

**JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE**  
*The City University of New York*

## **GOV.210 Comparative Urban Political Systems**

Prof. Janice Bockmeyer

Fall, 2007

T/Th, 3<sup>rd</sup> period (11:05am-12:20pm), Room 118W

Office: Room 3253N, Tues. - 3:30-4:45pm, Thurs. 12:30-1:30 and by appointment

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### **Course Objectives:**

This course will explore urban politics, government and governance using a comparative perspective. We will study theories most often applied to comparative urban politics, assess trends in urbanization, including the growth, shrinkage and resurgence of urban centers, examine the autonomy of city governments in relation to national and provincial (or state) authorities and regional associations, and analyze the impact of intergovernmental relations on city decision making. Key local service delivery and policy areas will also be examined. Students will be asked to access and compare local politics and the decision making processes of both the formal structures of local government and non governmental actors including political and other nonprofit organizations, developers, investors and business interests that might be local or global. Finally, students will be asked to assess the value of the global city concept by studying the global urban impacts of climate change, immigration, the globalization of the economy, the influence of transnational non-governmental organizations, and international terrorism and crime. Students will consider who legitimate decision makers should be in a local polity and what role remains for city inhabitants of increasingly global cities.

### **Course Requirements:**

Students are expected to participate actively in class discussions, write short assignments, take a midterm and final exam, and submit a 12-15 page research paper on a topic of their choice that is relevant to comparative urban politics and approved by the instructor (see Research Project). Students are strongly encouraged to visit office hours at least once during the semester to discuss their paper topic and secure the instructor's approval before beginning their research. Papers are due on **November 27th**. Late papers will be graded down by one-half grade per day late (weekends excluded). Grading is as follows: 15% class participation and short assignments, 25% mid-term, 30% research paper, 30% final exam.

### **Required Texts (Available for purchase in the JJ Bookstore and on reserve):**

Abrahamson, M. *Global Cities*. 2004. New York: Oxford Univ. Press.

Denters, B. & L. Rose. Eds. 2005. *Comparing Local Governance: Trends and Developments*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan

Hambleton, R. & J. Simone Gross. Eds. 2007. *Governing Cities in a Global Era*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mehta, S. 2004. *Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found*. New York: Vintage.

Strom, E. & J. Mollenkopf. 2007. *The Urban Politics Reader*. New York: Routledge.

**Additional Resources:** Below are some additional resources in comparative urban politics that may be helpful to students in their individual research assignments and in classroom discussions:

