

## Syllabus – USP 300 Intro to Urban Studies, Winter 2024

### Instructor Information

Norene Hough (she/her/ they/ them)

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Office Hours: Wednesday 2- 4 pm in B370, Urban Center or by appointment

### Course Description

USP 300 is a 4-credit course (CRN 63827) that introduces the interdisciplinary field of urban studies drawing on urban planning, economics, geography, sociology, politics and the humanities to provide basic concepts for understanding the urbanized world of the twenty-first century. This course discusses cities as economic, social, and political systems and ways in which people have thought about cities.

### Learning Outcomes

- Pursue a metacognitive process to be a reflexive reader, thinker, and learner while monitoring one's own comprehension of text, self-assessing your own learning. Engage with your own complex learning style, education, identity, and biases and how it impacts your perspective to synthesize and process new information presented in academic context.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and variety of urban forms and structures; and explain how the idea of the city varies in different historical and comparative contexts.
- Describe the distinctive social, cultural, and spatial features of cities and illustrate their impacts on the urban experience; and develop an appreciation of the complexity of cities in form and function and the importance of a multi-disciplinary approach to their investigation.
- Dissect the socio-structural power dynamics in researching/ studying cities as part of urban studies and how this process has contributed/ continues to perpetuate institutional, systemic, and structural racism.
- Demonstrate familiarity with a multi-disciplinary approach to the city as an object of study; and apply concepts or methods from more than one social science or adjacent discipline to analyze an urban issue or problem.
- This is a UNST Cluster course - this means we integrate the 4 program learning goals from University Studies: [Communication; Inquiry & Critical Thinking; Diversity, Equity & Social Justice, and Ethics Agency & Community](#).

### Class Materials

**This class has no required texts to purchase.** We will rely on articles, websites, and videos that will be posed to Canvas. We will use technology including (but not limited to) Canvas, email, Zoom, GIS StoryMaps, Websites and Google Suite. You are responsible for accessing these technologies multiple times per week. **You do need regular internet access and a computer/ laptop/ Chromebook for this class.** Reliance solely on a cellular connection and/or using a tablet will not be sufficient for the assignments in this course.

## Class Format

The course is organized thematically. We will meet in person twice a week and then have additional materials for outside of class that will include: pre-recorded lectures; readings; videos; web based activities, and discussions. This course asks you to practice the skills used by urban scholars every day to study & better under the city. Upper-division students are expected to be self-directed learners able to summarize and synthesize lectures, readings, media, and lead discussions.

Our class meets in person on Mondays & Wednesdays from 12 pm - 1:50. During class we will be engaging in discussions & activities. It is vital that you are able to regularly attend. **It is not possible to pass this course if you do not have regular attendance.**

The materials for the course will be run through the class Canvas site and all materials will be posted to that site. It is important to let the instructor know if you are not able to access information or if you are having problems with the technology. You will be *required to interact with the Class Canvas site multiple times per week.*

In addition, we will be using StoryMaps through your pdx.edu on-line subscription - so you will need to have regular access to a computer (not tablet/ phone/ Chromebook) to use this product. You can do this entirely on campus, in the computer lab.

## **Expectations for Inclusivity:**

Building an inclusive learning environment requires us to work together to listen (reading carefully and reflecting in the online environment), and make room for all to have a say (asking questions and interacting in an encouraging way); to support each other to find our voice; and to recognize and anticipate a wide range of perspectives, backgrounds, experiences, identities, and ways of being in the world.

We can all promote safe and inclusive learning by listening deeply (including reading carefully and reflecting) and being ready to learn from those around us. In an online learning environment, it is important to work to write clearly, thoughtfully, and respectfully (take your time and consider the impact of your words). Please learn and use the correct pronouns for your classmates, please do not make assumptions. I hope that we can begin from a place of mutual respect and gentle personalism – taking each other where we are at each day, offering the benefit of the doubt, and being aware that the workings of power and privilege impact different communities and individuals in different ways.

## Assignments

*The description below summarizes the grades and assignments for this course. Further guidance and detailed instructions about each assignment will be provided in each module and via Canvas. The class has a total of 1,000 possible points.*

### **In- Class Tasks, Out of Class Activities & Participation**

**300 points**

Participation in this course is key. Attendance will be taken and there will be Google Surveys, small in class activities, and some points will be assigned for tasks you will complete both in & outside of class.

