

THE UNIVERSITY  
*of* NORTH CAROLINA  
*at* CHAPEL HILL  
  
DEPARTMENT *of* CITY *and* REGIONAL PLANNING

**Plan 101** Cities and Urban Life

Prof. Andrew H. Whittemore

Fall 2019

**Overview**

This course will introduce students to the topic of cities and urban life. Over 80% of the United States’ population lives in cities or their suburbs, and over half of the world’s population lives in urban areas. Cities are more than their physical components of housing, offices, and roads. Cities have been the building blocks of many human societies for millennia, and even life in rural areas is impacted by cities’ culture and economies. Studying cities and urban life is important to understanding how human societies have developed, how our households live and function, how our economies grow and innovate, how our culture develops and influences, and an array of other topics including social opportunity, inequality, and political movements.

This course also serves as an elective (by petition) within the minor in City and Regional Planning. While this course focuses on cities through an interdisciplinary lens, other courses in the minor will focus on the challenges of cities as approached through the discipline of urban planning. Urban planners are a diverse group of professionals working in the private, public, and non-profit sectors who plan for new development and transportation systems, help mitigate the environmental impacts of urbanization, and address specific challenges in housing and economic development such as a lack of affordable housing or unequal access to employment.

**Learning Objectives**

* Students will complete this course with an understanding of the city as a setting for the examination of human cultures, economies, human identities, and social and political relations.
* Understand how to recognize and compare various forms of urbanization across the globe.
* Understand different periods in the history of global and American urbanization.
* Students will be introduced to the social life and culture of cities.
* Students will be introduced to the role of urbanization in the development of market economies.
* Students will be introduced to the role of cities in creating and maintaining social stratification and inequalities.
* Students will be introduced to the unique challenges of urban life in the realms of housing, education, transportation, and security.
* Students will conduct research that integrates the examination of primary and secondary sources.

**Logistics**

The class will meet twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:30-4:45 in Howell 115.

**Recitations**

Every week you will be required to attend an additional 50 minute recitation that will review the readings assigned for that week. During the weeks previous to the due dates for your two written assignments and your two exams, these recitations will focus on preparation for those assignments/exams.

**Readings**

Students are required to rent or purchase *Cities and Urban Life* (7th edition) by John Macionis and Vincent Parrillo. The book comes in a variety of formats at a variety of different prices – any format is suitable, so make a purchase or rental that fits in your budget. <https://www.amazon.com/Cities-Urban-Life-John-Macionis/dp/0133869806/>

All additional readings are available on Sakai under the Resources tab.

**Assignments and Grading**

The course requires two 5 page (6 pages maximum, 12 point Times New Roman, double spaced) research-based written assignments about a city or town you are very familiar with (this could be your home town, Chapel Hill, or somewhere else). The first paper should consider the geography of your town (due Sep. 26), and the other a type of stratification in your town or city (due Nov. 21). If you are most familiar with a rural area you may choose a larger geographical area like a county.

The first paper should analyze three topics related to the built environment of your city/town:

1. Economy and work (what are the types of places people work in or do business/shopping, where are they, and what do people do there?)
2. Housing and community (in what types of arrangements do people live, learn, and recreate – where and how do people associate with each other or avoid each other?).
3. Transportation (how does the way people move around your town make daily life possible and/or difficult?)

Maps and other graphics will help in the development of your paper’s narrative, but cannot contribute to the 4 page requirement. It is perfectly acceptable for you to speak from personal experience but you need to substantiate your arguments citing 2 primary sources aside from yourself (these are first-person accounts that you may find in newspaper articles, through photographs, audio or video recordings, survey/census data, or through an interview), citing 2 secondary sources (these are sources describing and analyzing primary sources), and citing 2 of our assigned readings (the textbook can only count as one). Don’t forget to introduce the topic and purpose of your paper, and come to some conclusion about the challenges your city/town faces (or doesn’t face) because of the way its communities/work places/transportation are arranged. Include references in the text e.g. “(Smith 1998)” with complete bibliographic information at the end of the paper e.g. “Smith, John. 1998. *The City*. Random House: New York, NY.”

