PLAN 714 Urban Spatial Structure  
FALL 2011  

Instructor:  
T. William Lester  
Lecture: Mondays and Wednesdays 2:00-3:15pm  
Office Hours: Tues: 10:00--12:00pm  
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twlester@unc.edu

Teaching Assistant:  
Louis Merlin  
Imerlin@email.unc.edu  
Office Hours: Wed 3:15-4:30pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course will provide planning students a foundational understanding of how cities work. By its nature this course will cut across all major fields within planning and will introduce the major theories, models, and methodological approaches that planners use to explain the function and structure of urban areas. While this course concentrates on positive behavioral theories that explain the actions of residents and firms that determine the spatial dynamics of regions, it also draws on structural and institutional theories of urban change. PLAN 714 is organized in four parts. The first covers the history of urbanization—from early origins to the contemporary economic and demographic trends—and presents an overview of urban spatial structure over time viewed through the lens of both housing policy and major infrastructure investments. The second part provides covers the essential theoretical tools that explain the location of population and employment across space, which in turn influences the spatial and economic relationships between regions. The third section focuses on intra-regional spatial structure and presents the basic theories of land use, land rent, and neighborhood change. These theories are an essential introduction to land use and environmental planning and also serve as an important heuristic for exploring the contemporary planning challenges covered in the final section including debates over sprawl, urban poverty and segregation, and regionalism.

The topics covered in this course are essential for understanding the forces that have shaped the development of modern metropolitan areas. They also constitute a basis for defining and understanding the role of planners. The focus of the course is primarily the United States, though international examples will be used where helpful.

OBJECTIVES
By the end of this course, students should be able to:
• Identify and assess the importance of major social, political, and economic forces that have shaped urban spatial development of cities in the U.S. and elsewhere  
• Understand descriptive and prescriptive approaches for examining urban form and function  
• Formulate and evaluate current policy and planning challenges affecting U.S. urban areas  
• Establish connections between aspects of planning theory and urban studies with current planning practice  
• Have a broad understanding of planning issues outside a student’s specialization area  
• Formulate questions for in-depth exploration in subsequent courses and research
COURSE FORMAT
The course is organized around two weekly lectures and class discussions. Although the course is large, participation and discussion is expected and required. In each 75-minute class, approximately 20 minutes will be allotted for discussion and questions. Students should complete the readings for a given session before coming to class on that day.

Students are expected to attend and participate during class meetings. Beyond the weekly reading, the coursework consists of two individual assignments (one problem set, and one critical response essay) and three group assignments. The group assignments are a critical part of the course (comprising 50% of your overall grade) and will require you to draw upon and analyze a wide variety of planning datasets. You will be assigned to one group for the entire semester and all team members are expected to pull their own weight and contribute to the group in a positive manner. As such 5% of your grade will be based on the feedback given to the instructor by your peers. A final exam will be given during the final exam week, and is tentatively scheduled for 2pm on Monday December 12th.

COURSEWORK OVERVIEW AND GRADING ALLOCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual assignment 1</td>
<td>Short answer problem set</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual assignment 2</td>
<td>Short essay on Ed Glaeser chapter</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group assignment 1</td>
<td>Tracking your region</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group assignment 2</td>
<td>Tracking your region</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group assignment 3</td>
<td>Tracking your region</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer assessment</td>
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<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 12/12 (subject to change)</td>
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<td>30%</td>
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Grades for the course will be assigned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100 - 90</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>89 - 75</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74 - 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>59 - 0</td>
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</tbody>
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A website has been created for the data sources you might need in your group assignments. The URL is also available through Blackboard (under assignments), but it is included here for your convenience: [http://www.lib.unc.edu/coursepages/plan/F11_plan714.html](http://www.lib.unc.edu/coursepages/plan/F11_plan714.html).

In fairness to all students, no late assignments will be accepted (or exams given) without a written medical excuse from your doctor and a proposed new deadline. Also, once set, I cannot alter the exam date. It is not flexible, so please make your travel plans and other commitments accordingly.

RECCITATIONS
Recitations related to group and individual assignments will be scheduled as needed. If not giving a formal recitation, the TA will be available during this time to answer individuals’ questions. You should not schedule any other activity during the recitation period. Four other compulsory activities are:

- Sept 7 GIS training, part. Davis Library, 247 (during class time).
- Sec 14 American Community Survey –Hands-on approach. Davis Library, 247 (during recitation time).
-Sept 21 GIS training part II. Davis Library, 247 (during class time).

-Oct 19 Using Census data for city analyses. Davis Library, 247 (during class time).

In addition, the GIS Data librarians will hold individual office hours Fridays between 2 and 4pm. To see any of them, please go to the Davis Library Reference desk and ask for Amanda Henley.

**READING MATERIAL**
All required readings are available on blackboard (blackboard.unc.edu). In addition, two sets of required readings have been placed on reserve in Chapin Planning Library. You may check out the articles to make your own set of photocopies but please keep the full set in the order that you found it.

