

NOHAD A. TOULAN SCHOOL OF URBAN STUDIES & PLANNING
PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

Urban Economic and Spatial Structure (USP 613)

Winter 2023

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Class Time: 1:00pm-3:40pm, Thursdays, URBN 220

Office Hours: 4-5pm T/Th, self-schedule at <http://bit.ly/ProfSchrockOfficeHours>; other times by appointment

Urban scholars have long sought to comprehend and explain the economic forces that give rise to cities through processes of urbanization, and impact the spatial dynamics of urban form and development. Not surprisingly, scholars have adapted these theories over time to reflect the changing circumstances facing cities, from changes to urban economic structure and function to technological shifts to changing patterns of land use and the built environment. As with any body of theory, the fundamental question is whether the new theories add explanatory power to our understanding of the “facts on the ground” in relation to existing theories.

This course is designed to introduce students to both seminal theoretical works, and contemporary debates, around these fundamental questions of urban growth and change. Although our focus is on the “economic,” our disciplinary scope will be relatively broad, encompassing scholarship in economics, geography, urban planning, and urban sociology. While this course is not an urban economics course *per se*, it is assumed that you have at least some rudimentary knowledge of microeconomic concepts; if not, you will likely need to backfill some of this along the way.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Describe and analyze foundational concepts of urbanization, agglomeration and urban form and spatial structure;
- Critically assess contemporary debates regarding urbanization and urban form, and their implications for urban phenomena and change, including dynamics of urban inequality and marginalization;
- Appreciate and critically assess diverse perspectives on urbanization, urban form and spatial structure, including diverse theoretical traditions and perspectives from outside of historically-dominant scholarly paradigms.

TEXTS

There are no required books for this course; the readings will be drawn from journal articles and book chapters, which will be made available via Canvas.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Your course grade will be based on five grade items:

Reading responses (15% of course grade): In at least five weeks of your choosing over the term (not including week 10), you will write a response to the week's assigned readings and post it to a discussion board on Canvas. These will be brief (200-300 words), and worth three percent each, to be graded on a check plus/minus basis. You may complete more than five responses; I will count the best five toward your final grade. The point of the reading responses is not to offer a comprehensive summary of the week's readings, but rather to articulate and support a singular thesis in relation to at least one of the readings.

Due date: Weekly, by 11am Thursdays

Topical literature review (15% of course grade): For one of the weeks during the term (not including week 10), you will write a longer (1200-1800 word) review of the week's readings, including at least three readings beyond the assigned set for the week. The objective of this assignment is to demonstrate your ability to synthesize literatures and draw out core themes, points of debate among authors, and relevant gaps and silences.

Due date: Friday, March 10th at 11:59pm

Midterm exam (20%): Between weeks 5 and 6, you will complete a take-home exam consisting of short essay questions relating to the topics of the first five weeks.

Final essay (30%): During finals week (ie, week 11), there will be a take-home essay exam based on the material of the full term.

Class Participation (20%): This class will operate as a seminar, which means that students are expected to be prepared and participate actively in the class discussion. Class participation grades will be based on the *quality*, not the *quantity*, of participation. Participation may come in the form of augmenting your own or commenting on other students' reading responses (before or after class) or posting additional materials on Canvas discussion boards.

ACCESS AND INCLUSION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: PSU values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students. My goal is to create a learning environment that is equitable, useable, inclusive, and welcoming. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) [<https://www.pdx.edu/drc>] provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment. If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. If you already have accommodations, please contact me to make sure that I have received a faculty notification letter and discuss your accommodations.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: It should go without saying that plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated, but I will say it anyway. “Academic dishonesty,” according to Section 577-031-0136 of the PSU Student Code of Conduct, refers to as “the act of knowingly or intentionally seeking to claim credit for the work or effort of another person or participation in such acts.”

[<http://www.pdx.edu/dos/codeofconduct>] This encompasses both egregious acts of cheating like copying the answer to someone else’s exam, but also more mundane acts like lifting reference material from websites without attribution. Per university policy, instances of academic dishonesty may result in a zero grade for those assignment(s). Regardless of how the issue is resolved, any incident of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Urban Studies Program Director and/or TSUSP School Director; students committing repeated acts of academic dishonesty may be subject to sanctions within their respective academic programs.

