

Geog3371W: Cities, Citizens, and Communities

225 Blegen | 10:00 – 1:00 Tuesdays/Thursdays | Summer 2012

Instructor: Jerry Shannon

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Course overview and requirements

For much of the last year, Occupy movements nationwide have rallied around the cause of the “99 percent” and raising public awareness of rising social disparities. One interesting aspect of these movements is their urban focus, their insistence that cities are key places where inequality is produced and most visible. This course uses this as a jumping off point by asking how cities matter to discussions of social justice and equity. Focusing mainly on contemporary American cities, we will shape our learning this semester around three main questions:

- 1) Who has a right to the city and its public spaces?
- 2) What factors shape the health and resiliency of urban neighborhoods and their residents?
- 3) What’s at stake in the ways we map urban inequality?

Course readings will provide potential answers to these questions. Through our course readings and conversation, you’ll develop your own answers, or perhaps just more questions.

This is a writing intensive course, which means you’ll be doing a lot of writing. You will be assigned three papers. Two of them are relatively short (4-5 pages). First, you’ll observe a public space somewhere in the Twin Cities and use course reading(s) to frame what you notice about it. Second, you’ll do an analytical comparison of 2-3 articles from our readings. Your final paper will be longer, about 10 pages. You’ll have a few options for how to complete this, but all will ask you to build upon and extend the course readings in some way. You’ll be doing regular informal writing as well, including a paper proposal, bibliography, and in-class reading responses.

While our class times will include some lectures, we’ll keep things varied with small and large group discussion, several films, a handful of activities, and a trip to downtown Minneapolis. While the condensed nature of this course will make it all a whirlwind, by the end you should have a better grasp of what folks in urban geography and related fields have to say on the issues of justice, equity, and health in the contemporary Western city.

Texts

Most of our readings for the course come from academic books and articles. Class discussions will focus on developing our understanding and reaction to these pieces. Readings will be made available through the Moodle course site in PDF format and are listed at the end of this syllabus. It is your responsibility to download these readings and print them if desired.

You are expected to have read the day’s assigned pieces prior to class. For the purposes of this course, “read” can be defined as spending time getting familiar with the main arguments of an article or chapter and being prepared to offer an opinion on those arguments. We will spend time writing about the day’s readings at the start of every class, so come prepared! You should also have a hard copy of readings, detailed notes, or a laptop with a PDF for easy reference during lecture/discussion.

Class schedule (as of July 3)

Unit 1: Whose city?

Tues., June 12: Intro to the course

Thurs., June 14: The Right to the City; Watch *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*

Read: Marcuse, Harvey

Tues., June 19: Readings on public space; Downtown field trip

Read: Latham et al., "Public Space" and **one** of the following (sign up in class): Davis, Zukin, Mitchell, Latham ("Urbanity..."), Valentine/Koskela & Pain (2 readings)

Thurs., June 21: Streets, sidewalks, and transit; Bill Lindeke, guest speaker; Review paper guidelines

Read: Jacobs, Day

Tues., June 26: Housing crises; Talk over fieldwork paper

Read: Leinberger; Mele

Due: Fieldwork paper

Unit 2: The healthy city?

Thurs., June 28: Transition to unit 2; Environmental justice; Introduce final paper assignment

Read: Pulido, Pellow

Tues., July 3: Disasters and resilience; research workshop; Watch *When the Levees Broke* episode

Read: Dyson; Campanella

Thurs., July 5: Neighborhoods and Health; workshop your paper proposals

Read: MacIntyre & Ellaway; Acevedo-Garcia, et al.

Tues., July 10: Obesity, food, and urban spaces; Watch *The Apple Pushers*

Read: Smith & Cummins; Guthman

Thurs., July 12: Discuss your papers; Watch *Geospatial Revolution*; Transition to Unit 3; Conferences

Due: Pairings paper

Unit 3: Where is inequality?