### **Weekly Note-taking Activity/ Reading Processing Activity**

**300 points**

To support the key class objective of learning to be a reflective learner, each week you will be responsible for completing and submitting a weekly Note-taking Activity Task. These tasks ask you to engage with reads & videos; think and process the information, and then create some set of notes/ study sheets that you can use in the future. Further directions will be given each week. There are 10 weeks and you are responsible for 10 Note-taking Activities (30 points each for 10 weeks for a total of 300 points.) These are due each week no later than midnight each Sunday.

### **City Exploration Project**

**400 points**

Each student will investigate a different city and create a city presentation. This project will be broken up over the course of the term into small weekly assignments you are responsible for researching your city & adding to Presentation. Students will create a visual story; explore how cities vary across the US, and how to concisely present information in both visual & written formats. Tasks are assigned each week, there will be checks on your progress in weeks 3 & 6 with the final project due in week 10.

***This class has no final exam.***

## Grading Policies

Grades in college are about more than just having completed the assignment. I subscribe to the Dr. Bates categorization of student work:

- An A assignment demonstrates original thought and synthesis of ideas, sophisticated, cogent analysis, and is clearly written or presented. Outstanding work.
- A B assignment presents above average analysis with appropriate evidence to support the ideas and is clearly written or presented. Very good work.
- A C assignment shows a basic level of understanding, with analysis limited to the most obvious arguments. Writing is competent. Adequate work.
- A D assignment misunderstands or misrepresents the material, or is so poorly written or presented as to obscure the analysis. Inadequate work.

**Final Grades** – Grades in this course are determined by points. Your percentage is based on these points.

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
Percentage Cutoff/ based on points	94%	90%	87%	84%	80%	77%	74%	70%	67%	64%	60%	0%

**No Incomplete grades** (“I” grades) will not be offered in USP 311. If you are experiencing difficulty, please seek help from the instructor or other campus supports as soon as possible. For more information, please consult the university “I-to-F” grade policy.

## **Late Work Policies**

**Grading:** Grades are determined entirely based on points assigned. The points for each assignment will be detailed on both the syllabus and each assignment. I use the standard university grading scale as detailed below. All grades are kept up to date in Canvas. The instructor provides feedback on larger assignments. If you have any questions about a grade, at any time, please email the instructor. It is your responsibility to check your grades on Canvas and ensure that you are making progress.

**Late Work Policies:** Classes move very fast & 10 weeks is very quick when you get behind. Late work makes it hard to keep up and engage with your peers. As a result, late work will be accepted for up to 1 week after the due date with a 10% penalty. After one week, I will not accept late work in this course.

**I know many unexpected things may happen, if you are behind in the course or something happens that puts you behind/ you need an extension, please contact the instructor immediately.** I can be very flexible but I need to know what is going on so that I can offer you that flexibility. Extensions require emailing the instructor and creating a new work plan.

**P/NP option:** At this time the option for **Pass/ No Pass is NOT being offered** for this course for this term. You have to receive a letter grade upon the completion of this class. Please know that if you get behind, I am willing to work with you. However, this requires us to meet and create a plan.

## Class Schedule

Week/ Date Module/ Topic	Tasks <i>(Materials are due on Mondays, Wednesdays &amp; Sundays)</i>	Deliverables
<p><b>Week 1</b>  <b>Jan 8 - Jan 14</b></p> <p><b>Introduction &amp; Thinking about Cities</b>                      +  <b>Understanding Cities/ Ways of Seeing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Into Google Survey</li> <li>→ Module Learning Objectives</li> <li>→ Directions for the Weekly Note-taking Activity</li> <li>→ Readings/ Videos/ Materials for the Week:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ What is a City? (4 min)</li> <li>◆ <u>Urban Geography: A Critical Introduction</u> Ch 1 (17 pages)</li> <li>◆ How big can cities get? (10 min 55 sec)</li> <li>◆ Why are People Moving to Cities (11 min 15 sec)</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Week 1 Note-taking Activity: Questions/ Your Own Style due Sun.</li> <li>→ City Exploration Project Task: Pick a City &amp; Get Started</li> </ul>	<p>Wednesday:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intro Survey</li> <li>• Bring Personal Object to Share</li> </ul> <p>Sunday:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Week 1 Note-taking Activity</li> <li>• Pick a City for Your Project &amp; Get Started</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 2</b>  <b>Jan 15 - Jan 21</b></p> <p><b>Cities as Object of Study: Space &amp; Place</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Module Learning Objectives</li> <li>→ Directions for the Weekly Note-taking Activity</li> <li>→ Readings/ Videos/ Materials for the Week:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ How are Cities Organized? (11 min 52 sec)</li> <li>◆ Space &amp; Status by Daphne Spain (10 pages)</li> <li>◆ Grand Reductions: 10 Diagrams That Changed City Planning (22 pages)</li> <li>◆ Why Cities are Where They Are (14 min)</li> <li>◆ Here Are the Real Boundaries of American Metropolises, Decided by Algorithm (2 pages)</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Week 2 Note-taking Activity: Main idea + Visuals &amp; Descriptions</li> <li>→ City Exploration Project Task: Map &amp; Description</li> </ul>	<p>Sunday:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Week 2 Note-taking Activity</li> <li>• Make Progress on Your City Project</li> </ul>

