

ULEC 2620 A: Fall 2018

URBAN WORLDS



--Istanbul, 2018

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LECTURE // Mon, 2:00 - 3:15pm, in 63 Fifth Ave, Room L104

SECTIONS // A) Tue, 4:00 - 5:15pm
B) Wed, 2:00 - 3:15pm
C) Thu, 10:00 - 11:15am

Overview

This course considers the many ways that we build, adapt, and live together in cities. With the majority of the world's population inhabiting urbanized areas, cities have become a crucial stage on which human social relations are made. At the same time, cities are produced through multiple imaginaries, as people struggle to define, explain, and mediate the complexity of urban life. Thus, cities unfold at the intersection of the material and the ideal, as the productive tensions between reality and imagination drive urban change.

And yet, we experience cities in incredibly varied ways. We bring our own personal and cultural values to everyday encounters with one another, even as political and economic forces sort us into uneven social relations. A fundamental experience of city life, then, is the process by which we navigate between our dreams and desires, on the one hand, and the barriers and deprivations of inequality on the other. This process results in a constant *struggle for the city*. We examine this struggle from the street corner to the globe and in between. Along the way, we pose several key questions: how are cities made, and for whom? How do we inhabit them? What are the filaments that hold us together? What forces and phantasms tear us apart? How might we carve out new social relations and imagine new spaces of transformation?

Objectives

The main goal of the course is to introduce conceptual rigor and complexity to the examination of cities. The first part familiarizes students with ways to approach and conceptualize cities. The second part explores historic transformations of cities and the complex social and cultural life unfolding in them. And the third part applies these concepts to contemporary urban problems.

The course provides a strong foundation for your future engagements with urban issues, whether in the everyday capacity as citizens, or as scholars, artists, designers, novelists, architects, bloggers, activists, advocates, musicians, journalists, curators, librarians, filmmakers, or others with a stake in the urban. After completing this course, you will be able to do the following:

- Provide a general outline of the recent history of cities and suburbs, and place phases of urban development in their proper contexts.
- Distinguish among varied urban concepts and practices as these emerge from different disciplines, interests, ideologies, and traditions.
- Analyze cities as generators of economic and social vitality as well as landscapes transformed by human planning and design.
- Identify and characterize a range of social groups, political interests, technologies, and cultural practices that shape the metropolis over time.
- Describe the metropolis at a variety of scales--from street level exchanges to designed landscapes to regional ecologies.

Course Policies

We want all of you to be successful in this course. The policies listed here provide the structure within which you can ensure success. You are responsible for all assignments, even if absent. Late assignments, failure to complete the readings, and lack of preparedness for in-class discussions and presentations will jeopardize your successful completion of this course.

Attendance

Attendance at both lecture and section is required. The only legitimate excuses for absence are: an extended illness requiring hospitalization or visit to a physician; a family emergency, e.g. serious illness; observance of a religious holiday. More than three unexcused absences will result in a failing course grade. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Participation

Class participation is essential and includes: completing readings, contributing to class discussions, maintaining civil conduct, and attending regularly and on time. Every student is expected to contribute, even if it takes the form of a comment prepared in advance. Since participation constitutes 20% of the grade, it can make a significant difference in the final grade.

Deadlines and formats

Late work in this course will be penalized by the reduction of an assignment grade by one-half letter grade per day. Moreover, all work must be handed in as hard copy, properly formatted and stapled, unless otherwise specified--*note: we are *not* a copy/print service*. Exceptions to these policies are very rare, and can be made only in dire emergencies (see attendance policy above).

Electronic Devices

Students should silence their phones. Laptops are permitted for taking notes, reviewing readings, and making presentations. However, students should not use e-mail or social networking websites during class. There is mounting evidence that taking notes by hand activates specific neurocircuitry in the brain associated with information integration and recall. We are not yet cyborgs!

