

FSEM 100 F701
Spring 2012

MWF 2-2:50PM
Monroe 213

No Place Like Home: Housing and Society

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Office Hrs: MWF 1-1:45
Tues: 9-10:30, Thurs 1:30-3

Course Overview: What does it mean to be homeless? How does that affect one's daily life? What sort of forces cause homelessness, and what solutions are being tried to address it? What does it mean to be a homeowner? What makes homeownership the "American Dream," and is it a dream for all? What policies support homeownership, and how does the foreclosure crisis come into play here? What does our understanding of "housing tenure" (whether one rents, owns, or has neither) tell us about power and inequality in society? In other words, how do race, class, and gender intersect with issues of housing in our communities?

These are among the questions we will wrestle with in this course. We will explore these issues through readings, discussions, and a series of small original research projects conducted in Fredericksburg. For each segment of the course (homelessness, renting, homeownership) we will combine in-class analysis of popular and scholarly material on housing with field work to explore an aspect of housing of interest to you.

Course Goals: by the end of the semester, you should:

- *Gain an understanding of the key issues surrounding housing types, housing policy, and inequality in the U.S.
- *Use a wide range of data sources to address specific empirical questions
- * Be able to use written and oral communication to explore and share ideas and arguments
- * Synthesize materials from several sources in order to construct and defend an argument
- * Be able to identify and acknowledge the perspectives of others, while recognizing and critiquing one's own perspectives.
- * Have a greater familiarity with the Fredericksburg community

Course Materials:

Anderson, Elijah. 1990. *Streetwise: Race, Class and Change in an Urban Community*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Burchard, Kurt. 2005. *Word on the Street: Homeless Men in Las Vegas*. Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press.

Harvey, Michael. 2003. *The Nuts and Bolts of College Writing*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.

Hayden, Delores. 2002. *Redesigning the American Dream: Gender, Housing and Family Life*. Norton Publishing.

Course Assignments:

I. Service-learning.

This course contains a service-learning component. That means that in order to successfully complete this FSEM, you will need to engage in course-related volunteer work in the Fredericksburg area. I have been working with COAR on campus to make this requirement easier for you. The requirement is as follows:

A. Contribute 10-15 service-learning hours during the semester, completing them before the end of classes. Your options will be explained to you – but there are several housing-related opportunities with transportation arranged by COAR. (See COAR website – coar.umwblogs.org)

Then:

B. You will write several reflective essays about your experiences, and tie them to course material.

C. A failure to complete these service-learning hours will cause a *significant* reduction in your final grade – your final grade will be reduced by a letter grade if you do not complete this component.

II. Assignments.

Participation: 15% You must be present, prepared, and actively participate in this seminar. That is the way we will all get the most possible out of this course. We all come from diverse viewpoints and we need to share our interpretations of our course materials in order to enrich our understanding of the topic. That said, we all need to participate respectfully as well. We are not all equally comfortable talking in class ---- as a group we will work to make a comfortable environment for EVERYONE to contribute their ideas, insights, and voices.

Discussion Leading: 15%. One way to ensure we have productive discussion of our reading materials is to rotate responsibility for leading discussion of them. You will each take a turn facilitating class discussion on our readings, in pairs. More information will be forthcoming on how and when to do this – but you can use whatever methods you think will be most successful. For example, in-class debate, small group discussions of prepared questions, and reflective writing followed by a large group discussion are among the many options available to you.

Research Projects: 15%, 15%, 15%; total of 45%. In each section of the course (homelessness, rental, homeownership) you will conduct original research on an aspect of the issue that is of interest to you. For instance, perhaps you want to learn more about homeless families, or about gated apartment complexes. To do this research you may combine a search of the *academic literature* with *field work* – investigating your topic in the Fredericksburg community and documenting what you find through field notes. We will discuss methodology **in detail** in class. For each research project you will write an individual paper (4-6 pages) to summarize your findings.

Writing Assignments: 25%. Throughout the semester you will complete small writing assignments, designed to help you both explore substantive issues from the course, and to hone your writing style. Due dates for many of these are on the syllabus, others may be assigned as we move along.

***Included in these assignments will be reflection essays about your service-learning experiences.

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.

III. Schedule of Course Units: (This is schedule to revision, as needed.)

***You are expected to complete readings by class time on the day/week they are listed on the syllabus. Reading AHEAD is ALWAYS good.**

<u>DATE(s)</u>	<u>TOPIC/READINGS</u>	<u>SKILLS/RESOURCES</u>
Jan 18-23	<i>Introduction to the Course: Why it Matters Where You Live</i> *on Blackboard: Reinerman Harvey: Intro; Anderson: Intro <i>Writing #1 due in class Jan 23rd</i>	Discussion guides, expectations, Service-learning
Section One: Neighborhoods and Renting: Not Quite as Good		
Jan 25-30	<i>Residential Segregation</i> Anderson: chs 1 & 2 Harvey: ch 1	Leading discussion; research topics Library resources – Jan. 25 th – meet at library
Feb 3	<i>Social Perception of Renters</i> Anderson: ch 5 Harvey: ch 2 <i>Writing #2 due in class Jan 30th</i>	Critique: analyzing arguments
Feb 6	<i>Working Appropriately with sources</i> Harvey: chs 6 & 7	Plagiarism and how to avoid it
Feb 8-10	<i>Rental Housing Policy</i> Anderson: chs 6, 8	
Section Two: The American Dream: Owning Your Own Home		
Feb 13-17	<i>Who Does the Dream Work For? Race, Class, Gender and Homeownership</i> Hayden: chs 1, 2 Harvey: ch 3 **Research paper 1 due IN CLASS Feb 13** <i>Writing #3 due in class Feb 17</i>	
Feb 20-24	<i>Homeownership Policy and Rhetoric</i> Hayden: chs 3, 4, 5 <i>Writing #4 due in class Feb 24</i>	
Feb 27-Mar 2	<i>Homeownership Outcomes</i> Hayden: 7 and 8 Harvey: ch 8 <i>Writing #5 due in class Mar 2</i>	

Spring Break: March 5-9: No class

- Mar 12-14 *In class service-learning reflection & trouble-shooting*
*on Canvas, TBA The Writing Center
- Mar 16-21 *When the Dream Goes Sour: the Foreclosure Crisis*
*on Canvas, Rugh and Massey, Immergluck,
Kaplan and Summers Critical thinking: looking at
Writing #6 due in class Mar 16 patterns, drawing conclusions
- Mar 23 *Workshopping Research Paper #2*
Harvey: ch 5

Section Three: The American Nightmare: Homelessness

- Mar 26-30 *Prevalence, Trends of Homelessness*
Borchard: Intro, ch 1
**** Research Paper #2 due Mar 26 ****
- Apr 2-6 *Causes and Consequences*
Borchard: ch 2, 3, 4, 5
Writing #7 due in class Apr 2
- Apr 9-16 *Solutions, Band-Aids and other Interventions*
Borchard: ch 6-8
Harvey: ch 4
Writing #8 due in class April 9
- Apr 18-20 Homelessness in Pop Culture
**on Canvas, TBA
- Apr 23-25 *Wrapping Up! Housing Tenure, How it Matters*
**readings available electronically*
- April 27 *Workshopping Research Paper #3*
- May 2 **Research Paper #3 due at start of Final Exam Period, 3:30pm**