

## **GEO 633: Critical Urban Issues**

Dr. Sara S. Metcalf

Spring 2012

Tuesdays 9:30am-12:10pm in 106 Wilkeson

Office Hours: Mondays 11:30-1:30pm in 115 Wilkeson or by appointment

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### **Course Description:**

This graduate-level seminar is designed to develop critical thinking about current issues in urban geography pertaining to inequities, and to examine the global and local forces underlying the nature of urban evolution. Topics will be tailored to student interests, and include environmental justice, poverty, food security, community health, neighborhood development and accessibility, and issues of race and class in the urban context. Different methodologies and associated research paradigms will be considered in the study of urban spaces. Classes will center on discussion of assigned reading materials, which will be provided through UBLearns. Students will link material to their own research interests, and will rotate responsibility for leading in-class discussions.

### **Evaluation:**

Participation (20%): This grade reflects how actively and thoughtfully the student takes part in the course throughout the semester. Students are expected to lead designated sessions as both a critic and synthesizer of peer responses to the assigned readings. As critic, each student will provoke discussion and offer alternative views. As synthesizer, each student will summarize the responses of their classmates on the basis of on-line and in-class discussion. The synthesizer will post a written summary to the discussion board for that week's readings.

Weekly Responses (30%): Each Monday before 3pm, students will submit written responses to the assigned readings for Tuesday's in-class discussion using the UBLearns "Discussion Board." Each student should contrast one of the assigned articles with another scholarly article of their choosing from beyond the list. Responses should be 1-2 pages (less than 500 words) in length and should exhibit proper citation of source material. A hard-copy of the response should be turned in to the instructor at the start of class, and students should bring an extra copy (digital or paper) for reference during class discussion.

Mid-term (25%): A take-home mid-term exam will be distributed prior to February 28 and due in class on March 6. Students will be asked to relate readings to their research interests and to develop a poster/collage of urban images about their research topic. The posters will be presented and discussed in class the day they are due (March 6).

Term Paper (25%): Students will write a 10-15 page (less than 4000 words) research paper on a topic determined in consultation with the instructor. Students will turn in their paper on the last day of class (April 24) and will orally present the paper during the final class discussion. The term paper should locate relevant scholarly articles and relate them to empirical observations of urban issues.

## Course Schedule:

Week	Date	Discussion Topic	Assigned Readings (available on UBLearns)
1	17-Jan	Introductions	
2	24-Jan	Occupying Urban Spaces	Harvey 1989, Mitchell 1995, Bell 2007
3	31-Jan	Environmental Justice	Heiman 1996, Heynen 2003, Schweitzer 2007
4	7-Feb	Differentiating Spaces	Kappeler 2010, Smith 2002, Wyly 2004
5	14-Feb	Poverty	Cope 2009, Rowe 1990, Yapa 1996
6	21-Feb	Socio-Spatial Dialectic	Amin 2007, Latham 2004, Soja 1980
7	28-Feb	NO CLASS – AAG	
8	6-Mar	Urban Health	Dye 2008, Northridge 2011
9	13-Mar	NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK	
10	20-Mar	Globalizing Cities	Peck 2001, Sassen 2000, Harvey 1996
11	27-Mar	Local Food Access	Alkon 2010, Raja 2008, Widener 2011
12	3-Apr	Participatory Processes	Elwood 2006, Knigge 2006, Metcalf 2011
13	10-Apr	Urban Sustainability	Keil 2003, K'Akumu 2007, Wolch 2007
14	17-Apr	Complex Cities	Batty 2008, Cole 2011
15	24-Apr	Conclusions	

Assigned Readings (listed by the Monday for which responses are due by 3pm to UBLearns):

January 23:

Harvey, David. 1989. "From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in Urban Governance in Late Capitalism." *Geografiska Annaler B: Human Geography* 71(1): 3-17.

Mitchell, Don. 1995. "The End of Public Space? People's Park, Definitions of the Public, and Democracy." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 85(1): 108-133.

Bell, David. 2007. "The Hospitable City: Social Relations in Commercial Spaces." *Progress in Human Geography* 31(1): 7-22.

January 30:

Heiman, Michael K. 1996. "Race, Waste, and Class: New Perspectives on Environmental Justice." *Antipode* 28(2): 111-121.