Food and drinks

Students are welcome to eat in class, taking care to respect others and to avoid disrupting the discussions.

Course Website

Canvas is an important resource for this class. Students should check it frequently for readings, assignments and announcements. The syllabus is posted there in dynamic format, with links to readings, videos, and other materials. Updates and corrections to the syllabus will be reflected on the canvas version only.

University Policies

New School Policy on Academic Integrity

It is the responsibility of students to learn the procedures specific to their discipline for correctly and appropriately differentiating their own work from that of others. As the New School policy states: "Plagiarism and cheating of any kind in the course of academic work will not be tolerated. Academic honesty includes accurate use of quotations, as well as explicit citation of sources in instances of paraphrasing and describing ideas, or reporting on research findings or any aspect of the work of others (including that of instructors and other students). These standards of academic honesty and citation of sources apply to all forms of academic work."

Compromising your academic integrity may lead to serious consequences, including (but not limited to) one or more of the following: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, academic warning, disciplinary probation, suspension from the university, or dismissal from the university. Every student at Parsons signs an Academic Integrity Statement as a part of the registration process. Thus, you are held responsible for being familiar with, understanding, adhering to and upholding the spirit and standards of academic integrity as set forth by the Parsons Student Handbook.

Guidelines for Written Assignments

The New School's Learning Center offers many resources for students to help with their writing: <https://www.newschool.edu/university-learning-center/>. There are many other useful guides for academic writing. I often direct students to Wesleyan University's Writing Center, which has many great links to resources such as Strunk and White's classic *Elements of Style*, Paul Brians' *Common Errors in English Usage*, and the University of Wisconsin's *Writing Handbook*. See Wesleyan's Center here: <http://www.wesleyan.edu/writing/workshop/resourcesforstudents.html>.

For further information on proper acknowledgment and plagiarism, including expectations for paraphrasing source material and proper forms of citation in research and writing, students should consult the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th edition (University of Chicago Press, 2010), *The Craft of Research*, 3rd edition (University of Chicago Press, 2008), or *A Manual for Writers*, 7th edition (University of Chicago Press, 2007).

Student Disability Services

In keeping with the University's commitment to provide equal access for students with disabilities, any student with a disability who needs academic accommodations is welcome to meet with the instructor privately. All conversations will be kept confidential. Students requesting any accommodations will also need to meet with staff at the office of Student Disability Services, who will conduct an intake, and if appropriate, provide an academic accommodation notification letter to you to bring to me. At that point I will review the letter with you and discuss these accommodations in relation to this course. The office is located in 63 Fifth Avenue, room 425. The direct telephone number is (212) 229-5626, extension 3135. You may also access more information through the University's web site at <http://www.newschool.edu/student-disability-services/>

Assignments

In ULEC 2620, assignments are designed chiefly to elicit informed, synthetic, and conceptually sophisticated understandings of the material presented. Grades are based on a 500-point total. Due dates for the assignments are clearly indicated on the syllabus.

Readings: There are no required textbooks for the course. All readings, web links, videos, and other materials are available through Canvas. It is essential that you check Canvas on a routine basis, as we will post updates, assignments, and other important information there.

Participation: We take your participation in the life of the course very seriously. Our success depends on everyone's active involvement, so it is vitally important that you speak up in the classroom. Participation includes not simply attending lecture and discussion, but coming prepared to contribute and to engage your colleagues in a spirit of civility and common purpose. (100 POINTS, 20% of total grade)

Presentation: The Multilayered Metropolis. In this assignment, you will work in teams to examine a well-defined small place--e.g., a street intersection, a commercial corridor, a rail hub, a park or playground. The goal will be to tease out relationships between the physical and social conditions of everyday urban life. You will describe the observable layers of changes over time, current social conditions and uses of the space, and the iterative relationship between the social and physical. Each group will present their findings (including images, maps, stats and texts) in a ten-page power point document. (100 POINTS, 20% of total grade)