The second paper can focus on any type of stratification in your city/town (racial, ethnic, gender, age, religious, class, etc.), discussing the particular arrangement it takes in the form of your town and the challenges that result (these may include difficulty accessing or using amenities, services, schools, transportation, employment, housing, healthy food etc.). Maps and other graphics will help in the development of your paper’s narrative, but cannot contribute to the 4 page requirement.As with the first paper, it is perfectly acceptable for you to speak from personal experience but you need to substantiate your arguments citing 2 primary sources aside from yourself (these are first-person accounts that you may find in newspaper articles, through photographs, audio or video recordings, survey/census data, or through an interview), citing 2 secondary sources (these are sources describing and analyzing primary sources; they don’t necessarily have to be about your town but can be used to make comparisons with other locations), and citing 2 of our assigned readings (the textbook can only count as one). Don’t forget to introduce the topic and purpose of your paper, and wrap up with a conclusion summarizing your argument. Include references in the text e.g. “(Smith 1998)” with complete bibliographic information at the end of the paper e.g. “Smith, John. 1998. *The City*. Random House: New York, NY.”

In both papers you will also be graded on the quality of your writing. Active voice! Agency! (e.g. “Developers built the houses in the 1960s” rather than “The houses were built in the 1960s”), verbs other than “to be” when possible! (e.g. “Evidence suggests” rather than “There is evidence that”). Short sentences are easier to digest! Avoid first person! Both papers are to be submitted on Sakai.

There will also be two exams. A multiple choice and short answer midterm exam in week 8 covering material from units 1-7, and a multiple choice and short answer final exam covering material from units 8-13. These exams will be given on sakai in the classroom – paper copies will be provided in the case of laptop problems. If you need other accommodations in order to take the exam, please contact Accessibility Resources & Service (<https://ars.unc.edu/>)

Grades are determined as follows:

Written assignment 1: 20%

Written assignment 2: 20%

Midterm: 25%

Final exam: 25%

Attendance and class participation: 10%

LATE ASSIGNMENTS POLICY: Late assignments drop four points per day. For example, if a ‘95’ paper is late one day it will receive a ‘91‘, two days late and it will receive a ‘87’ … *a late paper is better than a 0*.

**Class time and participation**

Class time will mostly consist of lecture and discussion. I welcome you to ask questions at any time during lecture and am happy to discuss any matter relevant to the content of the lecture at any time. It is not required that you ask questions or participate in discussion in this format, but it is encouraged.

Occasionally we will do think-pair-share exercises in class. In these exercises, I will ask you to pair with a classmate to discuss a question derived from the assigned reading for that class session. After a couple minutes, I will call on pairs of students to share the points of their discussion with the class.

Missing Class:

Students are allowed one unexcused absence without any questions from the instructor. Otherwise, you are expected to contact me for an excused absence. If a student has two unexcused absences, their grade will be affected. The same policy applies for recitations (contact your Teaching Assistant for an excused absence).

**Contact Information**

My office is located at 313 New East and my office hours are Tuesdays, 11:30am-12:30pm. I can be reached via e-mail at awhittem@email.unc.edu.

Your TA Anna Whitus (Tuesday recitation, 8-8:50am, Carolina Hall 104) can be reached at whitusar@email.unc.edu. Her office hours are Mondays 10:30-11:30, in New East 201 (the Chapin Reading Room).

Your TA Christian Snelgrove (Tuesday recitation, 5-5:50pm, Carolina Hall 204) can be reached at csnel@email.unc.edu. His office hours are Mondays 3-4pm, in New East 201 (the Chapin Reading Room).

Your TA Anna Gustines (Thursday recitation, 5-5:50pm, Dey 202) can be reached at gustines@email.unc.edu. Her office hours are Wednesdays 2-3pm, in New East 201 (the Chapin Reading Room).

Your TA Anise Vance (Tuesday recitation, 8-8:50am, Carolina Hall 204) can be reached at anise@live.unc.edu. His office hours are Mondays 8:30-9:30am, in New East 201 (the Chapin Reading Room).

**Instructor Biography**

I’m a local history enthusiast. I enjoy learning why communities look the way they do, and what people have to say about their own and others’ experiences in their communities. I enjoy roadside oddities, historic sites, and local libraries’ historical collections. The North Carolina Collection Gallery at Wilson library is my favorite place on campus. Much of my research is done in local libraries’ historical collections and other public archives. This research is usually focused on communities’ decisions on how to use land: who is empowered to make these decisions, why these empowered parties make the decisions they do, and the outcomes they (or other people) experience as a result of these decisions. This research is based on primary sources (relating direct experience with these decisions and their outcomes) and secondary sources (describing and analyzing primary sources).

You will be doing similar research over the course of this semester: looking at primary and secondary sources to tell a story about why a city or town is the way it is. The readings and exams will help you understand how other people have interpreted their communities, and give you clues as to what to look for in your home town or neighborhood.