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Week/ Date Module/ Topic	Tasks (Materials are due on <b>Wednesday &amp; Sundays</b> )	Deliverables
<p><b>Week 3</b>  <b>Jan 22 - Jan 28</b></p> <p><b>Selected History of Cities:</b>                      Settler Colonialism &amp; Industrialization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Module Learning Objectives</li> <li>→ Directions for the Weekly Note-taking Activity</li> <li>→ Readings/ Videos/ Materials for the Week:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Land Acknowledgment &amp; Western Lens (1 page)</li> <li>◆ Why did humans invent cities? (10 min)</li> <li>◆ The Dirt of Cities by Illich (3 pages)</li> <li>◆ Coal, Steam and the Industrial Revolution: Crash Course World History #32 (11 min)</li> <li>◆ How US corporations poisoned this Indigenous community by Vox (17 min)</li> <li>◆ The Centrifugal 20th Century (4 min)</li> <li>◆ Growth, Cities, and Immigration (12 min 45 sec)</li> <li>◆ 2020 Census shows U.S. population (6 pages)</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Week 3 Note-taking Activity: KWL &amp; Internet Visuals</li> <li>→ City Exploration Project Task: History Slideshow &amp; Turn in Project</li> </ul>	<p>Sunday:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Week 3 Note-taking Activity</li> <li>• Make Progress on Your City Project</li> <li>• <b>1st Draft of your City Project Turned In</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 4</b>  <b>Jan 29 - Feb 4</b></p> <p><b>Considering Urban &amp; Suburban Spaces</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Module Learning Objectives</li> <li>→ Directions for the Weekly Note-taking Activity</li> <li>→ Readings/ Videos/ Materials for the Week:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The New Urban Sociology Ch. 6 (30 pages)</li> <li>◆ What is a Suburb? (9 min)</li> <li>◆ An Inversion of Nature: How AC Created the Modern City (5 pages)</li> <li>◆ The Disturbing History of the Suburbs (6 min 19 sec)</li> <li>◆ Urban Geography: Why do we Live Where we Do? (8 min 45 sec)</li> <li>◆ What is the biggest threat facing cities? (1 page)</li> <li>◆ Suburbia is Subsidized (10 min)</li> <li>◆ Population Density 101: A Visual Guide to Suburbs and Skyscrapers (10 min)</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Week 4 Note-taking Activity: Mind mapping or Charting Method</li> <li>→ City Exploration Project Task: Landmark Map</li> </ul>	<p>Sunday:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Week 4 Note-taking Activity</li> <li>• Make Progress on Your City Project</li> </ul>