SAFE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: Portland State is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment (sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, and gender or sex-based harassment and stalking). If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or sexual harassment, know that help and support are available. Information about PSU’s support services on campus, including confidential services and reporting options, can be found on PSU’s Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response website at: <http://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/get-help> or you may call a confidential IPV Advocate at 503-725-5672 or schedule Online at <https://psuwrc.youcanbook.me>. You may report any incident of discrimination or discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment, to:

- PSU’s Title IX Coordinator: Rebecca Lawrence by calling 503-725-4410, via email at titleixcoordinator@pdx.edu or in person at Richard and Maureen Neuberger Center (RMNC), 1600 SW 4th Ave, Suite 830.
- Taylor Burke, Deputy Title IX Coordinator and Dean of Students: 503.725.4422 | askdos@pdx.edu, Smith Memorial Student Union (SMSU), 825 SW Broadway, Suite 433.

Please be aware that all PSU faculty members and instructors are required to report information of an incident that may constitute prohibited discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. This means that if you tell me about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence that may have violated university policy or student code of conduct, I have to share the information with my supervisor, the University’s Title IX Coordinator or the Office of the Dean of Student Life. However, the Title IX Coordinators will keep the information confidential and refer you to a confidential advocate. For more information about Title IX please complete the required student module [*Understanding Sexual Misconduct and Learning Resources*](#) in Canvas.

Additionally, I will be asking the class to help create a Community Agreement to govern the classroom environment. Students who consistently transgress this agreement may be subject to sanction within or beyond the class.

If you have concerns about things happening in the class, you are encouraged to reach out to me, or avail yourself of the various resources within the School and University, listed under the “[Resources and Reporting](#)” page on the TSUSP homepage>Equity.

COURSE OUTLINE

NOTE: Required and supplemental readings are subject to change. Check Canvas for an updated list.

Week 1 (Jan 12): Overview
<p>In this first session we will take stock of the important questions that scholars have posed about the economic foundations of urban and regional development and urban form. We will also consider how different theoretical traditions (neoclassical, Marxian, institutional) “explain.”</p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <p>Glaeser, Edward L. 2007. “The Economics Approach to Cities.” NBER Working Paper 13696. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.</p> <p>Krätke, Stefan. 2014. “Cities in Contemporary Capitalism.” <i>International Journal of Urban and Regional Research</i> 38 (5): 1660–77.</p> <p>Lawhon, Mary, and Yaffa Truelove. 2020. “Disambiguating the Southern Urban Critique: Propositions, Pathways and Possibilities for a More Global Urban Studies.” <i>Urban Studies</i> 57 (1): 3–20.</p> <p>Dantzer, Prentiss A. 2021. “The Urban Process Under Racial Capitalism: Race, Anti-Blackness, and Capital Accumulation.” <i>Journal of Race, Ethnicity and the City</i> 2 (2): 113–34.</p> <p>Review the following articles from USP 614:</p> <p>Robinson, Jennifer. 2010. “Cities in a World of Cities: The Comparative Gesture.” <i>International Journal of Urban and Regional Research</i> 35 (1): 1–23.</p> <p>Scott, Allen J., and Michael Storper. 2015. “The Nature of Cities: The Scope and Limits of Urban Theory.” <i>International Journal of Urban and Regional Research</i>, 39 (1): 1-15.</p>
Week 2 (Jan 19): Agglomeration and Urbanization
<p>The most fundamental economic question posed by urban scholars is: why do cities exist in the first place? How is the basis for urbanization changing over time? How do economic explanations for urban growth co-exist and compare with other explanations? In this week we unpack the basic economic concept of agglomeration, and how its manifestations are changing as the economy changes.</p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <p>Jacobs, Jane. 1969. “How Cities Start Growing.” In <i>The Economy of Cities</i>, 123–202. New York: Vintage.</p> <p>Thompson, Wilbur R. 1975. “Internal and External Factors in the Development of Urban Economies.” In <i>Regional Policy: Readings in Theory and Applications</i>, edited by John Friedmann and William Alonso, 201–20. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.</p> <p>Scott, Allen J. 2011. “Emerging Cities of the Third Wave.” <i>City</i> 15 (3–4): 289–321.</p> <p>Turok, Ivan, and Gordon McGranahan. 2013. “Urbanization and Economic Growth: The Arguments and Evidence for Africa and Asia.” <i>Environment and Urbanization</i> 25 (2): 465–82.</p>

Simone, Abdoumalig. 2016. "It's Just the City after All!" *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 40 (1): 210-18.

