URBAN POLICY
Political Science 228
Haverford College
Spring 2019

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(and by appointment)

Course Description

Several decades of deindustrialization and suburbanization during the mid- to late-twentieth century have left many of America’s urban areas in dire straits. The loss of jobs and residents has depleted the tax base and forced local officials to cut back on public services, thus causing a further decline in the quality of life. Social and economic problems have proliferated.

Yet the news is not entirely bleak for the nation’s urban centers. Some cities, both large and small, have responded to debilitating societal trends by implementing public policies that have made their cities more attractive places to live, work, and play. At the same time, other cities have continued to struggle. This course attempts to learn from the recent experiences of various cities in order to identify effective strategies for urban revitalization. We will examine policy initiatives in the key areas of economic development, housing and community development, education, law enforcement, transportation, sustainable development, and recreation to assess what works and what does not work. The course concludes by speculating on the future prospects of American cities.

Course Requirements

Field Trips to Philadelphia
Center City (Saturday, February 10)
West Philadelphia (March 24 or 25)
no grade

Class Participation
30%
First take-home exam
20%
Second take-home exam
20%
Final exam
30%

Note: Exams submitted after the assigned due date will be penalized by one third of a grade (e.g. B+ to B) each day they are late.

Readings


All other assigned readings will be available on Moodle.
Newspaper Reading

Our academic analysis of public policies designed to revitalize American cities will be enhanced if we simultaneously follow the reporting of relevant news in the media. To that end, students are expected to read at least one daily newspaper such as *The Philadelphia Inquirer, The New York Times, The Washington Post,* or *The Wall Street Journal* on a regular basis and be able to draw upon material in these newspapers in class discussions. More specifically, you should choose one policy issue that is of particular interest to you and assemble, over the course of the semester, a portfolio of five to ten articles pertaining to that issue. Each student will make a brief presentation to the class (about 5 minutes) highlighting some aspect of the policy issue that you feel is most interesting and germane to the class; your presentation will be given during the week of the semester in which your policy issue is most relevant.

Journals and Web Sites

In addition to monitoring newspaper reporting about urban policy, you should acquaint yourself with some of the major scholarly journals that focus on the condition of cities: *Urban Affairs Review, Journal of Urban Affairs, Housing Policy Debate, Economic Development Quarterly* and *Journal of the American Planning Association.* Other useful magazines are targeted to urban practitioners and policy makers such as *Governing* and *Planning.* All of these publications will be helpful in preparing your research paper.

An abundance of web sites related to urban policy might also be worth consulting. Prominent ones include:


U.S. Census Bureau ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov))

Brookings Institution: Metropolitan Policy Program ([www.brookings.edu/about/programs/metro/](http://www.brookings.edu/about/programs/metro/))

Planetizen ([www.planetizen.com](http://www.planetizen.com))

The Cyberhood ([www.thecyberhood.net](http://www.thecyberhood.net))

Shelterforce ([www.shelterforce.org](http://www.shelterforce.org))

National Urban League ([www.nul.iamempowered.com](http://www.nul.iamempowered.com))

Economic Policy Institute ([www.epi.org](http://www.epi.org))

National Housing Institute ([http://www.nhi.org](http://www.nhi.org))

International City/County Management Association ([www.icma.org](http://www.icma.org))

American Planning Association ([www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org))

National Civic League ([www.ncl.org](http://www.ncl.org))

Right to the City.Org ([www.righttothecity.org](http://www.righttothecity.org))


PICO National Network ([www.piconetwork.org](http://www.piconetwork.org))

Urban Institute ([www.urban.org](http://www.urban.org))

The Atlantic: CityLab ([www.citylab.com](http://www.citylab.com))

National Coalition for the Homeless ([www.nationalhomeless.org](http://www.nationalhomeless.org))

National Low Income Housing Coalition ([www.nlihc.org](http://www.nlihc.org))
Topics and Readings

Week 1

I. Introduction to Course

II. The Urban Context

Edward Glaeser, “Introduction: Our Urban Species” in *Triumph of the City*
Michael B. Katz, “What Is an American City?” in *Why Don’t American Cities Burn?*
William W. Goldsmith, Ch. 1: “Cities as Political Targets” and Ch. 2: “Cities as Budget-Cutting Targets” in *Saving Our Cities*

III. Economic Development

Week 2

A. Overview of Urban Redevelopment

Jon Teaford, “The Problem Perceived” in *The Rough Road to Renaissance: Urban Revitalization in America, 1940-1985*
Jane Jacobs, “Introduction,” *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*