Beauregard, R.A. & S. Body-Gendrot. Eds. 1999. *The Urban Moment: Cosmopolitan Essays on the Late-20<sup>th</sup>-Century City*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Bockmeyer, J. 2007. Building the Global City – The Immigrant Experience of Urban Revitalization. In *Governing Cities in a Global Era*, Eds. R. Hambleton & J. Simone Gross, pp. 177-188.
- Bockmeyer, J. 2006. Social Cities and Social Inclusion: Assessing the Role of Turkish Residents in Building the New Berlin. *German Politics and Society* 24: 49-76.
- Bockmeyer, J. 2006. A Culture of Walls: Diversity and Divisions in the New Berlin. In G. Lenz et al. Eds. *Toward a New Metropolitanism*, pp. 185-201. Heidelberg: Universitaetsverlag Winter.
- Bockmeyer, J.L. 2003. Devolution and the Transformation of Community Housing Activism. *The Social Science Journal* 40: 175-188.
- Body-Gendrot, S. 2000. *The Social Control of Cities? A Comparative Perspective*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- DiGaetano, A. & J. Klemanski. 1999. *Power and City Governance*. Minneapolis: Minnesota Univ. Press.
- Goetz, E. G. & S. E. Clarke. Eds. 1993. *The New Localism: Comparative Urban Politics in a Global Era*. Newburg Park, Calif.: Sage.
- Hambleton, R., H. Savitch & M. Stewart. Eds. 2002. *Globalism and Local Democracy: Challenge and Change in Europe and North America*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hambleton, R. & J. Simone Gross. 2007. *Governing Cities in a Global Era*. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan.
- Holston, J. Ed. 1999. *Cities and Citizenship*. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press.
- John, P. 2001. *Local Governance in Western Europe*. London: Sage.
- Neuwirth, R. 2005. *Shadow Cities: A Billion Squatters, A New Urban World*. New York: Routledge.
- Paddison, R. Ed. 2001. *Handbook of Urban Studies*. London: Sage Publications.
- Parker, S. 2004. *Urban Theory and the Urban Experience: Encountering the City*. London: Routledge.
- Pierre, J. 2005. Comparative Urban Governance: Uncovering Complex Causalities. *Urban Affairs Review*, Vol. 40, No. 4, March, pp. 446-462.
- Polèse, M. & R. Stren. Eds. 2000. *The Social Sustainability of Cities: Diversity and the Management of Change*. Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press.
- Sassen, S. 2006. *Cities in a World Economy*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.
- Sassen, S. 2002. Ed. *Global Networks, Linked Cities*. New York: Routledge.
- Savitch, H. 2007. *Cities in a Time of Terror*. New York: M.E. Sharpe.
- Savitch, H. 2001. Does Terror Have an Urban Future? *Urban Studies*, 38: 2515-2533.
- Savitch, H. & P. Kantor. 2002. *Cities in the International Marketplace: The Political Economy of Urban Development in North America and Western Europe*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press.
- Savitch N. & P. Kantor. 2003. Urban Strategies for a Global Era: A Cross-National Comparison. *American Behavioral Scientist* 46 (8): 1002-1033.
- Smith, M.P. & L.E. Guarnizo. Eds. 1998. *Transnationalism from Below*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publisher.
- Vale, L & T. Campanella. Eds. 2005. *The Resilient City: How Modern Cities Recover from Disaster*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press.
- Wolman, H. & M. Goldsmith. 1992. *Urban Politics & Policy: A Comparative Approach*. Cambridge: Blackwell.

### Internet Resources:

Working in the field of comparative urban studies will require us to reach well beyond the data and resources available in New York City. Throughout the semester we will build a list of currently useful internet sites. Students are particularly encouraged to visit the websites of global cities (example: [www.berlin.de](http://www.berlin.de)) to access information on urban politics, city governmental structures, agencies, non profit organizations, city services available to local residents, and statistical data. Many global cities offer site visits in English, but students are also encouraged to make full use of their second (or additional) language(s) for their research projects. A comprehensive list of sites for the study of urban politics in American cities can be found at: <http://www.apsanet.org/~urban/data.html>

**Readings:** (Reading assignments and dates for topics may change. Note instructor's announcements

carefully.)