Week 3 (Jan 26): Urban Systems and Polarized Development

How are urban regions connected to one another within the larger capitalist space- and political-economy? How are the relationships changing as the economy changes and restructures? In this week we examine theories of "global cities" and how they conceptualize the forces and processes impacting cities along the urban hierarchy.

Readings:

Friedmann, John, and Goetz Wolff. 1982. "World City Formation: An Agenda for Research and Action." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 6 (3): 309-44.

Krugman, Paul. 1999. "The Role of Geography in Development," *International Regional Science Review*, 22 (2): 142-161.

Robinson, Jennifer. 2002. "Global and World Cities: A View from Off the Map." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 26 (3): 531-54.

Brenner, Neil, and Christian Schmid. 2015. "Towards a New Epistemology of the Urban?" *City* 19 (2-3): 151-82.

Simone, Abdoumalig. 2020. "Cities of the Global South." *Annual Review of Sociology*, 46: 603-22.

Week 4 (Feb 2): Urban Land and Urban Spatial Dynamics

How do economic theories explain urban form, and how it has changed over time? In this session we engage with seminal theories of urban economics (both neoclassical and heterodox), which shine an analytical light on key aspects of the urban development process. We also engage with the institution of land as a market commodity, which underpin these theories.

Readings:

Harvey, David. 1973. "Use Value, Exchange Value, and the Theory of Urban Land Use," in *Social Justice and the City*, pp. 153-194.

Lipsitz, George. 2007. "The Racialization of Space and the Spatialization of Race: Theorizing the Hidden Architecture of Landscape." *Landscape Journal* 26 (1): 10-23.

McCann, Phillip. 2013. "The Spatial Structure of the Urban Economy." In *Modern Urban and Regional Economics*, 2nd ed., 107-39. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Haila, Anne. 2015. "Ideologies of Land." In *Urban Land Rent: Singapore As a Property State*. Chichester, England: Wiley Blackwell.

Ghertner, D. Asher. 2020. "Lively Lands: The Spatial Reproduction Squeeze and the Failure of the Urban Imaginary." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 44 (4): 561-81.

Week 5 (Feb 9): Urban Growth, Sprawl and Changing Urban Form

One focus of urban scholarship has been the trend toward decentralization and dispersion of economic activity away from urban centers. In this session we examine economic explanations for the phenomenon of “sprawl,” and arguments regarding changing patterns of urban morphology, both here in the United States and beyond, including the phenomenon of “peri-urban” development in the Global South. At the same time, we take stock of the dynamic of re-centralization at work in many cities.

Readings:

Walker, Richard A. 1981. “A Theory of Suburbanization: Capitalism and the Construction of Urban Space in the United States.” In *Urbanization and Urban Planning in Capitalist Society*, 383–429.

Glaeser, Edward L., and Janet E. Kohlhase. 2003. “Cities, Regions and the Decline of Transport Costs.” *Papers in Regional Science* 83 (1): 197–228.

Gospodini, Aspa. 2006. “Portraying, Classifying and Understanding the Emerging Landscapes in the Post-Industrial City.” *Cities* 23 (5): 311–30.

(* read one) *Caldeira, Teresa P.R. 2017. “Peripheral Urbanization: Autoconstruction, Transversal Logics, and Politics in Cities of the Global South.” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 35 (1): 3–20.

*Keil, Roger. 2018. “Extended Urbanization, ‘Disjunct Fragments’ and Global Suburbanisms.” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 36 (3): 494–511.

Additionally, pick one from selected readings (or one on your own) about peri-urbanization in the Global South.

Week 6 (Feb 16): Urban Development and the Local State

Economic theory has sought to explain how local government is organized toward the provision of public goods in society, with Tiebout’s theory of “voting with your feet” being the most prominent among them. In this session we discuss the Tiebout model and the resulting impacts of metropolitan fragmentation on urban development patterns, while noting the global trend toward fiscal and political decentralization.

Readings:

Peterson, Paul E. 1981. “The Interests of the Limited City.” In *City Limits*, 17–38. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Harvey, David. 1989. “From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in Urban Governance in Late Capitalism.” *Geografiska Annaler. Series B. Human Geography*, 3–17.