Report: The Creative City. Working in teams, you will assume the role of consultants who have been invited to report on a creative response to a specific urban issue. The reports should analyze the location, the urban issue, and the creative approach taken. The approaches that you study may vary--from municipal policy to regional planning, public art, architectural design, grass roots organizing, musical innovation, or a combination. In all cases, the goal is to expand our understanding of the tremendous range of creative engagements that are possible within and between cities. (100 POINTS, 20% of total grade)

Mid Term Exam: The mid-term exam consists of short-answer identification and essays. The short ID's are worth 20 points and the essays 80 points. The exam tests your ability to apply knowledge gained in the course. Simply marshalling facts is not enough. You will be asked to explain, contextualize, and interpret complex material, integrating insights from all of the readings and lectures and discussions into your essays. (100 POINTS, 20% of total grade)

Final Exam: The final exam has the same format as the midterm. The final is comprehensive, in that material will come from the entire semester, although it will be heavily weighted toward the second half of the course. Regardless of how well you have done on other assignments, you must take the final exam to pass the course. (100 POINTS, 20% of total grade)

Grading

We assume that students at The New School are capable of excellent work. However, we cannot grade on potential, only on performance. And just as we take very seriously the process of evaluating your work, it is imperative that you take responsibility for its quality. This includes meeting the deadlines, responding to the assignments as directed, building effective arguments, editing your writing for spelling and grammar, and assuring proper citation of ideas. Grades in this course will be assigned along a standard scale as follows:

A+ / A / A- // Reserved for exceptional work that goes above and beyond the expectations and requirements set forth in the assignment. Student demonstrates substantial achievement in the areas of critical thinking, interpretive connections between texts and ideas, analysis, and flexibility of argument. The argument or point of view that is offered is consistent throughout the paper, and governs the use and interpretation of all examples and sources. Visual material is very well integrated and properly attributed. “A-range” papers are very well organized, and are free of grammatical and editorial errors.

B+ / B / B- // These are very good papers and presentations. The work offers a sustained and meaningful approach to a critical endeavor and demonstrates the author’s ability to offer unique insight, to ask questions of primary or secondary source material, and/or to set up a debate between texts or points of view. The author’s position, and an argument is sustained fairly consistently throughout the paper. Visual material is well integrated and properly attributed. “B-range” papers/presentations are logically organized, and also respond to the assignment in thoughtful and distinctive ways.

C+ / C / C- // These are average papers and presentations. They will show some success, with a demonstrated ability to apply key terms or ideas from other texts, to analyze data, to engage in critical thinking, or to pose an interesting problem or question. However, the work does not build substantially on the initial question, or does not follow it through to the conclusion. There might be a variety of possible ideas put forward but with little commitment, coherence, or real insight. “C-range” papers may also have significant organizational, grammatical and/or editorial errors that impede the reader’s ability to understand the author’s point. Visual material may be present, but not well integrated or attributed.

D+ / D / D- // The paper/presentation adheres to all of the minimum guidelines of formatting, page-length, or other terms of the assignment. Written work or audiovisual presentations receiving a “D-range” grade may be a simple restatement of fact or commonly held opinion. These kinds of papers/presentations also will tend to put forward obviously contradictory or conflicting points of view, or may be unclear. “D-range” papers may also have serious organizational and grammatical errors that impede the reader’s ability to understand the author’s point. If visual material is present, it is poorly integrated or lacks proper attribution.

F // Failing grades are given for required work that is not submitted, for incomplete final projects, or for assignments that fail to follow even the basic requirements (without prior notification and approval). Make-up work or completion of missed assignment may be permitted only under exceptional circumstance with the approval of the instructor.

Weekly Schedule

Part One: Introduction

WEEK ONE, 08.27: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY OF CITIES

WEEK TWO, 09.03: URBAN WORLDS IN THE MAKING

Labor Day -- No Lecture / sections meet per usual

Orhan Pamuk, Chs. One and Two, *Istanbul: Memories and the City*. Vintage, 2005.

