

Honor 201: Urban Social Science Spring 2014

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Epler 108
Monday and Wednesday
8:00 am – 9:50 am

Office hours by appointment – but please feel free to ask!

Course Summary and Goals:

Urban societies, geography and economies are complex and dynamic. For human history, the role of urban centers has grown rapidly. This is problematic for social scientists. What does it mean to be urban? Do urban sites change human relationships? Do they alter the way humans understand themselves, how they make their way through life? Or are urban systems really different at all? This course uses the urban world to both learn about social science methods and about social systems – with a focus on Portland as a case study. At the end of the term you will have surveyed a series methods for making sense of social systems, some of the unique problems in the urban environment, and you will have a chance to tackle these issues with new tools.

Course Summary and Goals:

There are several goals for this course that should help burgeoning social scientists, curious artists, and anyone who encounters urban life. These goals include:

- Research: Ability to critically review claims, research and studies of social systems. Ability to formulate a research question, design a strategy to address it, and an awareness of the shortcomings of research approaches.
- Analysis: Skills and the practice of synthesizing multiple arguments to understand social systems. Applying these understandings to data to reach well-founded conclusions.
- Collaboration: Appreciation of the interdisciplinary nature of urban social science and how to work across different perspectives.
- Reflection: Evaluation of your own abilities to learn, research and communicate.

Reading and Required Texts:

At the end of this document is the course schedule – it includes details on when we will be reading various pieces and when items are due.

There is one primary text for this course. In addition, you will be asked to choose a second text that we will focus on in the last third of the course. You will need to acquire these texts in time to read and discuss them. All other readings will be available on D2L:

Required:

Ruane, Janet M. 2005. *Essentials of Research Methods: a Guide to Social Science Research*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub.

For the last third of the course, chose one of the following:

Duneier, Mitchell. 1994. *Slim's Table: Race, Respectability, and Masculinity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Fine, Gary Alan. 2002. *Shared Fantasy: Role-playing Games as Social Worlds*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kunda, Gideon. 2006. *Engineering Culture: Control and Commitment in a High-tech Corporation*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Marti, Gerardo. 2009. *A Mosaic of Believers: Diversity and Innovation in a Multiethnic Church*. Bloomington, Ind.; Chesham: Indiana University Press.

Rupp, Leila J., and Taylor. 2003. *Drag Queens at the 801 Cabaret*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Thorne, Barrie. 1993. *Gender Play: Girls and Boys in School*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Whyte, William Foote. 1993. *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

* Or – if you ask me before the end of April, another book of your choosing with my approval.

Brief Description of Assignments

Three main assignments are expected of you this term. More detailed handouts will be provided. Assignments are due at the beginning of class for the day listed on the schedule! The assignments are:

Discussion (20 Points)

Be prepared to participate in class. This means understanding the reading and being prepared to discuss. Simply offering opinions or personal anecdotes are not enough – unless you can frame them with the reading! Bring your readings and notes to class, this counts as part of participation!

Discussion leaders will be selected for many of the class sessions. This is a pseudo-random process where at the beginning of class I will announce 5-6 leaders for the day. They will have a chance to group up with others in the room, discuss in a small group the topics for the day, and present out to the group for the last portion of the class. So be prepared to lead at least a few times!

Timely attendance is critical – miss three classes and your grade will fall one letter grade. Miss four and it is an automatic fail for the course.

Why four? That's almost a quarter of our course meetings, and I would not expect much learning with that attendance rate. This also impacts your teammate in the Neighborhood Ethnography project.

Neighborhood Ethnography (60 Points)

This is a series of assignments throughout the term that will culminate in a report and poster about a neighborhood in Portland. This is a research project based on two person teams. The Neighborhood Ethnography will be developed with assignments throughout the term. The components are:

Title	Points	Due
Field Notes (Sample)	5	4/7
Literature Review Draft	5	4/21
Field Notes Draft	5	4/28
Field Notes Final	10	5/7
Neighborhood Maps	10	5/19
Final Report	15	6/9
Poster	10	6/9
Total	60	

Critical Reflection (20 Points)

A five-page essay reflecting on your individual experience with the course readings and the neighborhood ethnography project.

