

Fall 2014  
Wednesdays 7:20-10:00pm  
Hanover Hall L003  
Office Hours: Mon. 11am-12pm, Wed 2-3pm,  
or by appointment.

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## **SOCI 853: Cities in a Global Society Syllabus**

In this course, we will explore urban sociology, critical urban studies, and globalization studies to understand cities in a global context. This course includes classics and some of the newest works in these fields. We will explore cities in the Global North, the Global South, and the Second World of socialism. We will focus on debates on global cities, modernism and post-modernism, informality, and global urban inequalities, as well as examine a variety of methods to study urban trends.

### **Course Objectives**

By the end of this course, students should be able to

- Understand different forms of urbanization within a global context.
- Discuss major terms, themes, and debates in urban sociology, critical urban studies, and globalization studies.
- Understand various research methodologies for studying cities in a global context, as well as the differences between comparative approaches and global or transnational approaches.
- Write an extended literature review on an urban topic of your choice.

### **Course schedule and readings**

#### **Part I: Introduction**

*August 27: Global Cities Debate (Paper #1)*

- Sassen, Saskia. 2001. *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*. Princeton University Press.

*September 3: Global Cities Debate (Paper #2)*

- Smith, Michael Peter. 2000. *Transnational Urbanism: Locating Globalization*. Wiley-Blackwell.

#### **Part II: Modernism and Post-Modernism**

*September 10: Modernist Architecture and the City (Paper #3)*

- Ren, Xufei. 2011. *Building Globalization: Transnational Architecture Production in Urban China*. University of Chicago Press.
- Jacobs, Jane. [1961] 1992. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. Vintage. Chapter 1.\*

*September 17: Modernism and Cities of Rebellion (Paper #4)*

- Holston, James. 1989. *The Modernist City: An Anthropological Critique of Brasilia*. University of Chicago Press.

*September 24: Socialist vs. Capitalist Modernity (Paper #5)*

- Thaler, Wolfgang, Maroje Mrduljas, and Vladimir Kulic. 2012. *Modernism In-Between: The Mediatory Architectures of Socialist Yugoslavia*. Jovis.

*October 1: Making the Modern, Global City (Paper #6)*

- No class meeting. During this week, go on Southwest Heritage Walking Tour in DC: [http://www.culturaltourismdc.org/portal/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=700fde5d-3534-4ade-b902-3b8ecd95a137&groupId=701982](http://www.culturaltourismdc.org/portal/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=700fde5d-3534-4ade-b902-3b8ecd95a137&groupId=701982)  
In Paper #6, talk about this week's readings and about modernism in SW DC. Also, during the tour, think about gentrification in SW DC.
- Ghannam, Farha. 2002. *Remaking the Modern: Space, Relocation, and the Politics of Identity in a Global Cairo*. University of California Press.

*October 8: The Informality of Modernism and Postmodernism (Paper #7)*

- Roy, Ananya and Nezar AlSayyad, eds. 2004. *Urban Informality: Transnational Perspectives from the Middle East, South Asia, and Latin America*. Lexington Books.

### **Part III: Global Inequalities in Cities**

*October 15: Segregation and Gentrification (Paper #8)*

- Sugrue, Thomas. 1996. *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. Princeton University Press.

*October 22: Segregation and Gentrification (Paper #9)*

- Murray, Martin. 2010. *City of Extremes: The Spatial Politics of Johannesburg*. Duke University Press.

*October 29: Segregation and Gentrification (Paper #10)*

- Logan, John and Harvey Molotch. [1987] 2007. *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*. University of California Press.
- Smith, Neil. 2002. "New Globalism, New Urbanism: Gentrification as Global Urban Strategy," *Antipode* 34(3): 427-450.\*

*November 5: Inequalities and Citizenship (Paper #11)*

- Holston, James. 2009. *Insurgent Citizenship: Disjunctions of Democracy and Modernity in Brazil*. Princeton University Press.

