

SOCG 313  
Fall 2013  
Professor: Leslie Martin  
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**URBAN SOCIOLOGY (WI)**

Monroe 213  
Office: Monroe 413/654-1498  
**Office hours:** Mon, Fri 8:30-10;  
Tues 1-2:30; Thur 12:30-2:00  
*and by appointment*

**Course Overview:** Does urbanism destroy community or create it? Does the urban experience vary for different groups of people (by gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality)? What explains processes of urbanization and suburbanization? Why are businesses often located in the center of the city and residential neighborhoods outside of the center? How do neighborhoods develop distinctive characters and populations? How can we explain the rise and persistence of urban poverty and residential segregation? How are neighborhoods shaped by political and economic changes of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century? Who controls public space, and what is “allowed” in it? How do urban areas and neighborhoods respond to crises such as hurricanes and terrorist attacks? How do different cities respond to the needs of the poorest residents, and what shapes these responses? These are some of the questions we’ll address in this course. To do so, we’ll draw on several theoretical and methodological approaches to urban sociology. We’ll use these tools to examine neighborhoods and urban politics and policy in depth.

We will try to keep these ideas grounded in practical applications to Fredericksburg and the surrounding areas, through a variety of projects both in-class and out of class.

This is a writing intensive course, and we’ll take the commitment to improving writing seriously. To do this, you will read a lot – and read a lot of *good* writing – and you will write a lot.

**Course Goals:**

- \*To develop awareness of how we are all embedded in a personal, social, cultural, historical context that has bearing on our beliefs about others and on our actions.
- \*To increase knowledge of the ways diverse populations experience urban, rural and suburban communities and institutions.
- \*To facilitate use of competing theoretical paradigms for explaining urban processes and outcomes.
- \*To enhance understanding of course material by writing frequently about that material.
- \*To become better writers.

**Requirements:**

*Exams (30% total; 15% each)*

There will be two exams for this course. They will be take home, length-limited tests for which you can use any course materials. The exam due dates are indicated below. All exams will consist primarily of short essay questions. These questions will require you to draw on readings, lectures, and discussions from the course.

*Research Project (50%)*

You will be working on a research project throughout the semester. You will also be turning in parts of this project throughout the semester, and these parts, combined, will make up 25% of your final grade, with the final paper (15-20 pages) comprising the remaining 25%. This project will be either (a) a service-learning research project (many more details to come) or (b) on a topic of interest to you concerning some aspect of urban life or inequality here in the Fredericksburg area. During the course of the semester you will use several kinds of research methods (literature search, census data, newspaper searches, field observations) to get an understanding of your topic. Start thinking NOW about what topic would appeal to you. Separate documents will provide more details about each type of research project, and I am more

than happy to help you narrow your focus. Check the syllabus for due dates for parts of the project, and for the due date for the final paper.

*Research Presentation (10%)*

At the end of the semester, each student will make a brief presentation on their research to the whole class. The purpose of this presentation is primarily to share your insights and findings with all of us, to increase our knowledge of the local area and local issues. Please feel free to come to me with any questions or suggestions about this assignment.

*Participation (10%)*

Your informed, thoughtful participation in class is invaluable. You all have a host of experiences, knowledge and insight that only you can bring to the group – bring it! There will be many in-class exercises, activities, etc. which will also count towards your participation grade – so that even the more shy among you will have opportunity to contribute to the class dynamic.

**Grading Scale:**

A: 93-100 A-: 90-92

B+: 87-89 B: 83-86 B-: 80-82

C+: 77-79 C: 73-76 C-: 70-72

D+: 67-69 D: 60-67

Anything below 60 is a failing grade. Those selecting the Pass/Fail option must average a 60. Grades of D or below will be reported as Unsatisfactory on midterm grades.

**HONOR CODE:** All students are expected to follow the policies of UMW with respect to academic conduct. Anyone engaging in plagiarism, cheating, or any other form of academic dishonesty will be referred to the Honors Council. Please write and sign the following pledge on all assignments and exams:

***I hereby declare, upon my word of honor, that I have neither given nor received unauthorized help on this work. (Signature)***

**Disability Services:** The Office of Disability Services has been designated by the University as the primary office to guide, counsel, and assist students with disabilities. If you receive services through that office and require accommodations for this class, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your approved accommodation needs. Bring your accommodation letter with you to the appointment. I will hold any information you share with me in the strictest confidence unless you give me permission to do otherwise. If you need accommodations, (note taking assistance, extended time for tests, etc.) I would be happy to refer you to the Office of Disability Services. They will require appropriate documentation of a disability. Their phone number is 540-654-1266.

**Readings:** The following books are required for the course and available at the bookstore:

The Death and Life of Great American Cities. Jane Jacobs. 1961.

Sidewalk. Mitchell Duneier. 1999.