- Tues., Aug. 28    Defining the "city" **[Note: No class on Thurs., Aug. 30]**  
*Read:* Mumford, "What Is a City?" in *The City Reader*, pp.92-96 (electronic reserve)  
Kitto, "The Polis" *City Reader*, pp. 44-48 (e-reserve)  
Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *City Reader*, pp. 98-104 (e-reserve)  
Mehta, *Maximum City*, "Personal Geography," pp.3-38:  
    Begin reading Mehta to prepare for Assignment #1 which will be distributed on Sept. 6. As you read consider how Mehta defines "home." Why do Mehta's parents move their family to NYC? Why does he, as an adult, leave NYC for Bombay? Why do we live in cities?
- Sept. 4, 6        Urban political theory and comparing cities  
*Read:* Denters & Rose, "Local Governance in the Third Millennium," *Comparing Local Governance*, Chapt. 1.  
Mollenkopf, "How to Study Urban Political Power," *Urban Politics Reader*, pp. 100-109  
Peterson, "The Interests of the Limited City," *Urban Politics Reader*, pp. 121-129  
Stone, "Looking Back to Look Forward," *Urban Politics Reader*, pp. 131-140.
- Tues., Sept 11,    Cities and Globalization **[No JJ classes, Thurs., Sept. 13 and Tues., Sept. 18]**  
Thurs., Sept. 20  
*Read:* Abrahamson, Chapt. 1, 4, 8  
Sassen, "Overview" and "Economic Restructuring as Class and Spatial Polarization"  
*Urban Politics Reader*, pp.28-40
- Sept. 25, 27     The urbanization process  
*Read:* Champion, "Urbanization, Suburbanization, Counterurbanization and Reurbanization," in Paddison, Chapt. 9 (on reserve)  
Abrahamson, Chapt. 2  
Burgess, "The Growth of the City," *City Reader*, pp. 157-163 (e-reserve)  
Nivola, "Are Europe's Cities Better?" *Urban Politics Reader*, pp. 314-320.
- Oct. 2, 4        Intergovernmental relations and the purposes of local government  
*Read:* Borraz & Le Galès, "France: The Intermunicipal Revolution," Denters & Rose, 2  
Bobbio, "Italy: After the Storm," Denters & Rose, 3  
Savitch & Vogel, "The United States: Executive-Centred Politics," –Denters & Rose, 13  
Wilson, "The United Kingdom: An Increasingly Differentiated Polity?" Denters & Rose, 10
- Oct. 9, 11       Local government and social policy  
*Read:* Rose & Ståhlberg, "The Nordic Countries: Still the 'Promised Land'? – Denter & Rose, 6  
Hamnett, "Social Polarisation, Economic Restructuring and Welfare State Regimes," *Urban Politics Reader*, pp. 41-48.  
Weir, "Poverty, Social Rights, and the Politics of Place..." *Urban Politics Reader*, pp. 20-27  
Abrahamson, Chapt. 5
- Oct. 16, 18      Comparing structures for urban government  
*Read:* Goldsmith, "A New Intergovernmentalism? Denters & Rose, 14  
Denters & Rose, "Towards Local Governance?" in Denters & Rose, 15
- Oct 23, 25       Government or governance? The New Public Management  
*Read:* Denters & Klok, "The Netherlands: In Search of Responsiveness," Denters & Rose, 5

Gabriel & Eisenmann, "Germany: A New Type of Local Government?" Denters & Rose, 8  
Ladner, "Switzerland: Reforming Small Autonomous Municipalities," Denters & Rose, 9

**Tues., Oct. 30 – Midterm Exam**

- Thurs., Nov. 1: Urban politics: Why we participate (or not)  
*Read:* Putnam, "Bowling Alone," in *City Reader*, pp. 106-113  
Mehta, "Powertoni," pp. 39-77  
Bockmeyer, "Devolution and the Transformation of Community Housing Activism. (SSJ article on reserve)  
Lind, "Gender, Development, and Urban Social Change," *Urban Politics Reader*, pp. 205-214.
- Nov. 6, 8      Who are urban citizens? Immigrants and participation by non-citizen residents  
*Read:* Martinotti, "A City for Whom? Transients and Public Life in the Second-Generation Metropolis, in Beauregard & Body-Gendrot. -8 (on reserve).  
Bockmeyer, "Social Cities and Social Inclusion: Assessing the Role of Turkish Residents in Building the New Berlin;" *German Politics and Society* 24: 49-76.  
Jones-Correa, "Wanting In: Latin American Immigrant Women..." *Urban Politics Reader*, 241-248.  
Jones-Correa, "Resistance from Outside..." *Urban Politics Reader*, 85-93  
Abrahamson, Chapt. 3
- Nov. 13, 15      The politics of urban economic development  
*Read:* Shefter, "Political Economy of Fiscal Crises," *Urban Politics Reader*, pp. 168-174  
Strom, "In Search of the Growth Coalition," *Urban Politics Reader*, pp. 141-150  
Savitch & Kantor, "Political Economy of Urban Regimes," *Urban Politics Reader*, 176-188  
Abrahamson, Chapt. 6
- Tues., Nov 20      Can we build a sustainable and 'Social City'? **[No JJ classes, Thurs., 22 – Thanksgiving]**  
*Read:* Beatley, "Green Urbanism..." in *City Reader*, pp. 401-408  
Wheeler, "Planning Sustainable and Livable Cities," in *City Reader*, pp. 487-496  
Stren & Polèse, "Understanding the New Sociocultural Dynamics of Cities: Comparative Urban Policy in a Global Context. In Stren & Polèse, Chapt. 1  
Bollens, "Ethnic Stability and Urban Reconstruction," *Urban Politics Reader*, pp. 255-264
- Nov. 27\*, 29      Urban crime and policing in global cities **[Tues., Nov. 27 – Term Papers Due]**  
*Read:* Wilson & Kelling, "Broken Windows," *City Reader*, pp. 268-276  
Mehta, *Maximum City*, "Second to Scotland Yard," pp.77-
- Dec. 4, 6      The future of cities: Can we learn from destruction?  
*Read:* Eisenger, "The American City in the Age of Terror," *Urban Politics Reader*, pp. 321-329.  
Hein, "Resilient Tokyo: Disaster and Transformation in the Japanese City," in *The Resilient City*, pp. 213-234(on reserve)
- Dec. 11 (Last Class) The Politics of Cities in the Global Context: Summary and Review Session