Course Policies

Please review these policies – they guide expectations for all students so that its fair for everyone.

Attendance: We are learning through readings, discussions, and our own research. All of this requires a community to test ideas, explore theories and to discover new concepts. So attendance is critical! It helps you, it helps your fellow scholars, and its required. Here are the details:

- Miss three class meetings and your grade will fall one letter grade.
- Miss four class meetings and it is an automatic fail for the course.
- Being late 10 minutes or more is equal to missing class.
- Not having readings or notes with you is the same as being absent.

If something comes up – the best thing you can do is talk to me. Email me or stop me after class.

Late Work: Assignments are **due at the beginning of class** for the day they are listed on the schedule. All researchers and scholars struggle with meeting deadlines. But the mark of a great academic (or professional) is not just being intelligent but

also delivering their thoughts on time to others. So meeting deadlines is not just an arbitrary requirement – it is essential to learning. If you are going to be absent on a due date – talk to me before hand! Permission is easier to ask for than forgiveness. Each day you are late is a 10% drop. After the third day – it will not count.

Schedule and Assignments: Managing deadlines and your time is a critical skill. The course schedule is attached. It is your go-to document! You can load it into Google Calendar, or your phone, or your calendar. Whatever works – but find something that works to keep track of this! Claims that you forgot or were never told – well, those are not options.

Classroom Conduct: Thorough and exciting learning settings are often a little uncomfortable. Ideas will fly, arguments will fail, and succeed. Sometimes it's a little embarrassing. We are all coming from different places in life, and with different experiences that are all valid. Don't take bumps in the road personally – its part of the process.

At the same time, there is a limit to how far arguments or claims can go.

Engage ideas – not individuals.

Personal attacks are known as *ad hominem* – and while they are a staple of politics they are not acceptable here. Prejudice, discriminatory statements, or hurtful attacks will be called out – and might become a learning moment.

Please do not eat in class. It is hard to talk and eat.

Technology: No phones. I know all the tricks of how to text or comment with sly typing under the table, under a piece of paper... I will ask offenders to leave and mark them absent.

I discourage laptops too. I know many take notes on them – but that level of note taking can prevent you from really participating or hearing. If your readings are electronic – I understand. Make an extra effort to listen, make eye contact and stay engaged.

Plagiarism: Scholars seek to explore new ideas and communicate them effectively. This takes an enormous level of work – so taking these ideas and representing them as your own is serious and will result in a zero for the assignment. Plagiarism is not just copying text – it includes paraphrasing or rewording ideas without attributing them to the source.

For a simple discussion of plagiarism, see here:
<http://library.pdx.edu/tutorials/citation/7>

For a long and legalistic one (that formally applies to us all) see here:
<http://www.pdx.edu/dos/psu-student-code-conduct#ProscribedPSU>

Additional Resources/Support: If you have a disability and require assistance obtaining resources, please see me. I am happy to accommodate as needed. You will also need to register with the Student Resource Center in Smith Rm 435 or call 503-725-4150.

Team Projects: A common question is why do we have team project? Learning in general, and research in particular is a social activity. No longer do we learn alone, quietly discovering the world. It's a messy, social, difficult process awash in data – but not necessarily knowledge. Team projects are the way of life. But accountability is a problem – trust me when I say I can tell who pulls the weight on projects. Talk with me if you need. But know I am here to make teams and you succeed.

Course Schedule and Assignments

(May change, but will be with warning!)

