

Urban Studies and Planning 3

The City and Social Theory

Spring 2020

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Readings, assignments and activities: Canvas
Online course meetings: Zoom, MWF 11 AM to 11:50 AM
All course meetings will be recorded and posted to Canvas

The subject of this course

Should humans live in cities? The answer that you give will depend on what you think cities do for us—and on what you think city living does *to* us. People have been thinking about these questions for as long as cities have existed. Our focus in this class is on a few exemplary thinkers who tried to think the answers through carefully by putting together their assumptions, their reasons, and their evidence into the kind of internally consistent framework that we call a *social theory*.

Even though many of these thinkers lived a long time ago, some of their concerns are a lot like ours. Do cities breed epidemic disease, or do they make us better at prevention? Do cities strengthen human relationships, or do they cause us to be lonely and isolated? Do cities make our economies vulnerable to crises and depressions, or do they produce shared prosperity? Those are among the questions that we will discuss.

We will pay particular attention to the diversity of cultures and peoples who live within a single city. The very existence of a city depends on the coming together of people from different backgrounds who may find it hard to understand each other. The diversity of people in the city may create both challenges and opportunities for solving our collective problems, and we will consider what theorists have said about both the challenges and the opportunities.

Learning objectives

Read critically. You will acquire new skill at reading and making sense of difficult and unfamiliar texts. You will also improve your skill at identifying assumptions (and alternatives), identifying and seeking out relevant contextual information, and contrasting alternative readings of the same text.

Understand a few important theories. You will be able to discuss differences among some of the most important definitions of the city, theories of urban social life, and conceptions of the good city. You will be able to explain how cities survive and thrive according to these theories. You will recognize connections between particular theoretical ideas and actual practices of city planning and city building.

Appreciate diversity. Social theory comes in *a lot* of different guises, and you will acquire an appreciation for the sheer variety of forms and idioms that humans have used to communicate theoretical ideas about cities and social life. You will be able to recognize theoretical assumptions about

the city that are communicated in many different ways. You will also be able to explain some challenges and opportunities that the cultural diversity of city residents may present for our ability to govern ourselves.

Write well. You will improve your skill at composing arguments about other peoples' ideas. That is only one important kind of writing, but is a skill that will serve you well, no matter your profession.

Requirements

Take care of yourself. You will not get much learning done if you do not take care of your own health. That includes asking for help, and letting others take care of you, when that is what you need. Taking care of your health is also how you can look out for others during a time when our healthcare system is under strain.

Minimize distractions. You may find it hard to focus on coursework right now, and you may have roommates, family care responsibilities, or noisy neighbors that can make it even harder. Some distractions are unavoidable. Please take responsibility for minimizing *unnecessary* distractions, as best you can under the circumstances, both for the sake of your own learning and for your peers. Here are steps you can take:

- Please mute your microphone when you're in a class Zoom meeting unless you're speaking.
- It is OK to toggle between the readings, your notes, and the class session, but please *close and keep closed* all other message, chat, video and browser windows on your devices when you're logged into a class session.
- Please set ample aside time to read. Put reading time in your schedule. Respect it and ask others to respect it.
- Please create a distraction-free reading environment as best you can. Everyone's attention wanders sometimes when they are reading; a distraction-free environment will help you notice when your mind is wandering and refocus on the learning task at hand. There are lots of ways to create a distraction-free environment. Put in earplugs? Get under a blanket with a flashlight? Uninstall Instagram? Shut off all screens and read a paperback copy of the book? Whatever works for you.

Read. Reading difficult and unfamiliar texts is a skill that improves with practice. The point of this class is to give you the opportunity to practice until you get really good at it. If you ask your friend to tell you what is in the text, instead of reading it for yourself, that is like asking your friend to lift weights so that you can get stronger. It might help your friend improve, but it will not have the intended effect on you.

Discuss the readings with your peers. Your TAs and I will create opportunities for you to discuss the course readings with each other, including online discussion boards. Take advantage of these opportunities.

Complete assignments. We will have a variety of short assignments due in Canvas from week to week. Please keep up with them.

Do your own coursework. The UC San Diego Policy on the Integrity of Scholarship states that it is

the responsibility of students to “Complete and submit academic work that is their own and that is an honest and fair representation of their knowledge and abilities at the time of submission.”

You may read more about UC San Diego’s policy on Academic Integrity here:

<http://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/>. If you are unsure whether your work conforms to UC San Diego policy, ask me for help before you turn it in. The bottom line for this course: it is *never* acceptable to represent others’ written work as your own, even a little bit, 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. There are no exceptions to this rule.

Submit coursework for plagiarism review to Turnitin.com via Canvas. By taking this course, you agree that you will submit all required papers for textual similarity review by Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the terms of use agreement posted on the Turnitin.com site.

Grades, late policy, and Pass/No Pass

Grades. The final course grade will be computed as follows:

- Seven online quizzes and activities (5% each, total 35%)
- A short midterm paper of no more than 5 double-spaced pages due in Week 5 (30%)
- A short final paper of no more than 5 double-spaced pages due in the final exam period (35%)

The paper prompts will be distributed in advance and the papers will be graded according to a rubric distributed in advance.