Markusen, Ann. 1984. “Class and Urban Social Expenditure: A Marxist Theory of Metropolitan Government.” In *Marxism and the Metropolis*, edited by William K. Tabb and Larry Sawers, 2nd ed., 82–100. New York: Oxford University Press.

Howell-Moroney, Michael. 2008. “The Tiebout Hypothesis 50 Years Later: Lessons and Lingering Challenges for Metropolitan Governance in the 21st Century.” *Public Administration Review* 68 (1): 97–109.

Pick one from selected readings about urban governance in the Global South.

Week 7 (Feb 23): Housing Markets, Gentrification and Neighborhood Change

Housing markets are fundamental to the dynamics of urban growth and change, especially in terms of neighborhoods and socioeconomic patterns of change, where individual decisions translate into processes of neighborhood disinvestment or gentrification. In this session we review basic theories of housing market dynamics, with a particular emphasis on gentrification.

Readings:

- Aalbers, Manuel B., and Brett Christophers. 2014. "Centering Housing in Political Economy." *Housing, Theory and Society* 31 (4): 373–94.
- Berry, Brian. 1985. "Islands of Renewal in Seas of Decay." In *The New Urban Reality*, edited by Paul E. Peterson, 69–96. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.
- Pattillo, Mary. 2013. "Housing: Commodity versus Right." *Annual Review of Sociology* 39: 509–31.
- Smith, Neil. 1996. "Local Arguments: From 'Consumer Sovereignty' to the Rent Gap." In *The New Urban Frontier*, 49–71. New York: Routledge.
- Rucks-Ahidiana, Zawadi. 2022. "Theorizing Gentrification as a Process of Racial Capitalism." *City & Community*, 74 (3): 173-192.

Week 8 (Mar 2): Segregation and Urban Inequality

A tremendous amount of urban scholarship has focused on the plight of disadvantaged and marginalized populations, and the neighborhoods in which they live. But how should we make sense of the economic factors that play a role in producing, sustaining – or reversing – the marginalization of poor communities and communities of color? Should efforts to address inequality focus on poor places or poor people?

Readings:

- Garrido, Marco. 2021. "Reconceptualizing Segregation from the Global South." *City & Community* 0 (0): 1-19.
- Gibson, Karen J. 2007. "Bleeding Albina: A History of Community Disinvestment, 1940-2000." *Transforming Anthropology* 15 (1): 3–25.
- Goetz, Edward G., Rashad A. Williams, and Anthony Damiano. 2020. "Whiteness and Urban Planning." *Journal of the American Planning Association* 86 (2): 142–56.
- Sampson, Robert J. 2018. "Neighbourhood Effects and beyond: Explaining the Paradoxes of Inequality in the Changing American Metropolis." *Urban Studies* 56 (1): 3–32.
- Slater, Tom. 2013. "Your Life Chances Affect Where You Live: A Critique of the 'Cottage Industry' of Neighbourhood Effects Research." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 37 (2): 367–87.

Week 9 (Mar 9): Urbanization and the Environment

Are cities and urbanization processes good or bad for the sustainability of natural and environmental systems? As recognition of the unfolding climate crisis grows, so does scholarship aimed at understanding this intersection. In this week we will survey the urban environmental

literature and how it makes sense of this dynamic, and the relationship between urbanization and natural systems more broadly.

Readings:

Pulido, Laura. 2000. "Rethinking Environmental Racism: White Privilege and Urban Development in Southern California." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 90 (1): 12–40.

Angelo, Hillary, and David Wachsmuth. 2020. "Why Does Everyone Think Cities Can Save the Planet?" *Urban Studies* 57 (11): 2201–21.

Savini, Federico. 2021. "Towards an Urban Degrowth: Habitability, Finitude and Polycentric Autonomism." *Environment and Planning A* 0 (0): 1–20.

Seto, Karen C., Roberto Sánchez-Rodríguez, and Michail Fragkias. 2010. "The New Geography of Contemporary Urbanization and the Environment." *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 35 (1): 167–94.

Swyngedouw, Erik, and Nikolas C. Heynen. 2003. "Urban Political Ecology, Justice and the Politics of Scale." *Antipode* 35 (5): 898–918.

Week 10 (Mar 16): Students' choice

In the final week I let the students pick the topic(s).