

Urban sociology was invented by scholars in rapidly urbanizing societies who were newcomers to the big city. Many of them had grown up in small, close-knit villages and towns. They wondered whether social bonds of any kind could long survive in a modern metropolis where people lived among millions of strangers. They asked questions like these: How do city people preserve civility, when most of their encounters are with strangers they may never see again? Who will take care of the poor and the sick, if neighbors do not know each other personally? How is it that a particular city neighborhood can maintain a definite cultural identity, when individual city people are constantly coming and going? They studied the social consequences of metropolitan living by comparing city life explicitly or implicitly to life in traditional agrarian village societies.

Today urban living is the global norm, and even most rural places are economically and socially connected to large urban centers. Instead of contrasting cities with pre-urban village life, urban sociologists today therefore generally study urban lifeways by examining the contrast between city and suburb, or contrasts among different cities, or among neighborhoods *within* a city.

In this course we will study some classic and contemporary works of urban sociology. Our goal is to discover what we have learned about the answers to the classic questions of the field, and to consider what new questions sociology should pose about our new, thoroughly urban age.

## EXPECTATIONS

I expect you to keep up with the class reading and show up ready to discuss it. The reading load is sometimes heavy. In a typical week, the Monday session will be a mix of lecture and discussion, and Wednesday and Friday classes will rely heavily on discussion of the reading.

The course grade is based on attendance and informed participation in class discussion (10%), and on three short papers worth 30% each. The paper prompts and due dates are listed in this syllabus. The papers are due in weeks 3, 7, and 10 of the quarter. There is no separate final exam or final paper. This means that you cannot skip the reading and hope to catch up at the end of the quarter. The key to doing well on the papers is to keep up with the reading.

## TURNING IN ASSIGNMENTS

**Nota Bene: Future instances of this class will include a final assessment, as required by faculty senate policy.**

The papers *must* be turned in electronically via [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com), with no exceptions.

It is to your advantage to turn your assignments in on time, but I will accept late work, with no excuses necessary. That said, I will only accept late work on the following conditions, with *no exceptions*: (1) late work will lose one third of a grade point for every *calendar day* it is late (e.g., it might be demoted from a B+ to a B, or a B- to a C+); (2) late work goes to the bottom of my grading pile, and I will make no guarantees about how quickly I will get to grading it; (3) late work must be turned in before the *next* assignment is due, or before Wednesday, March 19, whichever comes first.

The paper assignments for this course are designed to inform our class discussions, so late work may also adversely affect your participation grade.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

I assume your familiarity with UCSD's policy on the integrity of scholarship, which you can read about here: < <https://students.ucsd.edu/academics/academic-integrity/policy.html>>.

I also assume your familiarity with scholarly norms concerning proper attribution and citation. If you are unsure whether your work conforms to these norms, ask me for help *before* you turn it in. The bottom line for this course: it is *never* acceptable to represent others' work as your own, even by mistake. If I find evidence of academic dishonesty, I will assign a failing grade on the assignment and report the incident to the Academic Integrity Coordinator.

## SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND REQUIRED READING

The following is the outline of our course. Where a required reading has been ordered for purchase at the bookstore I have indicated it with a dollar sign (\$). I have also listed recommended supplemental reading under the heading “further reading.” These readings are not required. They include sources that I think are of interest because they are either especially new, especially good, especially interesting for thinking through the issues at hand, or especially important, though not necessarily all four. I do not expect you to read those recommended texts this quarter; I list them here in case you want to read more about urban sociology after the course is done.

**All of the required readings that have not been ordered for purchase are available on electronic reserve. To access electronic reserves, you will need to be using a computer on campus, or else log in via a UCSD VPN. The reserves page for this course has a password. The password is: im153**

### Week 1 CITY AND COMMUNITY

*For at least a century sociologists have conducted research in the city to investigate whether (and, if so, how) different patterns of settlement on the land affect our collective ability to form and sustain communities, where community is understood to include networks of social relationships, shared norms, and bonds of trust. We will consider some influential theories about whether and how cities might destroy or invigorate communities.*

To discuss Weds.:

Park, Robert E. 1921. “Segregation as a Process” and “Secondary Contacts and City Life,” pp. 253-255 and 312-316 in Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* (University of Chicago Press).