	Readings	Assignments
Week 1: <i>A brief history of truth: Introduction to science and the particularities of social science</i>		
3/31	National Academy of Science. 2009.	
4/2	Ocejo, 2013 (Introduction, pages 1-14) Emerson, Fretz, Shaw, 1995	Field Notes – spend time in your neighborhood for a practice run.
Week 2: <i>Why study society and urban spaces?</i>		
4/7	Durkheim “What is a Social Fact?” Wirth, 1938	
4/9	Library Session Ruane Chapters 3-4	Field Notes Sample Due
Week 3: <i>Scientific reasoning: research design, methods and problems</i>		
4/14	Booth, 1995 (page 85-106) Oreskes, 1994	
4/16	Ruane Chapters 5-6	
Week 4: <i>Data sources and analysis: GIS, Census and other data</i>		
4/21	Hong and Duff, 2002 Huff, 1954, How to Lie with Statistics (Excerpt) Tufte, 2001 (skim selections)	Literature Review <i>Draft</i> Due
4/23	Jurjevich and Shrock 2012 Whyte in Ocejo, 2013 (pages 157-163) Zorbaugh (Selection)	
Week 5: Making sense of the data, telling the story		
4/28	Geertz (Introduction, pages 3-30)	Field Notes Draft for Peer Review
4/30	Gibson, 2007	
Week 6: Unique challenges of a global, urban world		
5/5	Appadurai 1991 Gaytán, 2013	
5/7	Ocejo, 2013 (Pages 17-23; 53-63, 64-86)	Field Notes Due

Week 7: Unique challenges of a global, urban world pt 2		
5/12	Caldeira 1999 Ocejo 2013 (pages 32-40; pages 231-238)	
5/14	Rotenberg 1999	
Week 8: Book choice discussions		
5/19	Book Choice	Neighborhood Map Due
5/21	Book Choice	
Week 9: Book choice discussions		
5/26	Memorial Day	No Class - Holiday
5/28	Book Choice	
Week 10: Book choice discussions		
6/2	Book Choice	
6/4	Book Choice	
Finals Week		
6/9	Poster Presentations	Final Report Due

Reading List

- Appadurai, Arjun. 1991. "Global Ethnoscapes: Notes and Queries for a Transnational Anthropology." in *Recapturing anthropology: Working in the present*, edited by Richard Gabriel Fox. School of American Research Press Santa Fe.
- Booth, Wayne C. 1995. *The Craft of Research*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Caldeira, Teresa P. R. 1999. "Fortified Enclaves: The New Urban Segregation." Pp. 83–107 in *Theorizing the city: the new urban anthropology reader*, edited by Setha M. Low. New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press.
- Durkheim, Émile. [1895] 2006. *The Rules of Sociological Method: And Selected Texts on Sociology and Its Method*. England: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gaytán, Marie Sarita. 2008. "From Sombreros to Sincronizadas Authenticity, Ethnicity, and the Mexican Restaurant Industry." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 37(3):314–41.

- Geertz, Clifford. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gibson, Karen J. 2007. "Bleeding Albina: A History of Community Disinvestment, 1940-2000." *Transforming Anthropology* 15(1):3–25.
- Hong, Lawrence K., and Robert W. Duff. 2002. "Modulated Participant-Observation: Managing the Dilemma of Distance in Field Research." *Field Methods* 14(2):190.
- Huff, Darrell. 1991. *How to Lie with Statistics*. London: Penguin Books.
- Jurjevich, Jason and Greg Shrock. 2012. Is Portland Really the Place Where Young People Go To Retire? Migration Patterns of Portland's Young and College Educated, 1980-2010. Portland State University. Portland, OR
- National Academy of Science. 2009. *On Being a Scientist: A Guide to Responsible Conduct in Research: Third Edition*. (Preface, pp 1-3, 8-18, 24-27)
- Ocejo, Richard E., ed. 2013. *Ethnography and the City: Readings on Doing Urban Fieldwork*. New York: Routledge.
- Oreskes, Naomi, Kristin Shrader-Frechette, and Kenneth Belitz. 1994. "Verification, Validation, and Confirmation of Numerical Models in the Earth Sciences." *Science* 263(5147):641 –646.
- Rotenberg, Robert. 1999. "Landscape and Power in Vienna: Gardens of Discovery." Pp. 138–65 in *Theorizing the city: the new urban anthropology reader*. New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press.
- Ruane, Janet M. 2005. *Essentials of Research Methods: a Guide to Social Science Research*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub.
- Tufte, Edward. 2001. *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information*. 2nd ed. Cheshire, Conn.: Graphics Press.
- Wirth, Louis. 1938. "Urbanism as a Way of Life." *American Journal of Sociology* 1–24.
- Zorbaugh, Harvey Warren. [1929] 1983. *The Gold Coast and the Slum: a Sociological Study of Chicago's Near North Side*. Chicago, Ill. Univ. of Chicago Press.