Late policy. *Papers* will be accepted late, with no questions asked, on the following conditions. (1) Late work will go to the back of the queue, and will be graded when we have the opportunity; if you turn it in late, we will almost certainly have to grade it late. (2) Papers that are turned in late will lose one third of a letter grade per calendar day they are submitted late (e.g., from A+ to A, or from B- to C+).

Quizzes and activities are worth five points each, and those that are completed late will lose one point out of five; if they are more than one week late, they will lose one additional point for each full calendar week they are late.

The point of these late policies is to encourage you to pace yourself by spreading the work out over the quarter, and to give you some assurance that your peers will also be keeping up with the same brisk pace. If completing coursework on a regular schedule will present a special challenge for you this quarter, but you still intend to complete the course, then you might wish to consider taking the course on a Pass/No-Pass basis.

Pass/No-Pass policy. Students may change their selection of P/NP or Letter Grade through the end of Week 10. This temporary policy is in effect for the Spring 2020 academic quarter only.

Ordinarily, a course must be taken for a letter grade in order to count towards the major or minor in Urban Studies and Planning or in Real Estate and Development. The Department of Urban Studies and Planning is amending that policy for courses taken during Spring 2020: courses that would count

towards either major or minor will also count toward the respective major or minor if they are taken P/NP.

Courses taken P/NP in Spring 2020 also will not count towards the 25% cap on P/NP courses for the Bachelor's degree.

Some additional resources

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students requesting accommodations for this course because of a disability must provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). The OSD will not be issuing letters on paper this quarter, and you should not visit their office in person. If you need to request a letter, you may find details for how to do it here: <<https://osd.ucsd.edu/resources/covid-19.html#Information-for-Students>>

Students desiring accommodations must present their AFA letters to Faculty and to the OSD Liaison in the USP Program in advance. Contact the OSD for further information: 858.534.4382 (phone); osd@ucsd.edu (email); <<http://disabilities.ucsd.edu>> (website).

COVID-19 and meeting your basic needs

You can find up-to-date covid-19 information for the UC San Diego community, and links to supportive resources, by clicking [here](#).

The Basic Needs Hub has compiled a list of supportive resources for students who are experiencing economic insecurity in this time of crisis; you can find that list [here](#).

Title IX Compliance

The University recognizes the inherent dignity of all individuals and promotes respect for all people. Sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse will NOT be tolerated. If you have been the victim of sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse, we encourage you to report this matter promptly. As a faculty member, should I learn of any sexual misconduct, or physical or psychological abuse, I must report the matter to the Title IX Coordinator. Should you want to speak to a confidential source you may contact the Counseling Center.

Assigned readings

We will read excerpts from all of the following texts.

Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah* (1377), translated and abridged by Franz Rosenthal (1958)
Versions available online:

https://asadullahali.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/ibn_khaldun-al_muqaddimah.pdf
<https://delong.typepad.com/files/muquaddimah.pdf>

W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903)

Versions available online:

<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/408>

Louis Wirth, three articles (from 1926, 1938, and 1944)

Versions available online (requiring UC San Diego VPN access):

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2765040>

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2768119>

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/41206493>

Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1959)

Versions available online:

- As of today, it is easy to find a pdf scan of the entire book with a Google search.
- It is also for sale on Amazon and elsewhere.
- I recommend that you *purchase a copy* in a format that you find easy to annotate.

Marcus Anthony Hunter and Zandria F. Robinson, *Chocolate Cities: The Black Map of American Life* (2018)

Version available online (requiring UC San Diego VPN access):

- <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/j.ctt1wrpwsn>
- It is also for sale on Amazon and elsewhere.
- I recommend that you *purchase a copy* in a format that you find easy to annotate.

Schedule of topics and required readings

The schedule of lecture topics and midterm exams is subject to change. Any changes to the schedule of exams or lectures will be announced on Canvas.

Please do the readings *in preparation* for the class scheduled for that day. Class discussion and activities will assume that you have already read the text.

Week 1 Preliminaries

Week 2 Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah*

Monday: Chapter II, sections 1 through 7

Wednesday: Chapter IV, sections 1, 2, 5, 10, 13, 16, 17 and 18

Week 3 W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*

Monday: Chapters 1 and 11

Wednesday: Chapter 14

Friday: Chapters 2, 4 and 7

Week 4 W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*

Monday: Chapters 8, and 10

Wednesday: Chapter 9
Friday: Chapters 3, 5, and 6

Week 5 Louis Wirth, various articles
Monday: "The Ghetto"
Wednesday: "Urbanism as a Way of Life"
Friday: "Group Tensions and Mass Democracy"

Week 6 Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*
Monday: Chapter 1
Wednesday: Chapters 2-4
Friday: Chapters 5-6

Week 7 Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*
Monday: Chapters 7 and 8
Wednesday: Chapters 9-11
Friday: Chapters 12, 13 and 15

Week 8 Marcus Anthony Hunter and Zandria Robinson, *Chocolate Cities*
Monday: Chapter 1
Wednesday: Chapters 2-4
Friday: Chapters 5-7

Week 9 Marcus Anthony Hunter and Zandria Robinson, *Chocolate Cities*
Monday is Memorial Day; no scheduled Zoom
Wednesday: Chapters 11 and 12
Friday: Chapter 13 and 14

Week 10 Jane Jacobs, *Death and Life of Great American Cities*
Monday: Chapter 22