

**MPA 599 Urban Politics & Policy**  
Dept. of Political Science,  
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

**Spring 2013 Syllabus**

Building 5, Room 138  
Mondays 6:00 – 9: 50 pm

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Office Hours: Mondays 3:30 - 5:30pm

**Overview and Objectives:**

This course is a seminar on contemporary politics and policy topics about urban America. Urban areas are facing various challenges as they have evolved. This course examines current urban issues against the history of urban development and the politics of cities. The changing approaches of governance and public policies are also discussed in both theoretical and practical manners.

This course is divided into three parts. The first part (“Structuring urban politics”) will address the basic concepts and procedures of politics in urban context. Part II “Debates of urban policy issues” will discuss important urban policy issues, such as urban sprawl, economic development and redevelopment, immigration, and transportation. Part III “Urban governance and reform” will focus on the general functions and systems of local governments, their positions in the federal system, and the ongoing reforms towards urban governance. The three major objectives of this course are:

- to explore the features and dynamics of urban social and political evolution;
- to develop skills to understand key urban issues;
- to exam the changing ways for local governments to address multiple urban problems;
- to learn and enhance your critical and analytical thinking skills.

To accomplish these objectives, students are expected to actively participate in the class. Lectures and discussions will be mixed with writings and presentations by students.

**Required Text:**

Ronald K. Vogel & John J. Harrigan. (2007). *Political change in the metropolis*. (8th ed.). New York: Pearson-Longman. (Required) **(VH)**

Robert E. England, John P. Pelissero, & David R. Morgan. (2011). *Managing urban America*

(7th ed.). Washington: CQ Press. (Optional) **(EPM)**

In addition to the text, other readings, documents, and lecture slides will be provided on the course Blackboard (BB).

**Blackboard:**

Blackboard will be our primary source for online communication. It will be used to post announcements, course materials (PowerPoint lecture slides, and supplementary readings), assignments and grades. Students will submit their assignments and other works to Blackboard before the deadlines. All registered students should be able to access the Blackboard at <https://blackboard.csupomona.edu/>.

**Assignments & Grading:**

Final grades will be determined on the following scale. Any “curving” of grades, if necessary – and it usually is not – will be done only after calculating the overall scores for the entire course, not for individual tests. No individual extra-credit “deals” will be negotiated.

Current event presentation	10%
Discussion leader	5%
Three reading reflection papers	3 x 10% =30%
“Urban facts” report & presentation	20%
Group paper & presentation	20%
Class participation	15%

**Equivalence Definition:**

A	93-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	84-86%
B-	80-83%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	0-59% Failure

Current event presentation (10%)

We will have one of you each week to present a current event article (not earlier than 2012) related to urban politics and policy topics. They should be articles, op-ed pieces, or analysis from a websites, newspapers or magazines. A question to lead the class discussion is also required.

Three reflection papers (3 X 10% = 30%)

You have the options of writing reflection papers on 3 out of the 6 sets of non-textbook readings (see those with “\*” on the schedule). These reflection papers should include your thoughts and any analysis that you have of the readings prior to our classroom discussion. Each paper should be 2-3 pages.

### Discussion leader (5%)

We will have class time to discuss most of the non-textbook readings. Each of you will provide a “discussion starter” for the class based on the reading material(s) being assigned to you. A sign-up sheet will be passed around on the first day of class, and you can select the reading material(s) and the day you wish to present.

### “Urban facts” report & presentation (20%)

Each of you will choose a section of the policy issues in the Brookings’ report “The state of metropolitan America.” For certain policy issue, you will first summarize the findings in the report, and then do your own data collecting on a specific city or metropolitan area. You should compare the “facts” of your city to national situation in Brookings’ report, and give some explanations and policy suggestions. You’ll present it on Apr 29, and the paper (3-5 pages) is due on May 6.

### Group paper & presentation (20%)

In groups of two, you will identify a city or a metropolitan area within the U.S. and focus on its specific urban crisis(es) or challenge(s). You are expected to apply the related models and theories presented in this class (if any) to your analysis, and give policy suggestions. You’ll present in groups on June 3, and the paper (6 -12 pages) is due on June 10.

### Class participation (15%)

This is a seminar involving many in-class discussions, team works, and presentations. Students are expected to attend every class and participate in class activities. You will not be able to receive an A in the class without meeting this requirement.