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Week/ Date Module/ Topic	Tasks (Materials are due on <i>Wednesday &amp; Sundays</i> )	Deliverables
<p><b>Week 5</b> <b>Feb 5 - Feb 11</b></p> <p><b>Mental Health in Urban Spaces</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Module Learning Objectives</li> <li>→ Directions for the Weekly Note-taking Activity</li> <li>→ Readings/ Videos/ Materials for the Week:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Excerpts from: <i>The Urban Brian: Mental Health and the Vital City</i> by Nikolas Rose &amp; Des Fitzgerald</li> <li>◆ <i>Global Stratification &amp; Poverty: Crash Course Sociology #27</i> (10 min 19 sec)</li> <li>◆ The study that shows life is a lot more unequal than you (probably) think. (3 min)</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Week 5 Note-taking Activity: Abstract &amp; Study Questions</li> <li>→ City Exploration Project Task: Demographic Profile</li> </ul>	<p>Sunday:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Week 5 Note-taking Activity</li> <li>● Make Progress on Your City Project</li> <li>● Mid-Term Survey</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 6</b> <b>Feb 12 - Feb 18</b></p> <p><b>Inequity in Urban Spaces: Gender &amp; Immigration</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Module Learning Objectives</li> <li>→ Directions for the Weekly Note-taking Activity</li> <li>→ Readings/ Videos/ Materials for the Week:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <i>Cities &amp; Society</i> Ch. 8 (9 pages)</li> <li>◆ Excerpts from <i>Feminist City</i> (14 pages)</li> <li>◆ These charts show how migration is changing our cities (5 pages)</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Week 6 Note-taking Activity due Sun.</li> <li>→ City Exploration Project Task: Edit &amp; Submit Draft</li> </ul>	<p>Sunday:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Week 6 Note-taking Activity</li> <li>● <b>Week 6 Draft of City Exploration Project</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 7</b> <b>Feb 19 - Feb 25</b></p> <p><b>Urban Politics &amp; Power: Government Organization, &amp; How Cities Work</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Module Learning Objectives</li> <li>→ Directions for the Weekly Note-taking Activity</li> <li>→ Readings/ Videos/ Materials for the Week:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <i>The Skeleton of Power, Chapter 13</i> (41 pages) - maybe or perhaps something else</li> <li>◆ Forms of Local Government from the National Leave of Cities (3 pages)</li> <li>◆ Which US city is closest to a true regional government? (11 min)</li> <li>◆ Who Really Designs Cities? (9 min 32 sec)</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Week 7 Note-taking Activity due Sun.</li> <li>→ City Exploration Project Task: City Government &amp; Organization</li> </ul>	<p>Thursday:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Note-taking Reflection Google Form</li> </ul> <p>Sunday:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Week 7 Note-taking Activity</li> <li>● Make Progress on Your City Project</li> </ul>

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Week/ Date Module/ Topic	Tasks (Materials are due on <b>Wednesday &amp; Sundays</b> )	Deliverables
<p><b>Week 8</b> <b>Feb 26 - Mar 3</b></p> <p><b>Challenges in Urban Spaces Today</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Module Learning Objectives</li> <li>→ Directions for the Weekly Note-taking Activity</li> <li>→ Readings/ Videos/ Materials for the Week:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Does my Neighborhood Determine my Future? (22 min)</li> <li>◆ From Cities &amp; Societies Ch. 11: Understanding Homelessness: From Global to Local by Jennifer Wolch &amp; Michael Dear (18 pages)</li> <li>◆ So You think you Understand Homelessness (16 min 22 sec)</li> <li>◆ Directions for the End of City Exploration Project</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Week 8 Note-taking Activity due Sun.</li> <li>→ City Exploration Project Task: Topic of Your Choice</li> </ul>	<p>Sunday:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Week 8 Note-taking Activity</li> <li>● Make Progress on Your City Project</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 9</b> <b>Mar 4 - Mar 10</b></p> <p><b>Urban Economies: Work &amp; Industry</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Module Learning Objectives</li> <li>→ Directions for the Weekly Note-taking Activity</li> <li>→ Readings/ Videos/ Materials for the Week:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <i>City Lights</i> Ch. 18 (30 pages) - or maybe something else?</li> <li>◆ Economic Schools of Thought (10 min)</li> <li>◆ CitiesX Videos by Ed Glaeser - (7 min total)</li> <li>◆ The Power of Place and Education – The Economics of Opportunity (8 min)</li> <li>◆ Racial Segregation in the US – Poverty in Inner Cities (4 min 37 sec)</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Week 9 Note-taking Activity due Sun.</li> <li>→ City Exploration Project Task: Business Leaders</li> </ul>	<p>Sunday:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Week 9 Note-taking Activity</li> <li>● Make Progress on Your City Project</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 10</b> <b>Mar 11 - Mar 17</b></p> <p><b>Global Cities &amp; Future Urban Forms</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Module Learning Objectives</li> <li>→ Directions for the Weekly Note-taking Activity</li> <li>→ Readings/ Videos/ Materials for the Week:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ What is a Global City? ( 3 pages)</li> <li>◆ If You Shouldn't Call It The Third World, What Should You Call It? (2 pages)</li> <li>◆ The 100 million city: is 21st century urbanization out of control? (5 pages)</li> <li>◆ Ch. 11 Urbanization in the Developing World (excerpts) The New Urban Sociology by Gottdiener, Hutchison, and Ryan (21 pages)</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Week 10 Note-taking Activity due Sun.</li> <li>→ City Exploration Project Task: Conclusion, Presentation, Edit &amp; Submit</li> </ul>	<p>Thursday:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Present Projects to Peers in Class</li> </ul> <p>Sunday:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Week 10 Note-taking Activity</li> <li>● Make Progress on Your City Project</li> <li>● End of Term Survey</li> </ul>
<p><b>Finals Week</b></p>	<p>Final Version of Your City Exploration Project - <b>Due Wednesday, March 20th before midnight.</b></p>	