### **Part IV: Exploring the City and Urban Methodologies**

*November 12: Henri Lefebvre (Paper #12)*

- Lefebvre, Henri. [2003] 1970. *The Urban Revolution*. University of Minnesota Press.

November 19: *Walking and Heterotopias (Paper #13)*

- de Certeau, Michel. “Walking in the City” and “Spatial Stories”  
<http://faculty.georgetown.edu/irvinem/theory/DeCerteau-Practice-Excerpts.pdf>
- Foucault, Michel. 1967. “Of Other Spaces, Heterotopias.”  
<http://foucault.info/documents/heterotopia/foucault.heterotopia.en.html>
- Doron, G. M. 2000. “The Dead Zone and the Architecture of Transgression,” *City* 4(2).\*

November 23: \*\*Exchange drafts of final paper by email by midnight.\*\*

November 26: *Thanksgiving Recess \*No Class\**

December 3: *A City Tour (Paper #14)*

- Davis, Mike. 1990. *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*. Vintage.

\*\*Return comments on drafts (in hardcopy during class).\*\*

*Final Paper Due:* Wednesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at 10:15pm by email ([jbockman@gmu.edu](mailto:jbockman@gmu.edu)).

### Course Requirements

Class participation	20%
Short weekly papers	20%
Comments on research paper	5%
Final Research Paper	55%

To receive a passing grade, all four components must be completed.

### Grading scale

A	95	over 93
A-	92	90-92
B+	88	87-89
B	85	83-86
B-	82	80-82
C+	78	77-79
C	75	73-76
C-	72	70-72
D	65	60-69
F	0	0-59

*Class participation:* Participation includes attendance, being on time, bringing the reading, asking questions, and, especially, participating in discussion. The weekly readings will be used extensively during class discussion.

*Short weekly papers:* This is a 2-page paper on the readings each week. You can write more than two pages if you wish. Please include:

- 1) What is/are the main argument(s) of the reading?
- 2) Choose a passage (or two or more) that illuminates at least one of these arguments.
- 3) What do you find most interesting or surprising about the reading?
- 4) How does it relate to previous readings and discussions we have had?

5) Discuss or list one or two questions you have about the reading.

The paper must be turned in by email (jbockman@gmu.edu) 4:00pm on Wednesdays. You can drop two weekly papers from your grade: 12 out of 14 papers will go towards your grade.

#### *Comments on Final Paper*

Each student will give a draft of their final paper to two other members of class. These “commentators” will write at least one page of comments about the draft to the author to help the author improve the final paper. These comments will be submitted with the final paper and graded.

#### *Final research paper*

Each student will prepare a 20-page extended literature review on either a particular city or on a particular global urban theme. Your papers should advance your own intellectual project (your thesis or dissertation). I will meet with each of you individually during the semester to discuss your work and to generate a topic. I am glad to read drafts of the research paper. With your research paper, please include the commentators’ comments and memo explaining how you incorporated their comments.

#### *Late Policy*

For each day that any written work is late that grade will be reduced by a step (e.g., an A paper will become an A- paper one day after the due date, a B+ paper two days after the due date, etc).

#### *Laptop, E-Book, I-Phone Policy*

I do not allow the use of laptops, e-book readers, i-phones, or other devices in class because I want everyone to be fully present in the classroom. Therefore, hardcopies of all the books and articles must be used in the classroom.

### **Required Texts**

The books listed without a\* in the course schedule above are required for the course and are available from the bookstore. The syllabus and articles/book chapters listed with a\* in the course schedule above will be available on Blackboard. Hardcopies of the books and articles must be used, not electronic copies.

### **Additional Items**

- If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. <http://ods.gmu.edu>
- I will not tolerate plagiarism. George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee. For more info: <http://honorcode.gmu.edu>. We will talk about what plagiarism is in class.
- Other useful campus resources:  
Writing Center: A114 Robinson Hall, 703.993.1200, <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>.  
University Libraries “Ask a Librarian,” <http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>  
Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), 703.993.2380, <http://caps.gmu.edu>