**Final Exam, Tuesday, December 18, 10:15am-12:15pm**

## The Semester Research Project

**INTRODUCTION:** This semester you are asked to execute a project of your own design in which you develop a hypothesis that is relevant to comparative urban politics, and test it using comparative, cross-national urban research. Below is an outline of the key steps to developing and testing a two variable hypothesis. This outline is intended to guide you through the basic stages of doing research and presenting it in a paper. Remember that you must receive my approval for your paper topic, or hypothesis, before beginning your project. You may visit office hours for feedback or guidance, or write the instructor by email ([jbockmeyer@jjay.cuny.edu](mailto:jbockmeyer@jjay.cuny.edu) or [jbockmeyer@aol.com](mailto:jbockmeyer@aol.com)) and secure written feedback and approval.

**THE ASSIGNMENT:** Students will choose a research question of interest, shape the question into a two-variable hypothesis (see below), and test the hypothesis using qualitative or quantitative methods. Students may use all CUNY and NYPL library resources and/or any archives or private collections, as well as internet sources. **Minimum Requirements:** The project must test the hypothesis by comparing at least two cities located in two different nations. Students will make use of no fewer than **8** primary sources. Sources will be cited in endnotes, footnotes or parenthetical citations. In addition, all papers must include a bibliography listing all sources used. Any appropriate style guide may be used, including MLA, APA.

### STAGES IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT:

**Stage One: Pose a problem in the form of a question.** Begin your project with a central question that is interesting to you, relevant to the class, and significant to our understanding of comparative urban politics. Examples: What determines whether city inhabitants will have a significant role in local economic development decisions? What determines whether cities plan for shrinkage and growth? What determines whether cities provide subsidized affordable housing? As part of this stage we conduct an initial *literature review*, or a review of the articles and books written about our topic. This helps us develop expectations about the main variables having an effect on our area of concern.

**Stage Two: State a hypothesis.** Hypotheses move your research project forward by suggesting a concrete answer to your question that can be tested. The hypothesis is a presumption, in other words, used for testing that can then be proved or disproved. In this class we will be using the two variable hypothesis built by posing a relationship between a dependent and independent variable. The dependent variable is the one we wish to explain--for example, the role played by residents in economic development decisions. The independent variable is the one that we have a hunch can best explain it, for example, the relative economic health of the city. If we think we have identified a possible cause of our dependent variable, then we can pose a relationship and state the hypothesis: **I hypothesize that strong local economic health heightens the role played by local residents in economic development decision making.** Our goal is not, in other words, to prove that our hunch is correct, but to have an assumed *cause* (independent variable) and *effect* (dependent variable) in place, as well as the assumed relationship between them, that can then structure our examination. Remain objective throughout your research project. Remember that we may, in fact, disprove our hypothesis by the end of our project.