**OTHER ACADEMIC BUSINESS**

**“The Honor System forms a bond of trust among students, faculty, and administrators. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill operates under a system of self-governance, as students are responsible for governing themselves. As such, our University is transformed into a powerful community of inquiry and learning. The Honor Code embodies the ideals of academic honesty, integrity, and responsible citizenship, and governs the performance of all academic work a student conducts at the University. Acceptance of an offer of admission to Carolina presupposes a commitment to the principles embodied in our century-old tradition of honor and integrity.”**

http://catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/honor-code/

I am committed to treating Honor Code violations seriously and urge all students to become familiar with its terms set out at https://studentconduct.unc.edu/. If you have questions it is your responsibility to ask the professor about the Code’s application.

Missing Class: Students are permitted to miss class for EXCUSABLE absences only. Students are allowed one unexcused absence without any questions from the instructor. If a student has two unexcused absences, their grade will be affected.

Late Assignments: I will accept assignments late if you face unforeseen circumstances such as a family emergency or medical condition. In the case of the latter, please see a doctor and/or therapist who can provide you with a brief note. Unexcused lateness will result in your grade being lowered by a grade per day late (e.g. A- to B+).

Disability*:* The University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability or pregnancy complications resulting in difficulties with accessing learning opportunities. All accommodations are coordinated through the Accessibility Resources and Service Office. In the first instance please visit their website [http://accessibility.unc.edu](https://outlook.unc.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=TX9P-iEKuUOJ13QgJZni44yxaiBLvNEI7xytaJmv-to-UbSem5tbnY2HQL2SGLERRpN73Xe03_U.&URL=http%3a%2f%2faccessibility.unc.edu), call 919-962-8300 or email [accessibility@unc.edu](https://outlook.unc.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=TX9P-iEKuUOJ13QgJZni44yxaiBLvNEI7xytaJmv-to-UbSem5tbnY2HQL2SGLERRpN73Xe03_U.&URL=mailto%3aaccessibility%40unc.edu). Please contact ARS as early in the semester as possible.

Resources: Our purpose as professors is to help you to excel in this learning environment. Should you need further assistance beyond the help of the professor, please consult the following on-campus resources:

•  The Writing Center: http://writingcenter.unc.edu/

•  Learning Center: http://learningcenter.unc.edu/

•  Counseling and Wellness Services: [http://campushealth.unc.edu](https://outlook.unc.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=TX9P-iEKuUOJ13QgJZni44yxaiBLvNEI7xytaJmv-to-UbSem5tbnY2HQL2SGLERRpN73Xe03_U.&URL=http%3a%2f%2fcampushealth.unc.edu)

**SCHEDULE AND READINGS**

**Tuesday, August 20: Course Introduction**

**UNIT 1: Defining the City**

**Thursday, August 22**

Macionis and Parrillo, Chapter 1 “Exploring the City” 1-12

Ulf Hannerz, excerpt from “The Search for the City” in *Exploring the City*, 59-63

**Tuesday, August 27**

Macionis and Parrillo, Chapter 1 “Exploring the City” 12-21

Philip Steinberg, excerpt from “What is a City? Katrina’s Answers” in *What is a City? Exploring the Urban after Hurricane Katrina*, 3-18

**UNIT 2: History of the World’s Cities**

**Thursday, August 29**

Macionis and Parrillo, Chapter 2 “The Evolution of the World’s Cities” 23-39

Gordon V. Childe. “The Urban Revolution” *Town Planning Review* 21 (1): 3-17

**Tuesday, September 3**

Macionis and Parrillo, Chapter 2 “The Evolution of the World’s Cities” 39-52

Lewis Mumford“Citizen versus Ideal City” *The City in History* 158-182

**UNIT 3: History of the United States’ Cities**

**Thursday, September 5**

Macionis and Parrillo, Chapter 3 “Development of North American Cities” 53-62

Witold Rybczynski *City Life*, “In the Land of the Dollar” 110-130

**Tuesday, September 10**

Macionis and Parrillo, Chapter 3 “Development of North American Cities” 62-84

Dolores Hayden “Sitcom Suburbs” *Building Suburbia* 128-153

**UNIT 4: Cities in the United States Today**

**Thursday, September 12**

Macionis and Parrillo, Chapter 4 “Today’s Cities and Suburbs” 85-99

Jon C. Teaford, excerpts from “Diverse Suburbia” *The American Suburb* 43-52, 58-69, 79-85