Wirth, Louis. 1938. “Urbanism as a Way of Life.” *American Journal of Sociology* 4(1): 1-24.

Fischer, Claude. 1995. “The Subcultural Theory of Urbanism: A Twentieth-Year Assessment.” *American Journal of Sociology* 101, no. 3 (November): 543-77.

### Week 2 URBAN POLITICAL ECONOMY

*Another tradition in urban sociology argues that mere fact of urbanism has little effect on community—although social life is different in the city than in the country, these differences exist because of the peculiar political and economic institutions that give rise to cities in the first place. We will consider how such institutions as private property in land; the existence of*

*markets for land, labor, and capital; and political arrangements for regulating the use of land might shape the important features of urban community life.*

\$ Logan, John R. and Harvey Molotch. 2007 (earlier editions OK). *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place* (University of California Press). Chapters 1-4.

### Week 3 SOCIAL ISOLATION IN THE CITY

*Cities are places where humans are most closely crowded together; and yet, perhaps paradoxically, they are also places where humans are most likely to live alone. Classical social theorists worried that cities were causing the breakdown of large kin networks and providing nothing to replace them. Do cities, in fact, cause social isolation? Is this aspect of city living bad for people, or is it freeing?*

### MONDAY IS MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY – NO CLASS MEETING

\$ Klinenberg, Eric. 2011. *Going Solo: The Extraordinary Rise and Surprising Appeal of Living Alone*. New York: Penguin. Entire.

**Assessment: First 5-page paper due *before* class on Friday, January 24. Your paper should address the question: how, if at all, does urbanism contribute to the extraordinary rise of living alone? Your paper should draw on the reading to support your argument.**

Further reading:

Sampson, Robert J. 2012. *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Small, Mario Luis. 2004. *Villa Victoria: The Transformation of Social Capital in a Boston Barrio*. Princeton: Princeton.

### Week 4 URBAN POVERTY

*People usually move to cities for economic opportunity, and cities are great concentrations of wealth. Why, then, is there so much poverty in cities? Several generations of sociologists have hypothesized that urban poverty persists because the spatial concentration of poverty has debilitating effects on the social networks, individual dispositions, or capabilities of the poor. We will consider some recent research relevant to the evaluation of these hypotheses.*

\$ Sharkey, Patrick. 2013. *Stuck in Place: Urban Neighborhoods and the End of Progress toward Racial Inequality*. University of Chicago Press. Entire.

Further reading:

Wilson, William J. 1987. *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

De Souza Briggs, Xavier, Susan J. Popkin and John Goering. 2010. *Moving to Opportunity: The Story of an American Experiment to Fight Ghetto Poverty*. New York: Oxford University Press.

### Week 5 SEGREGATION

*A classic explanation for the how both economic opportunity and persistent and concentrated poverty can coexist in American cities points to the racial segmentation of housing and labor markets. We will consider the measurement of racial segregation, the processes that produce racial segregation, and the consequences that segregation has for urban social life.*

\$ Wilson, William Julius and Richard P. Taub. 2006. *There Goes the Neighborhood: Racial, Ethnic and Class Tensions in Four Chicago Neighborhoods and their Meaning for America* (New York: Vintage Books). Chapters 1, 3, and 6, and at least one other chapter of your choice.

Further reading:

Massey, Douglas S. and Nancy A. Denton. 1993. *American Apartheid*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Jackson, Kenneth T. 1985. *Crabgrass Frontier*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Week 6           STIGMA, CONTAINMENT, AND BANISHMENT

\$ Beckett, Katherine and Steve Herbert. 2009. *Banished: The New Social Control in Urban America*. New York: Oxford University Press. Entire.

Week 7           CIVIL AND UNCIVIL ENCOUNTERS

**MONDAY IS PRESIDENT’S DAY – NO CLASS MEETING**

Duneier, Mitchell and Harvey Molotch. 1999. “Talking City Trouble: Interactional Vandalism, Social Inequality, and the ‘Urban Interaction Problem.’” *American Journal of Sociology* 104(5), March: 1263-1295.