**Stage Three: Develop the research design.** Design is a fancy way of saying that we next need to find the best way to test our hypothesis. This means deciding how best to measure our two variables. Taking the sample hypothesis used above, to measure our independent variable we may want to examine the decision making role of residents in different cities with a range of economic conditions from strong to weak. But how will we measure the dependent variable, the decision making role of residents? Here we may decide to review data (articles, books, news accounts, archival materials) on the process of major urban development projects and look for indications that residents had strong influence. We may decide to rank the relative strength of residents' role in decision making. Going through the design stage helps us

narrow down our research task--we cannot study all cities or all development projects in our cities of interest--while staying focused on our hypothesis.

**Stage Four: Collect data.** We next go to the library to collect the necessary books, articles, statistics, (some projects may require census or other data) needed to measure our variables and test our hypothesis. This will also mean conducting an internet search, and/or going to an archive to use historical materials to construct case studies of an event(s). When using the internet, remember that the internet takes the researcher to an address or source, but does not tell us the quality of the source. Just as works found in a library might be weak or strong, appropriate for your topic or inappropriate, sources found on the internet are also of varying quality and use to your research task. It is up to the student to choose strong and appropriate sources.

**Stage Five: Data analysis.** Now we need to review our data very carefully and start to assess what it is telling us. Back to our example, what pattern do we see across our cities? Do our findings about residents' influence and economically healthy cities seem to fit our expectations? Do some of our cases take us by surprise? Here we need to put our biases aside and try to analyze what the data tells us about our presumption that, in this case, cities with fiscal woes will probably not give local residents much input. Is our dependent variable caused by our independent variable? If most cases seem to fit, but one is extraordinary in comparison, we may have to do a bit more research to find out if there were any extraordinary (**spurious**) factors having an effect. We may find that the cases did not follow the pattern we expected. Remember that it is as 'correct' to reject the hypothesis as it is to 'prove' it. **We are only testing the validity of the hypothesis; we are not setting out to prove it.**

**Stage Six: Draw conclusions.** Now it is time to draw some conclusions. In the final analysis, was the hypothesis correct or incorrect? More importantly, did you find any relationship between your two variables? How strong was the relationship? Here **it is most important not to overstate your findings.** We may have found a weak relationship between variables. We need to mention the weaknesses in the relationship, point to where our research demonstrated some expected findings and some that our hypothesis did not predict. We also need to acknowledge any weaknesses in our project design (perhaps the cities chosen were not appropriate; maybe a study with more cases would have produced different results, etc.). What, in the final analysis do our findings tell us about the importance of economic health to the possible influence of local inhabitants in development decisions that will affect the whole city? Is it harder for residents to play a role under certain economic conditions? What wider significance might this have? Will our findings point to some ways that city residents might heighten their "voice" in deliberations? We might point out in the conclusions if our findings are useful to residents and other decision makers. We might also want to point to what factors might be explored in our next research project.

One final point should be made. When we write up the paper, we need to cite, or refer to, all of the sources we used in our analysis, the sources of our data and any ideas that were not our own. I would recommend that for this you consult a style guide, such as *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (most recent edition), available in most bookstores, or the *APA Guide*, or *A Pocket Style Manual* (Diana Hacker). A summary of APA is also available in the John Jay library and Writing Center. It will show you how to use footnotes, endnotes or parenthetical references, and the proper format for the bibliography. **All papers must use both proper citations and a bibliography in order to receive a grade.** If you need special help with the actual writing of the paper, citations and bibliography, please visit the Writing Center. A final word of warning: using anyone's ideas, work, writings, and presenting them as your own is **plagiarism**. Papers that are plagiarized will receive a grade of 0, and in some cases will be referred to the Dean of Students for punitive action. For a statement of John Jay College's plagiarism policy, please see the Undergraduate Bulletin. If you have any questions about how to cite your sources, consult me or the Writing Center (or both). **Students will be required to submit their papers to Turnitin.com for scanning.** You will receive these guidelines in a separate guid

