Urban Sociology (SOCI 153)

Fall 2024, MWF 4-4:50pm in CENTR 216

Professor: Jon Ruiz (jjr026@ucsd.edu)

Office hours: M/W, 11:00am-12pm in SSB 474

Urban Sociology is one of the oldest subfields in social science, with an original mission to examine the unique social dynamics of the city. Following industrialization, people began moving from the rural countryside to urban centers in search of employment. This dramatic change in the kinds of communities people live in raised urgent questions about what social bonds might look like in such a context. The goal of this course, then, is to examine some of the themes and questions that have preoccupied urban sociologists. By the end of the course, students should be able to think critically about questions such as: How is civility maintained in the city? What are the sources of urban poverty? What are the implications of suburbanization and gentrification?

**Assessment**

Assessment for the class will consist of several reading response memos, a midterm exam, and a final exam. The breakdown of final grades will be as follows:

Reading response memos: 35% of your grade. Each student will submit a total of five reading response memos. You can choose which weeks to write on (the only week you cannot select is week 5). Memos must be submitted by 11:59pm the Friday of the week you are writing on. Memos are 300-500 words, will be graded pass/fail, and are to be submitted via the Assignments page in Canvas. All memos must summarize at least one reading in the syllabus for that week and present a question, criticism, or comment for further discussion. You may also engage with other readings.

Midterm exam: 25% of your grade. This take-home exam will be circulated by 9am on Thursday of Week 5 and due by the end of the day (i.e. 11:59pm) that Friday. It will consist of multiple choice, T/F, fill-in-the-blank, short answers, and one essay response. The exam will cover both readings and lecture materials that are *not* taken directly from the readings.

Final exam: 40% of your grade. The final exam will take a similar form to the midterm, but with two essay responses.

**Readings**

All texts are available on Canvas. I recommend setting up a VPN to access online readings off campus. See instructions [here](https://blink.ucsd.edu/technology/network/connections/off-campus/VPN/). Please let me know if you have trouble accessing the readings.

Some readings will contain technical genetics terms. I strongly recommend that you consult publicly available resources like Wikipedia or the [NIH/NHGRI glossary](https://www.genome.gov/genetics-glossary).

**Course policies**

Cheating and plagiarism:

Students are expected to do their own work and to cite sources according to established norms as outlined in the UCSD Policy on Academic Integrity. The policy can be found here: [h: http://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/2](h:%20http://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/2%20). A FAQs page on what counts as cheating can be found here: [http://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/faq/index.html](http://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/faq/index.html%20).

Cheaters will receive a failing grade on the assignment or exam and/or the entire course. They may also be referred for additional disciplinary action elsewhere at UCSD. If you are unsure about what is considered either plagiarism or cheating, please ask.

Missing/late exams and assignments:

Failure to turn in your take-home exams on time without a valid excuse will result the deduction of one half-letter grade for every day (or part thereof) after the deadline. Excuses communicated after the deadline will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances.

Contesting grades:

You may contest any grades by sending the assignment or exam to me.

Struggles with the class:

If you are having trouble with any aspect of the class, including deadlines, it is always best to contact me as soon as possible. That way we can address the problem before you have fallen too far behind or lost too many points from your final grade.

Disability accommodations:

Students requesting accommodations for this course due to a disability must provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Students are required to present their AFA letters to Faculty (please contact me privately) and to the OSD Liaisons in the Sociology Department in advance so that accommodations may be arranged.

**Week 0**

*Friday (9/27)*

Introduction, no readings

**Week 1: Early Urban Sociology**

*Monday (9/30)*

Wirth, L. (1938) “Urbanism as a Way of Life.” *American Journal of Sociology* 44(1): 1–24.

*Wednesday (10/2)*

DuBois, W. E. B. The Souls of Black Folk: A Social Study. Tribeca Books, 2011. (Chapters 1–2)

*Friday (10/4)*

DuBois cont.

**Week 2: Maintaining Civility in the City**

*Monday (10/7)*

Lee, J. (2002)“From civil relations to racial conflict: Merchant-customer interactions in urban America.” *American Sociological Review* 67(1): 77-98.

*Thursday (10/9)*

O’Brien, D.T., Sampson, R.J. and Christopher Winship (2015) “Ecometrics in the age of big data: Measuring and assessing ‘broken windows’ using large-scale administrative records.” *Sociological Methodology* 45 (1): 101-147.

*Friday (10/11)*

**Week 3: Urban Political Economy**

*Monday (10/14)*

Logan, J.R. and Harvey Molotch. (2007) Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place. Berkeley: University of California Press. (Chapters 1–2)

*Wednesday (10/16)*

Logan, J.R. and Harvey Molotch. (2007) Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place. Berkeley: University of California Press. (Chapter 3)

*Friday (10/18)*

Logan, J.R. and Harvey Molotch. (2007) Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place. Berkeley: University of California Press. (Chapter 4)

**Week 4: Urban Inequality**

*Monday (10/21)*

Tilly, C. (2006) *Identities, Boundaries, Social Ties*. Routledge. (Chapters 1-2)

*Wednesday (10/23)*

Tilly, C. (2006) *Identities, Boundaries, Social Ties*. Routledge. (Chapter 3)

*Friday (10/25)*

Marable, M. (1999) *How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America: Problems in Race, Political Economy, and Society*. South End Press. (Introduction)

**Week 5: Review and Midterm**

*Monday (10/28)*

Review, no readings

*Wednesday (10/30)*

Review, no readings

*Friday (11/1)*

Exam

**Week 6: Suburbanization**

*Monday (11/4)*

Cheng, W. (2013. *The Changs Next Door to the Diazes: Remapping Race in Suburban California*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (Introduction*)*

*Wednesday (11/6)*

Cheng, W. (2013. *The Changs Next Door to the Diazes: Remapping Race in Suburban California*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (Chapters 1-2)

*Friday (11/8)*

Cheng, W. (2013. *The Changs Next Door to the Diazes: Remapping Race in Suburban California*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (Chapters 4-5)

**Week 7: Urban Poverty**

*Monday (11/11)*

Veteran’s Day, no class!

*Wednesday (11/13)*

Smith, S.S. (2005) “‘Don’t put my name on it’: (Dis)trust and job-finding assistance among the black urban poor.” *American Journal of Sociology* 111(1):1-57.

*Friday (11/15)*

Desmond, M. (2012) “Disposable Ties and the Urban Poor.” *American Journal of Sociology* 117 (5): 1295-1335.

**Week 8: Gentrification**

*Monday (11/18)*

Zukin, S. (2009) *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places. New York*: Oxford University Press. (Introduction and Chapter 1)

*Wednesday (11/20)*

Zukin, S. (2009) *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places. New York*: Oxford University Press. (Introduction and Chapters 2-3)

*Friday (11/22)*

Zukin, S. (2009) *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places. New York*: Oxford University Press. (Chapter 4)

**Week 9: Eviction**

*Monday (11/25)*

Desmond, M. (2012) Eviction and the reproduction of urban poverty. *American Journal of Sociology* 118(1): 88-133.

*Wednesday (11/27)*

Desmond, cont.

*Friday (11/29)*

Thanksgiving holiday, no class!

**Week 10: Mental Health in the City and Final Review**

*Monday (12/2)*

Gong, N. (2019) “Between tolerant containment and concerted constraint: Managing madness for the city and the privileged family.” *American Sociological Review* 84(4): 664–689.

*Wednesday (12/4)*

Review

*Friday (12/678)*

Review