Heynen, Nikolas. 2003. "The Scalar Production of Injustice within the Urban Forest." *Antipode* 35(5):980-998.

Schweitzer, Lisa and Max Stephenson, Jr. 2007. "Right Questions, Wrong Answers: Environmental Justice as Urban Research." *Urban Studies* 44(2): 319-337.

February 6:

Kappeler, Aaron and Patrick Bigger. 2010 "Nature, Capital, and Neighborhoods: 'Dispossession without Accumulation?'" *Antipode* 43(4): 986-1011.

Smith, Neil. 2002. "New Globalism, New Urbanism: Gentrification as Global Urban Strategy." *Antipode* 34(3): 427-450.

Wyly, Elvin and Daniel Hammel. 2004. "Gentrification, Segregation, and Discrimination in the American Urban System." *Environment and Planning A* 36: 1215-1241.

February 13:

- Cope, Meghan and Frank Latham. 2009. "Narratives of Decline: Race, Poverty, and Youth in the Context of Postindustrial Urban Angst." *The Professional Geographer* 61(2): 150-163.
- Rowe, Stacy and Jennifer Wolch. 1990. "Social Networks in Time and Space: Homeless Women on Skid Row." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 80(2): 184-204.
- Yapa, Lakshman. 1996. "What Causes Poverty? A Postmodern View." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 86(4): 707-728.

February 20:

- Amin, Ash. 2007. "Re-thinking the Urban Social." *City* 11(1): 100-114.
- Soja, Ed. 1980. "The Socio-Spatial Dialectic." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 70(2): 207-225.
- Latham, Alan and Derek McCormack. 2004. "Moving Cities: Rethinking the Materialities of Urban Geographies." *Progress in Human Geography* 28(6): 701-724.

March 5:

- Dye, Christopher. 2008. "Health and Urban Living." *Science* 319: 766-769.
- Northridge, Mary E. and Lance Freeman. 2011. "Urban Planning and Health Equity." *Journal of Urban Health* 88(3): 582-597.

March 19:

- Harvey, David. 1996. "Cities or Urbanization?" *City* 1/2: 38-61.
- Peck, Jamie and Nik Theodore. 2001. "Contingent Chicago: Restructuring the Spaces of Temporary Labor." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 25(3): 471-496.
- Sassen, Saskia. 2000. "The Global City: Strategic Site/New Frontier." *American Studies* 41(2/3): 79-95.

March 26:

- Alkon, Alison and Christie McCullen. 2010. "Whiteness and Farmers Markets: Performances, Perpetuations ... Contestations?" *Antipode* 43(4): 937-959.
- Raja, Samina, Changxing Ma and Pavan Yadav. 2008. "Beyond Food Deserts: Measuring and Mapping Racial Disparities in Neighborhood Food Environments." *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 27(4): 469-82.
- Widener, Michael, Sara Metcalf and Yaneer Bar-Yam. 2011. "Dynamic Urban Food Environments: A Temporal Analysis of Access to Healthy Foods." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 41(4): 439-441.

April 2:

- Elwood, Sarah. 2006. "Beyond Cooptation or Resistance: Urban Spatial Politics, Community Organizations, and GIS-based Spatial Narratives." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 96(2): 323-341.

Knigge, LaDona and Meghan Cope. 2006. "Grounded Visualization: Integrating the Analysis of Qualitative and Quantitative Data Through Grounded Theory and Visualization." *Environment and Planning A* 38: 2021-2037.

Metcalf, Sara and Michael Widener. 2011. "Growing Buffalo's Capacity for Local Food: A Systems Framework for Sustainable Agriculture." *Journal of Applied Geography* 31(4): 1242-1251.

April 9:

Keil, Roger. 2003. "Urban Political Ecology." *Urban Geography* 24(8): 723-738.

K' Akumu, Owiti. 2007. "Sustain No City: An Ecological Conceptualization of Urban Development." *City* 11(2): 221-228.

Wolch, Jennifer. 2007. "Green Urban Worlds." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 97(2): 373-384.

April 16:

Batty, Michael. 2008. "The Size, Shape, and Scale of Cities." *Science* 319: 769-771.

Cole, Sam. 2011. "Creative Chaos? Globalization, Agglomeration, and the Metropolis." Working Paper.