When Work Disappears. William Julius Wilson. 1996

The Nuts and Bolts of College Writing. Michael Harvey. 2003. (\*\*I have readings from this book sprinkled throughout the semester. Equally effective, you could read the whole thing, early on, taking notes – and apply what you've read with each writing assignment. Either way is fine – just make sure you DO THE READING, and then apply what you've read)

**\*\*Additional readings are on Canvas, and are marked with an \***

**Schedule of Classes:** This outline is subject to change, as needed

## **I. PATTERNS AND EXPLANATIONS OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

### **A. Intro**

- Aug 26            *What is this class about?*
- Aug 28            *Selecting Projects, Issues to Study; Deciding about Service-Learning Options*  
\*\*Look at the local newspapers, the Free-Lance Star, through fredericksburg.com. Begin thinking about what you may want to focus on, we'll talk in class.\*\*  
Harvey: Intro  
Jacobs: Introduction
- Aug 30            *How Urban are we? Patterns of Urbanization – Globally and in US*  
Jacobs: Ch 1  
Harvey: ch 1
- Sept 2, 4         *What does it mean to be “urban”?*  
\*Wirth – “Urbanism as a Way of Life”  
\*Gans – “Urbanism and Suburbanism as Ways of Life”  
Harvey ch 2
- Sept 6, 9         *What does it mean to be “suburban”?*  
\*Fischer “Theories of Urbanism”  
\*Jackson ch 10  
\*Hayden ch 3

### **\*Sept 6 – RESEARCH PROJECT TOPICS DUE IN WRITING\***

### **B. Key Approaches and Theories**

- Sept 11, 13       *Functionalist Approaches to the City: Urban Ecology and Pluralism*  
\*Robert Park – “Urban Ecology”  
\*Ernest Burgess – “The Growth of the City,”  
\* Richard Florida – link from Atlantic Cities
- Sept 16, 18       *Conflict Approaches to the City: Political Economy, Elite Theory*  
\*Molotch – “The City as Growth Machine”  
\*Logan & Molotch – Preface, “Social Construction of Cities”
- Sept 20           *Conflict Approaches to the City: Feminist Urban Theory*  
\*Ann Markusen – “City Spatial Structure, Women’s Household Work, and National Urban Policy”  
\*Adler and Brenner – “Gender and Space: Lesbians and Gay Men in the City”
- Sept 23           *Project and Writing Work day*  
Duneier: Introduction  
Harvey: ch 3 & 6

## **III. THE CITY WHERE YOU LIVE: NEIGHBORHOODS**

### **A. Neighborhoods & Community**

- Sept 25, 27       *What are neighborhoods and community?” Why are they important?*  
Jacobs: ch 1, ch 6  
Wilson: ch 1

**\*\*Sept 25 – ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ASSIGNMENT DUE\***

- Sept 30, Oct 2      *Why are neighborhoods racially segregated?*  
\*Massey and Denton – “Segregation and the Making of the Underclass”  
Wilson – ch 2, 3
- Oct 4            In-class work day on research projects  
Harvey ch 4, 8  
**\*\*Exam 1 handed out in class Oct 4, due Oct 7\*\***
- Oct 7            *What are ethnic enclaves?(or: Whatever else we feel like talking about now!)*  
Wilson: ch 4  
Harvey: ch 7
- Oct 9, 11        *What is Gentrification? Why does it matter?*  
\*Hamnett – “Blind Men & Elephant...”  
\*Martin – “Boredom, Drugs and Schools”

**NO CLASS MONDAY OCT 14- -FALL BREAK**

***C. Concentrating and Deconcentrating Poverty***

- Oct 16, 18        *What are “concentrated poverty” and “ghettos”?*  
Wilson: ch 5, 6  
**Oct 18 - RESEARCH PROJECT PAPER SEGMENT DUE**
- Oct 21, 23        *What are we “doing” about concentrated poverty?*  
\*Chaskin & Joseph – “Building Community in mixed income developments”  
\*Fraser et al – “Making Mixed Income communities work for low-income people”  
\*Turner et al “Helping Poor Families Gain...”
- Oct 25            ***In-class Writing and Research Work day***  
Duneier: Appendix, When You Gotta Go

**IV. THE CITY WE SHARE**

***A. Public Space: Can we just all get along?***

- Oct 28            *Public space for play*  
Jacobs: chs 2, 3  
\*Kidder – Parkour, the Affective Appropriation...
- Oct 30, Nov 1    *Public Space and conflict*  
Duneier: Book Vendor, Magazine Vendor, Men Without Accounts, Sidewalk Sleeping

***B. Urban Development Policies***

- Nov 4, 6            *Efforts to create a better city*  
Duneier: How Sixth Avenue...  
Wilson: ch 7  
**Nov 4– RESEARCH PROJECT PAPER SEGMENT DUE**
- Nov 8, 11, 13    *Policing the city*  
Duneier: Part Four (Space Wars, Christmas on Sixth...)

\*TBA: Articles on Stop/Frisk

***C. Urban Disasters and Inequality: Hurricane Katrina***

Nov 15, 18     *Who is most vulnerable to urban disaster?*

\*TBA

Harvey: ch 8

**Nov 18 RESEARCH PROJECT PAPER SEGMENT DUE**

Nov 20, 22     *What are some consequences of urban disasters?*

25     \*TBA

**NO CLASS NOV 27, 29: THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**Presentations of Research**

Nov 25, Dec 2, 4, 6

**DEC 6 FINAL PAPER DUE**

**\*\*Second Exam handed out Dec 6; DUE DURING EXAM PERIOD**

Sect 1: Fri, Dec 13, by 11:00am. Late exams not accepted.

Sect2: Wed. Dec 11, by 2:30pm. Late exams not accepted.