Tues., July 17: Women, GIS, and the mapped city; Review paper requirements; Conferences

Read: McClafferty, Kwan

Due: Paper proposal and bibliography

Thurs., July 19: Jeff Matson speaks; Segregation; Activity: Getting familiar with GIS

Read: Wilkes & Iceland; Phillips; Latham et al., "Segregation"

Tues., July 24: Luther Krueger speaks; Activity: comparing racial segregation across cities; In-class revision

Due: Research paper draft

Thurs., July 26: In class revision; Watch *Requiem for Detroit*; Conference times

Due: Revision letters and comments

Tues., July 31: GIS, metrics, and urban space; TED talks about cities; Work and conference times

Read: **One** of the following (sign up in class): Pavlovskaya, Brown & Knopp, Elwood, Kneebone and Garr

Thurs., Aug. 2: Extra credit presentations; Wrap up of course topics

Due: Final draft of research paper

Grades

Course grades will be determined out of 250 total points. The distribution of those points will be as follows:

- Class participation: **30 points**
- Fieldwork and Pairings papers (4-5 pages): **50 points each**
- Paper proposal and peer review letters: **10 points each**
- Final paper (10 pages): **100 points**

Class participation will be determined on your attendance, participation in discussion, peer review, and doing the reading. The last item will be measured through the daily “100 words and a question” reading responses completed in class, which will be worth two points each.

Final grades will be determined using a standard grading scale, as follows:

A+ 250-245	B: 219-205	C- 179-175
A 244-230	B- 204-200	D+ 174-170
A- 229-225	C+ 199-195	D 169-150
B+ 224-220	C 194-180	F 149 and below

The grading policy in this course conforms to university guidelines. Therefore a "C" is equivalent to basic fulfillment of requirements; to achieve a grade higher than a "C" a student must perform beyond the basic requirements. Please keep the following scale and criteria in mind:

- A--Achievement outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
- B--Achievement significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements
- C--Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect
- D--Achievement worthy of credit, even though it fails to meet course requirements fully
- F--Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either: (1) completed but at a level of achievement not worthy of credit; or (2) was not completed, and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an "I."

Extra Credit

You can earn up to 10 points of extra credit by completing a presentation on your final paper during the last week of class. This is voluntary but a nice way to share your work. You should do it!

Electronic Devices

Please don't text, instant message, email, or post on Facebook/Twitter during lecture and class discussion. Doing so is disrespectful and distracting for me and your classmates. Also limit phone calls to emergencies/urgent situations. In short, use common sense and stay focused on our class.

Moodle

Grades, readings, and assignments will be handled through the course Moodle site. The most direct way to get on Moodle is to go this URL: <http://moodle2.umn.edu>. Click on the “Login with Internet or Guest ID” on the left hand side and enter your x.500 username and password. A link to the course site should appear. Alternatively, you can also access the site by going to the MyU site (<http://www.myu.umn.edu>), logging in, and clicking on the “My Courses” tab. The course Moodle site should be listed on the resulting screen.

Late work

There are three major papers in this course. In the event any of these is turned in after the due date listed on the assignment, there will be a *penalty equal to 10% of the paper's value* applied. Any assignment not turned in by *one week* after the due date will be given a 0.

No late work is accepted for the daily "100 words and a question" reading responses. If you will be absent, post your thoughts on the Moodle forum for these responses (at the top of that webpage) *prior* to class time.

Absences

Attendance is required at all class meetings and will be assessed mainly through the daily reading responses. This is especially important in a summer course where each class is the equivalent of one week of a regular semester. I do not classify absences as excused or unexcused. Instead, since illnesses and emergencies happen, you are allowed one absence without penalty. Any additional absences will result in a *3 point deduction* from your class participation grade. If there's a longer term health issue or other life circumstance that will result in you missing multiple classes, *notify me as soon as possible*.

Scholastic Dishonesty

The Student Conduct Code defines plagiarism along with other forms of scholastic dishonesty in this way: "Scholastic Dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis."

Plagiarism is a serious offense anywhere, but especially so in a university environment. Any assignment that uses another's work without proper acknowledgement will be penalized. Plagiarism that is clearly intentional and extensive will result in a failing grade for the course. For more information, see <http://writing.umn.edu/tww/preventing/index.html>

Students with Disabilities

Any student with a documented disability condition (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, systemic, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange accommodations should contact Disability Services (612-626-1333) and me at the beginning of the semester.

Grade Disputes

If you feel that an assignment has not been graded fairly, contact me within a week of receiving the disputed grade. You should provide substantive reasons for your dispute, such as reference to the assigned goals of the assignment. I will respond to any such requests promptly. If you are dissatisfied with my response, you may also contact the Student Conflict Resolution Center (<http://www.sos.umn.edu/students/grades.html>).

Student Conduct

The University of Minnesota Student Conduct Code governs all activities in the University, including this course. Students who engage in behavior that disrupts the learning environment for others may be subject to disciplinary action under the Code. This includes any behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts my ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-

based requirements or related activities. Students responsible for such behavior may be asked to cancel their registration (or have their registration canceled).

Course Bibliography

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