*Required text:*
There is no required text for this course. All required readings are available on Blackboard.

*Optional text -available on Reserve at Davis Planning Library:*

**HONOR CODE**
The UNC honor Code states: “It shall be the responsibility of every student at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to obey and to support the enforcement of the honor code, which prohibits lying, cheating, or stealing when these actions involve academic processes or University, student or academic personnel acting in an official capacity.”

To meet this standard in this course, note the following: in written work, all ideas (as well as data or other information) that are not your own must be cited. Note that ideas that require citation may not have been published or written down anywhere. Discussion of assignments with peers is strongly encouraged.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>COMMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24-Aug</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Introduction, Course Overview</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-Aug</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Origin of Cities, History of Settlement Form in the U.S.</td>
<td>Group assignment 1 out</td>
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<tr>
<td>31-Aug</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Origin of Cities, History of Settlement Form in the U.S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-Sep</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>Labor day</td>
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<tr>
<td>7-Sep</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Datasets for urban policy analysis I</td>
<td>Davis Library 247</td>
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<tr>
<td>12-Sep</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Current U.S. Urban Trends</td>
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<tr>
<td>14-Sep</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Current U.S. Urban Trends</td>
<td>Individual assignment 1 out; Recitation, Davis 247</td>
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<tr>
<td>19-Sep</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Urban Policy and Settlement Form: Housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>21-Sep</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Datasets for urban policy analysis II</td>
<td>Davis Library 247</td>
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<tr>
<td>26-Sep</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Urban Policy and Settlement Form: Infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>28-Sep</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Presentations group assignment # 1</td>
<td>Group assignment 1 due</td>
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<td>3-Oct</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Presentations group assignment # 1</td>
<td>Group assignment 2 out</td>
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<td>Individual assignment 1 due</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-Oct</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Location Theory and Economic Specialization</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-Oct</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Central Place Theory and Systems of Cities</td>
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<td>12-Oct</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Deindustrialization and Global Production Networks</td>
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<td>17-Oct</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Classical Land Use Models; Introduction to Land Rent</td>
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<tr>
<td>19-Oct</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Datasets for urban policy analysis III</td>
<td>Group assignment 3 out</td>
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<tr>
<td>24-Oct</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Presentations group assignment # 2</td>
<td>Group assignment 2 due</td>
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<tr>
<td>26-Oct</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Presentations group assignment # 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>31-Oct</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>The Monocentric City and Planning Implications</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-Nov</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>The Polycentric and the Dispersed City: Review and Modeling Challenges</td>
<td>Individual assignment 2 due</td>
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<tr>
<td>7-Nov</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Public Goods and Urban Location</td>
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<tr>
<td>9-Nov</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Sprawl</td>
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<tr>
<td>14-Nov</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Sprawl</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16-Nov</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>The Concentration of Poverty</td>
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<tr>
<td>21-Nov</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Poverty and Race</td>
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<tr>
<td>23-Nov</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>28-Nov</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Challenges of Metropolitan Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>30-Nov</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Presentations group assignment # 3</td>
<td>Group assignment 3 due</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-Dec</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Presentations group assignment # 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>7-Dec</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Course Wrap up</td>
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PART I: INTRODUCTION

Introduction, Course Overview (8/24)

Herbert and Thomas, Cities in Space, City as Place, Chapter 1, The concerns of urban geography.


Origin of Cities, History of Settlement Form in the U.S. (8/29 & 8/31)


Herbert and Thomas, Cities in Space, City as Place, Chapter 2, Urban origins and change over time, 17-43.


Current U.S. Urban Trends (9/12 & 9/14)


Urban Policy and Settlement Form: Housing (9/19)


Urban Policy and Settlement Form: Infrastructure (9/26)


PART II: INTER-REGIONAL SPATIAL STRUCTURE

Location Theory and Economic Specialization (10/5)


Central Place Theory and Systems of Cities (10/10)

McCann, Philip. 2001. *Urban and Regional Economics*. Oxford: Oxford University, Chapter 2

Deindustrialization and Global Production Networks (10/12)


**PART III: INTRA-REGIONAL SPATIAL STRUCTURE**

Classical Land Use Models; Introduction to Land Rent (10/17)


The Monocentric City and Planning Implications (10/31)

McCann, Philip. 2001. *Urban and Regional Economics*. Oxford: Oxford University, Ch 3 & 7


The Polycentric and the Dispersed City: Review and Challenges (11/2)


Public Goods and Location Behavior (11/7)


**PART IV: CURRENT CHALLENGES**

Sprawl (11/9 & 11/14)


**The Concentration of Poverty (11/16)**


**Poverty and Race (11/21)**


**Challenges of Metropolitan Planning (11/28)**


(optional) Lester, T. W. 2006 “Metropolitan Governance in the United States: A Review of Recent Motivations, and Theoretical Perspectives” *Unpublished Manuscript*