\* More details of the assignments will be explained in class and also on Blackboard. All the work should be double-spaced, using 12-point font and standard 1-inch margins. For the essays, it should adhere to APA (American Psychological Association) style. A brief guide to APA style can be found at <http://www.writing-with-confidence.org/apastyle.html>.

### **Class Policies:**

- Academic integrity:  
Cheating and plagiarism are intolerable and the appropriate disciplinary penalty will be followed. Please check the following web site for illustrations of plagiarism and common mistakes that students make.  
<http://dsa.csupomona.edu/judicialaffairs/academicintegrity.asp>  
  
Violations of academic integrity will result in an F on the assignment and/or the course, and their cases will be reported to Judicial Affairs. You are responsible for reviewing and complying with all the University policies. Please find more information at <http://dsa.csupomona.edu/judicialaffairs/>
- Late work policy:  
It is your responsibility to meet the assignment deadlines as specified in the course schedule. Computer-related problems (i.e., “my email isn’t working” or “My computer is down”) are NOT acceptable excuses. For each 24 hours late from the due time, 20% will be deducted from your original score, unless you have documented excuse, e.g. doctor’s note, and police report, and death certificate. Contact me by email ASAP if you have an emergency that will require delayed work.

**Course Schedule:**

Date	Topics & Readings	Assignments
<b>Part I. Structuring urban politics</b>		
Apr 8	Introduction to the course; The evolution of urban America  - VH: 1 - Fishman. (1999). "The American metropolis at century's end: Past and future influences."	
Apr 15	The evolution of urban America (cont'd); Urban politics: diversity, political machines, & change  - VH: 3, 4 & 5 - *Mohl & Betten. (1970). "The history of urban America: An interpretive framework." - *Saltzstein. (2003). "A cacophony of change: the American city 1970-2000."	Reflection paper 1 due
Apr 22	Urban "regimes" & Community power  - VH: 7 - *Davidoff. (1990). "Advocacy and pluralism in planning" - *Davis. (1992). "Fortress Los Angeles: The militarization of challenge of conceptualization," - *Mossberger & Stoker. (2001). "The evolution of urban regime theory: The urban space."	Reflection paper 2 due
<b>Part II. Debates of urban policy issues</b>		
Apr 29	The state of urban America: the urban policy issues  - EPM: 1 (p.2-5); - Frey, et al. (2010). "State of metropolitan America: On the front lines of demographic transformation."  "Urban facts" presentations	
May 6	Urban growth, sprawl & suburban development  - VH: 2 & 8; - *Lang. (2000). "Did Neighborhood Life-Cycle Theory cause urban decline?" - *Gordon & Richardson. (2000). "Critiquing sprawl's critics"	"Urban facts" report due.

May 13	<p>Urban Economic development &amp; redevelopment (Guest Speaker: Rick Zimmer)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VH: 6;</li> <li>- *Glasgow, et al.. (2012). "Local development policies and the foreclosure crisis in California"</li> <li>- Chapin. (2004). "Sports facilities as urban redevelopment catalysts"</li> </ul>	Reflection paper 3 due
<b>Part III. Urban governance and reform</b>		
May 20	<p>Local government &amp; Urban policy making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VH: 7 (p.193-200);</li> <li>- EPM:3 &amp; 4;</li> <li>- *Mullin, Peale, &amp; Cain. (2004). "City Caesars? Institutional structure and mayoral success in three California cities."</li> <li>- *Svara.(1987). "Dichotomy &amp; Duality: Reconceptualizing the relationship between policy and administration in Council-Manager cities."</li> </ul>	Reflection paper 4 due
May 29	<p>National urban policy &amp; Intergovernmental relations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VH: 11;</li> <li>- *Sapotichne.(2010). "The Evolution of National Urban Policy Congressional Agendas, Presidential Power, and Public Opinion."</li> <li>- *PPIC. (2011). "Rethinking the State-Local Relationship: Local economic development."</li> <li>- Murphy. (2011). "Obama's Urban Policy: Slow Start. Sustainable Finish?"</li> </ul>	Reflection paper 5 due
Jun 3	<p>New regionalism &amp; Regional collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VH: 10</li> <li>- *Weaver, et al. (2000). "Multilevel governance and metropolitan regionalism in the USA"</li> <li>- *Savitch, et al. (2000). "Path to New regionalism"</li> </ul> <p>Final presentations</p>	Reflection paper 6 due
Jun 10	Final week!	Final paper due.