Arthur Symons, Ch. III, *London: A Book of Aspects*.

Gwendolyn Brooks, "Kitchenette Building," *Selected Poems*. Harper & Row, 1963.

Part Two: Concepts

WEEK THREE, 09.10: THE SOCIAL CITY

Rosh Hashanah -- No Lecture / sections meet per usual

Jane Jacobs, "The Use of Sidewalks: Safety," *Death + Life of Great American Cities*.

Charlie Vázquez, "A Cultural Oasis Inside a Bronx Bodega," *Electric Literature*.

Margaret Crawford, "Blurring the Boundaries," *Everyday Urbanism*.

Short Film, "The Social Life of Chinese Small Urban Spaces"

WEEK FOUR, 09.17: THE LAYERED CITY

Brian McGrath, "Slow, Medium, Fast," *Resilience in Ecology and Urban Design*.

Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, excerpts from "Istanbul," *Beş Şehir (Five Cities)*.

Walt Whitman, "The City Dead-House."

Video: *How Buildings Learn, Part 6--Shearing Layers* <<http://youtu.be/HTSbtM12IZw>>

Buildings in Netherlands <<http://code.waag.org/buildings/>>

WEEK FIVE, 09.24: THE IMAGINED CITY

Arthur Conan Doyle, "The Man with the Twisted Lip," *Sherlock Holmes*.

Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, Part 1, *Learning from Las Vegas*.

Sharon Zukin, "The Creation of a Loft Lifestyle," *Loft Living*.

Promotional Film, "To New Horizons." <www.youtube.com/watch?v=tAz4R6F0aaY>

Promotional Film: EPCOT. <www.youtube.com/watch?v=_GOYu05GknY>

WEEK SIX, 10.01: THE NETWORKED METROPOLIS

Stephen Graham and Simon Marvin, "Constructing the Modern Networked City," *Splintering Urbanism*.

AbdouMaliq Simone, "People as Infrastructure," *Public Culture*.

Vocational film, "Telephone and Telegraph." <www.youtube.com/watch?v=rEEr8il78i0>

Promotional film, "The Big Delivery Wagon."
<www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZt72jsz0Ik&t=248s>

Short Films about the Dabbah Wallahs of Mumbai

Group presentations due: groups should upload presentations by Oct 1 at Noon.

Part Three: Trajectories

WEEK SEVEN, 10.08: THE INDUSTRIAL FURNACE

Frederick Engels, "The Great Towns," *Condition of the Working Class in England*.

Carl Sandburg, "Chicago."

Joseph Heathcott and Pamela Ambrose, "Industrial Urbanism as an Archival Artifact," in *Art Documentation Bulletin*.

Web site: The Fabulous Ruins of Detroit <www.detroityes.com/home.htm>

Web site: Emscher Park <<http://citypeak.blogspot.com/2011/10/emscher-park-ruhr-valley-germany.html>>

WEEK EIGHT, 10.15: AN URBAN AGE?

Luis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *American Journal of Sociology*.

Theodore Dreiser, Chapters 3 and 4, *Sister Carrie*.

William Shack, "Le Jazz Hot," in *Harlem in Montmartre*.

Bessie Smith sings St. Louis Blues <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JpVCqXRIXx4>>

Clip from *Safety Last* (Harold Lloyd) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QEcTjhUN_7U>

Midterm Exam posted on Canvas on Mon, Oct 15 after lecture

Midterm Exam due on Mon, Oct 22 in lecture

WEEK NINE, 10.22: THE EXPANDING METROPOLIS

Robert Park and Ernest Burgess, "The Growth of the City," *The City*.

Kenneth T. Jackson, "Drive-In Culture," *Crabgrass Frontiers*.