\$ Lee, Jennifer. 2002. *Civility in the City: Blacks, Jews and Koreans in Urban America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Chapters 4-8.

<p><b>Assessment: Second 5-page paper due before class on Friday, February 21. Your paper should address the question: how, if at all, does segregation affect civility in the city? Your paper should draw on the reading to support your argument.</b></p>
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Week 8           SUBURBANIZATION

*Scholars of segregation and urban poverty have emphasized the consequences of suburbanization for the social networks of the poor city residents left behind, but what does suburban development do to the social networks and lifeways of the people who move to—or grow up in—the suburbs? We will consider the challenge of defining the suburb, the causes of suburbanization, and the contributions of various methods for studying the effects of suburbanization.*

\$ Cheng, Wendy. 2013. *The Changes Next Door to the Diazes: Remapping Race in Suburban California*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Introduction, Chapters 1-2, and Chapters 4-5.

Further reading:

Gans, Herbert. *The Levittowners*.

Jackson, Kenneth T. 1985. *Crabgrass Frontier*. New York: Oxford University Press.

#### Week 9 GENTRIFICATION

*Classical models of spatial assimilation and suburbanization emphasized that middle- and upper-income people tend to flee from low-income neighborhoods, but it became obvious in the late twentieth century that sometimes white and upper-income people move into low-income neighborhoods. Under what conditions does gentrification occur, and what are its consequences for individuals and communities that were already located in these neighborhoods?*

Zukin, Sharon. 2009. *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places*. New York: Oxford University Press. Introduction and Chapters 1-4.

Further reading:

Freeman, Lance. 2006. *There Goes the 'Hood*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Brown-Saracino, Japonica. 2009. *A Neighborhood that Never Changes: Gentrification, Social Preservation, and the Search for Authenticity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

#### Week 10 FORECLOSURE AND DISPLACEMENT

Crump, Jeff, Kathe Newman, Eric S. Belsky, Phil Ashton, David H. Kaplan, Daniel J. Hammel, and Elvin K. Wylly. 2008. "Cities Destroyed (Again) for Cash: Forum on the U.S. Foreclosure Crisis." *Urban Geography* 29: 745-784.

Niedt, Christopher and Isaac William Martin. 2013. "Who are the Foreclosed? A Statistical Portrait of America in Crisis." *Housing Policy Debate* 23(1): 159-176.

**Assessment: Third 5-page paper due *before class on Wednesday, March 12*. Your paper should address the question: who benefits, and who loses, when affluent people move out of the suburbs and move into poor urban neighborhoods? Your paper should draw on the reading to support your argument.**

## EVALUATION RUBRIC FOR PAPERS

<p>A- through A+</p>	<p>For an A, a paper must have all of the characteristics of a B paper listed below. In addition, it will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have an innovative thesis.</li> <li>• have a logically compelling argument.</li> <li>• consider and refute alternative arguments.</li> <li>• show evidence of originality or creativity.</li> <li>• have a clear and error-free prose style.</li> <li>• adduce particularly strong evidence.</li> </ul>
<p>B- through B+</p>	<p>For a B, a paper must have all of the characteristics of a C paper listed below. In addition, it will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a clear thesis statement.</li> <li>• have a logical structure that advances the argument.</li> <li>• adduce appropriate evidence to support its argument.</li> <li>• be free from digressions and extraneous material.</li> <li>• be mostly free from errors of usage and grammar.</li> <li>• be free from major substantive errors; where a C paper gets some things right, a B paper gets few things wrong.</li> </ul>
<p>C- through C+</p>	<p>For a C, a paper must have all of the characteristics of a D paper listed below. In addition, it will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have an identifiable thesis statement.</li> <li>• adduce evidence to support its argument.</li> <li>• communicate an understanding of some core concepts from the reading.</li> </ul>
<p>D- through D+</p>	<p>A D paper will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• comply with UCSD's policy on the integrity of scholarship</li> <li>• comply with the instructions for the assignment (e.g. with respect to length, timeliness of submission, and the number and character of sources)</li> </ul>