations on Housing, Urban Design, and Human Work” (CR)

**Week 11:**

**November 3: Planning as a Response to Sprawl: Smart Growth**

- 1799.0 Bringing Smart Growth to Massachusetts: Douglas Foy and the Office for Commonwealth Development
- 1799.1 Bringing Smart Growth to Massachusetts: Douglas Foy and the Office for Commonwealth Development: Sequel

**November 5: Metropolitan Problems**

- Myron Orfield, “Fiscal Equity” (CR)

**November 7: Planning for Whom in Post-Flood New Orleans**

- 1862.0 Plans versus Politics: New Orleans after Katrina
- 1862.1 Plans versus Politics: New Orleans after Katrina, Sequel

**Week 12: Economic Development for Whom?**

**November 10:** Richard Florida, “The Creative Class” (CR)

- <http://www.paducaharts.com/>
- <http://memphismusicmagnet.blogspot.com/>

**November 12:**

- Michael Porter, “The Competitive Advantage of the Inner City” (CR)
- Mary Cashiola, “Keeping It Real” (*Memphis Flyer*):  
<http://www.memphisflyer.com/memphis/Content?oid=oid%3A9990>

**November 14: The Importance of Place: Municipal Agency**

- Wanda Rushing, “Globalization and the Paradoxes of Place: Poverty and Power in Memphis” (ACAD)

## **Week 13: Understanding Crime Prevention: Competing Theories**

### **November 17:**

- James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling, “Broken Windows” (CR)
- **Assignment:** What kind of crime takes place in your neighborhood?
- <https://crimemapper.memphispolice.org/crimemapper/index.cfm>

### **November 19: Community Policing**

- **Field Trip to Memphis COACT?**
- 1887.0 Revisiting Gang Violence in Boston

### **November 21: Assertive Policing**

- 1530.0 Assertive Policing, Plummeting Crime: The NYPD Takes on Crime in New York

## **Week 14:**

### **November 24: Health**

- TBD
- **Assignment:** What healthcare services are available in or near to your neighborhood?

### **November 26: No Class-Thanksgiving**

### **November 28: No Class-Thanksgiving**

## **Week 15:**

### **December 1: Gentrification**

- Joe Feagin & Robert Parker, “Gentrification and Redevelopment in Central Cities” from *Building American Cities: The Urban Real Estate Game* (ACAD)
- Ross and Levine, “Recent Trends: Gentrification and Globaliation” (ACAD)

### **December 3:**

- Peter Burns, “Community Organizing in a Non-Regime City” (ACAD)

### **December 5: Community Development and Human Capital**

- Gittell, Ortega-Bustamente, and Steffy, “Women Creating Social Capital and Social Change” (ACAD)
- James DeFilippis, “The Myth of Social Capital in Community Development” (ACAD)

## **Week 16:**

### **December 8: Presentations**

### **December 10: Presentations Last Day of Class**