**Tuesday, September 17**

Macionis and Parrillo, Chapter 4 “Today’s Cities and Suburbs” 99-116

Andrew Ross, excerpts from “Gambling at the Water Table” *Bird on Fire: Lessons from the World’s Least Sustainable City* 21-24, 38-46

**UNIT 5: Urban Sociology**

**Thursday, September 19**

Macionis and Parrillo, Chapter 5 “Urban Sociology” 117-129

Friedrich Engels “The Great Towns” *The City Reader* 46-54

**Tuesday, September 24**

Macionis and Parrillo, Chapter 5 “Urban Sociology” 129-146

Louis Wirth “Urbanism as a Way of Life” *American Journal of Sociology* 44, 1: 1-24

**Thursday, September 26: WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT 1**

CITY/TOWN BUILT ENVIRONMENT PAPER DUE

In class Movie! *Metropolis* (1927)

**UNIT 6: Spatial Perspectives**

**Tuesday, October 1**

Macionis and Parrillo, Chapter 6 “Spatial Perspectives” 147-173

**Thursday, October 3**

Kenneth Jackson “The Drive-In Culture of Contemporary America” *Crabgrass Frontier* 246-271

Greg Hise, Michael Dear, and H.E. Schockman “Rethinking Los Angeles” *Rethinking Los Angeles* 1-13

**UNIT 7: Critical Urban Theory**

**Tuesday, October 8**

Macionis and Parrillo, Chapter 7 “Critical Urban Theory” 174-198

**Thursday, October 10**

Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, “Boom Town and Bust Town” in *The Deindustrialization of America*, 82-107

David Giffels, “Stone” in *The Hard Way on Purpose* 19-28

**Tuesday, October 15: MIDTERM EXAM**

**Thursday, October 17: FALL BREAK**

**UNIT 8: The Urban Experience**

**Tuesday, October 22**

Macionis and Parrillo, Chapter 8 “The Context of Cities” 199-210

Jane Jacobs “The Uses of Sidewalks: Safety” *Death and Life of Great American Cities* 29-54

**Thursday, October 24**

Macionis and Parrillo, Chapter 8 “The Context of Cities” 211-226

Charles Montgomery “The (Broken) Social Scene” *Happy City* 44-62

**UNIT 9: Comparative Urbanism**

**Tuesday, October 29**

Macionis and Parillo, Chapter 9 “Comparative Urbanism” 228-254

Edward Glaeser “How do Cities Succeed?” *Triumph of the City* 223-246

**UNIT 10: Class Stratification**

**Thursday, October 31**

Macionis and Parillo, Chapter 10 “Stratification and Social Class” 256-281

**Tuesday, November 5**

Lance Freeman. Excerpts from “There Goes the ‘Hood” and “Making Sense of Gentrification” in *There Goes the Hood: Views of Gentrification from the Ground Up*,59-79, 95-107

**UNIT 11: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender**

**Thursday, November 7**

Macionis and Parillo, Chapter 11 “Race, Ethnicity, and Gender” 288-301

Yale Rabin “The Persistence of Racial Isolation: The Role of Government Action and Inaction” in *Urban Planning and the African American Community*,93-108

**Tuesday, November 12**

Macionis and Parillo, Chapter 11 “Race, Ethnicity, and Gender” 301-319

Dolores Hayden. 1980. “What Would a Non-Sexist City Look Like?” *Signs* 5(3): 170-187

**UNIT 12: Housing, Education, Crime**

**Thursday, November 14**

Macionis and Parillo, Chapter 12 “Housing, Education, Crime” 320-347

J. Anthony Lukas “McGuff” *Common Ground*,139-159

**Tuesday, November 19**

Macionis and Parillo, Chapter 12 “Housing, Education, Crime” 320-347

Pedro Noguera, “The Social Context and Its Impact on Inner-City Schooling” *City Schools and the American Dream* 23-41

**Thursday, November 21: WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT 2**

CITY/TOWN STRATIFICATION PAPER DUE

In class Movie! *Over the Edge* (1979)

**Tuesday, November 26**

Macionis and Parillo, Chapter 13 “Global Urban Development” 348-359

Suketu Mehta, *Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found* “Mumbai” 113-130 and excerpt from “Sone ki Chidiya” 450-464

**UNIT 13: Global Urbanization**

**Thursday, November 28: THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**Tuesday, December 3**

Macionis and Parillo, Chapter 13 “Global Urban Development” 359-379

Sam Quinones “The Rebirth of Tijuana” *New York Times*

**Friday, December 12: FINAL EXAM, 4 PM**