## Resources & Information

### **Food Security Information**

The PSU Food Pantry offers services to currently enrolled Portland State University students, by providing a free, welcoming, and inclusive environment to acquire supplemental food items on a regular basis. The pantry is located in SMSU 325. For more information email [foodhelp@pdx.edu](mailto:foodhelp@pdx.edu)

### **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, usable, 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) 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. The DRC is located in 116 Smith Memorial Student Union, 503-725-4150, [drc@pdx.edu](mailto:drc@pdx.edu), <https://www.pdx.edu/drc>. **If you already have accommodations, please contact me to make sure that I have received a faculty notification letter and discuss your accommodations.**

### **PSU Cultural Resource Centers**

The Cultural Resource Centers (CRCs) create a student-centered inclusive environment that enriches the university experience. We honor diversity, explore social justice issues, celebrate cultural traditions, and foster student identities, success, and leadership. We provide students with employment, volunteer, and leadership opportunities. All are welcome!  
([www.pdx.edu/cultural-resource-centers](http://www.pdx.edu/cultural-resource-centers)) [cultures@pdx.edu](mailto:cultures@pdx.edu)

### **Infants/ Children in Class Policy**

Parents who are breastfeeding an infant, or expressing milk, may do so in class without the permission of the instructor. Or if you prefer to breastfeed or breast-pump outside of class, you may take time out of class to use a lactation room. If you need to bring a child/children to class, please notify the instructor ahead of time. (There are backpacks that can be checked out from the [Resource Center for Students with Children](#), SMSU 462, that have toys and games for children up to age 12). Note that you are responsible for seeing that the child or children are not disruptive to the class and for ensuring that all additional University policies and rules are followed by those that you bring (and be prepared to step outside should disruption become an issue).

**I understand the reality of COVID and having to remote learn with your children at home.** I have no problem with your children joining you on camera/ when participating in this course. Please let me know what accommodations you need to make this work.

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### **Writing Resources**

This course does require you to stretch yourself as a writer. To be an effective communicator your writing needs to 1) meet the assigned task; 2) be designed for the intended audience; 3) convey all important information. Every writer needs to proofread and revise their work to obtain the best finished product. If you need help with this process, PSU's Writing Center ([www.writingcenter.pdx.edu](http://www.writingcenter.pdx.edu)) has a variety of free services.

### **Mandated Reporter/ Title IX Reporting Obligations**

Portland State is committed to fostering a safe, productive learning environment. Title IX and our school policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, which regards sexual misconduct — including harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. We expect a culture of professionalism and mutual respect in our department and class. Please be aware that as a faculty member, I have the responsibility to report any instances of sexual harassment, sexual violence and/or other forms of prohibited discrimination to PSU's Title IX Coordinator, the Office of Equity and Compliance or the Dean of Student Life and cannot keep information confidential. You may report any incident of discrimination or discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment, to either the Office of Equity and Compliance or the Office of the Dean of Student Life. If you would rather share information about sexual harassment or sexual violence to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact a confidential advocate at 503-725-5672 or by scheduling on-line ([psuwrc.youcanbook.me](http://psuwrc.youcanbook.me)) or another confidential employee found on the sexual misconduct resource webpage. For more information about your obligations and resources for sex/gender discrimination and sexual violence (Title IX), please complete the required student module Creating a Safe Campus in your Canvas.

### **Academic Honesty & Plagiarism**

Students are expected to be ethical not only in the classroom, but also out of the classroom. It is in all students' interest to avoid committing acts of academic dishonesty and to discourage others from committing such acts. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following examples: engages in any form of academic deceit; refers to materials or sources or uses devices not authorized by the instructor for use during any quiz or assignment; provides inappropriate aid to another person in connection with any quiz or assignment; engages in Plagiarism. Cheating and or plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade for the assignment which may result in a failing grade for the course as well. For more information, please look at the PSU Student Code of Conduct ([www.pdx.edu/dos/psu-student-code-conduct](http://www.pdx.edu/dos/psu-student-code-conduct))

*Many of the sections of the syllabus were adapted from other professors and a variety of university sources.*