B. Downtown


Week 3

C. Downtown (continued)

I. Uneven Development

Douglas Rae, “Two Cheers for Very Unequal Incomes” in *Justice and the American Metropolis*, eds. Clarissa Rile Hayward and Todd Swanstrom
2. The Creative Class and the Visiting Class

Richard Florida, “The Power of Place” in *The Rise of the Creative Class*
Sharon Zukin, “Introduction: The City That Lost Its Soul” in *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places*
Costas Spirou and Dennis R. Judd, “The Legacy Projects” and “Epilogue: A City of Bread and Circuses?” in *Building the City of Spectacle: Mayor Richard M. Daley and the Remaking of Chicago*

**FIELD TRIP TO CENTER CITY PHILADELPHIA:** Saturday, February 10 (alt. date: Sunday, February 11)

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**Week 4**

D. Neighborhoods

William Julius Wilson, “The Economic Plight of Inner-City Black Males” in *Against the Wall: Poor, Young, Black, and Male*, ed. Elijah Anderson

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**Week 5**

E. Neighborhoods (continued)

1. Workforce and Small Business Development

Devah Pager, “Blacklisted: Hiring Discrimination in an Era of Mass Incarceration,” in *Against the Wall: Poor, Young, Black, and Male*, ed. Elijah Anderson
2. Alternative Strategies


**FIRST TAKE-HOME EXAM DUE**

IV. Housing and Community Development

Week 6

A. Responding to Concentrated Poverty


Robert J. Chaskin and Mark L. Joseph, Chs. 1-5 in *Integrating the Inner City*

Week 7

B. Responding to Concentrated Poverty

Robert J. Chaskin and Mark L. Joseph, Chs. 6-9 in *Integrating the Inner City*

C. Community Development


Week 8

**SPRING BREAK**

Week 9

D. Neighborhood Revitalization and Gentrification

Lance Freeman, “There Goes the ‘Hood” in *There Goes the ‘Hood: Views of Gentrification from the Ground Up*
Daniel Monroe Sullivan and Samuel Shaw, “Retail Gentrification and Race: The Case of Alberta
Street in Portland, Oregon,” Urban Affairs Review, May 2011
Samuel Stein, “Progress for Whom, For What? Progressive Politics and New York City’s Mandatory
Inclusionary Housing,” Journal of Urban Affairs, January 2018
Film in class: “Class Divide”

SELF-GUIDED FIELD TRIP TO WEST PHILADELPHIA: Weekend of March 24-25

V. Education

Week 10

A. Racial Isolation

Dana Russo, “School Desegregation: From Topeka, Kansas to Wake County, North Carolina –
Changing the Path, but Staying the Course,” Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law and
Policy, 19 (3), 2012
Neil Krauss, “When Political Support Is Not Enough to Reform Urban Schools” in Majority
Cities: Policy Making and Inequality in Urban Politics

B. Public School Finance

To be assigned

C. Charter Schools

Richard D. Kahlenberg and Halley Potter, A Smarter Charter, Chs. 1-3

SECOND TAKE-HOME EXAM DUE

Week 11

D. Charter Schools

Richard D. Kahlenberg and Halley Potter, A Smarter Charter, Chs. 4-8

E. High-Stakes Testing and Accountability

James Hassler Rhodes, “Progressive Policy Making in a Conservative Age? Civil Rights and the
Politics of Federal Education Standards, Testing, and Accountability,” Perspectives on
Politics, September 2011
Film in class: “Tested”
Week 12

VI. Law Enforcement

A. Punitive Policing

Kevin Baker, “‘Welcome to Fear City’: The Inside Story of New York’s Civil War, 40 Years On,” The Guardian, May 18, 2015

B. Race and the Carceral State


Week 13

C. Police Brutality


VII. Transportation

David Dayen, “The Great Los Angeles Revolt Against Cars,” American Prospect, Summer 2017
Jonathan Mahler, “The Case for the Subway: It Built the City and the City Must Rebuild It to Survive,” New York Times Magazine, January 7, 2018

Week 14

VIII. Parks, Recreation, and Ecology

Christopher G. Boone and Ali Modarres, “Green Spaces, Green Governance, and Planning” in City and Environment
William W. Goldsmith, Ch. 5: “The Paradox of Plenty” in Saving Our Cities
Kameshwari Pothukuchi, “‘To Allow Farming Is to Give Up on the City’: Political Anxieties Related to the Disposition of Vacant Land for Urban Agriculture in Detroit,” Journal of Urban Affairs, vol. 39 (8), 2017
Week 15

IX. The Future of Cities


**FINAL EXAM DUE AT END OF EXAM PERIOD**