General Motors promo film, *To New Horizons* <archive.org/details/ToNewHor1940>

Redbook magazine promo film, *In the Suburbs* <www.archive.org/details/IntheSub1957>

CNN Report, Mexico's Urban Sprawl <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YcBqnKuUBs0>>

Building a Better Burb web site <buildabetterburb.org/housing.php>

WEEK TEN, 10.29: CITIES IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD

Edward Soja, "Regional Urbanization and the End of the Metropolis Era," *The New Blackwell Companion to the City*.

Ananya Roy, "Urban Informality: Toward an Epistemology of Planning," *Journal of the American Planning Association*.

Yasser Elsheshtawy, "Arabian Tabula Rasa: Abu Dhabi's Urban Imaginary," *New Geographies 1: After Zero*.

Music videos from MIA (London), Spoek Mathambo (Johannesburg), Bloodywood (Mumbai), Dancing Ganesh (Mexico City)

Part Four: Themes

WEEK ELEVEN, 11.05: DIVERSITY

Milagros Ricourt and Ruby Danta, "Women and Convivencia Diaria," *Hispañás de Queens*.

Radhika Subramania, "Urban Physiognomies," *The Cities of Everyday Life*.

Suzi Hall, "The Boundaries of Belonging," *City, Street, and Citizen*.

Short Film, Street Food-Nairobi <www.youtube.com/watch?v=0nodjFDRUXQ&t=40s>

Short Film, Taste of Migration: Penang <www.youtube.com/watch?v=9RIXUxp2FWk>

WEEK TWELVE, 11.12: INEQUALITY

Tom Sugrue, "Violence and the Color Line," *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*.

Ali Madanipour, "Living Together or Apart," *Companion to Urban Design*.

Saskia Sassen, "Who Owns Our Cities," in *The Guardian*.

Million Dollar Blocks project

<www.spatialinformationdesignlab.org/projects.php%3Fid%3D16>

BBC film, *Welcome to India* <<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x5kutva>>

Group presentations due: groups should upload presentations by Nov 12 at Noon.

WEEK THIRTEEN, 11.19: THANKSGIVING BREAK -- NO CLASS MEETINGS

WEEK FOURTEEN, 11.26: GOVERNANCE

Mike Royko, ch. 1, in *Boss*.

Gyan Prakash, "The Urban Turn." *The Cities of Everyday Life*.

Lise Autogena, "Collective Dreaming and the Practice of Creative Disruption," BCN_LDN 2020.

Type "city organizational chart" into Google and review selected charts

Film, *Ecumenopolis* <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=maEcPKBXV0M>>

WEEK FIFTEEN, 12.03: SPACE

Garnette Cadogan, "Walking While Black," *Literary Hub*.

Regnar Kristensen, "La Santa Muerte in Mexico City: The Cult and its Ambiguities," *Journal of Latin American Studies*.

Keller Easterling, "Zone," *Urban Transformations*.

BBC "The Box" web-based global tracking of a shipping container
<news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/in_depth/business/2008/the_box/default.stm>

WEEK SIXTEEN, 12.10: NEIGHBORHOOD

Mindy Fullilove, "Butterfly in Beijing," *Root Shock*.

Piri Thomas, "Puerto Rican Paradise" and "Alien Turf." *Down These Mean Streets*.

Angel Nieves, "Revaluing Places: Hidden Histories from the Margins," *Places*.

Photo Tour of the Pedregal de Santo Domingo Neighborhood, Mexico City.
<<https://www.flickr.com/photos/81455898@N03/albums/72157676404137074>>

Film, "Last Days of the Beijing Hutongs" <www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJsrl58yDEE>

Film, "Who Are the Cockneys Now?" <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-7uW7koB7pw>>

Final exam posted after lecture on Mon, Dec 10th on Canvas

Final exam due on Mon, Dec 17th at 5pm

WEEK SEVENTEEN, 12.17: END OF TERM -- NO CLASS MEETINGS