

A User's Guide for Teaching Urban Studies 101 at Queens College

URBST 101: Urban Poverty and Affluence

Prepared by
The Curriculum Committee
Department of Urban Studies
Queens College CUNY

In Fall 2009, Perspectives on the Liberal Arts and Sciences (Perspectives) will replace LASAR in the college's general education curriculum. The QC Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) has approved URBST 101 as a Perspectives course. This User's Guide describes the curricular elements that URBST 101 instructors will need to include in their courses – and that must appear on their syllabi – in order to meet the new Perspectives guidelines (see p. 2). An assessment of the extent to which the objectives of the course have been achieved must also be conducted (see part 5 of this Guide).

These curricular elements must be incorporated into all URBST 101 courses taught in the Fall 2009 semester and in every semester thereafter. We are circulating this User's Guide well in advance to give ample time for course development by URBST 101 instructors.

Prior to the start of the Fall 2009 semester, the Urban Studies Department's Curriculum Committee will review each URBST 101 syllabus to insure that it meets the newly established Perspectives criteria. The committee will need approximately **four** weeks to complete its review, so please submit your syllabus no later than July 15, 2009. Make submissions to Jeff Maskovsky, chair, Curriculum Committee, Urban Studies Department (Jeff.Maskovsky@qc.cuny.edu).

1) Course Description

The QC UCC approved this course description for URBST 101:

Introduction to the multidisciplinary field of urban studies, investigates why cities are places of economic and political opportunity for some but not for others. Compares major social scientific models and methods for studying urban poverty and inequality, and explores the major structural forces that shape U.S. cities. Special attention is paid to the existence of inequalities based on race, class, ethnicity, gender, and/or sexuality, and analyzes proposals to reduce these inequalities.

This is the statement that will appear in the QC schedule of classes and in the course bulletin. Students are therefore likely to encounter this course description prior to enrolling in your course. Although instructors are, of course, free to write their own unique course descriptions, we encourage you to write a description that conforms more or less to this statement.

2) General Education Requirements

Starting in Fall 2009 (but not before), the following statement **must** appear on all URBST 101 syllabi:

General Education Requirements: This course fulfills two general education requirements. Through its discussion of urban studies approaches for studying social systems, this course fulfills the "Analyzing Social Structures" Area of Knowledge and Inquiry requirement. Because this course engages in discussions of the American political system, social values and attitudes toward government and society, and the role of urban residents in shaping those institutions and values, it fulfills the "United States" Context of Experience requirement.

3) Perspectives Criteria

In addition to the elements discussed above, all sections of URBST 101 must fulfill the Perspectives criteria described below. The requirements for the new Perspectives curriculum are described in detail in the document entitled “General Education at Queens College, A Report of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee” (see box below).

(from General Education Area Requirements, approved, by the QC Academic Senate, April 2006)

Perspectives on the Liberal Arts and Sciences (PLAS) Courses will:

1. Address how **data and evidence are construed** and **knowledge acquired** in the discipline. that is, how questions are asked and answered;
2. **Position the discipline** within the liberal arts curriculum and the larger society.
3. **Address the goals** for an Area of Knowledge and Inquiry (e.g., **Analyzing Social Structures**) and a Context of Experience (e.g., **United States**).

Each PLAS course will also, where appropriate to the subject matter:

4. Be **global or comparative** in scope,
5. Consider **diversity** and the nature and construction of **forms of difference**,
6. Engage students in **active inquiry**,
7. Reveal the existence and importance of **change over time**, and
8. Use **primary documents and materials**.

Area of Knowledge and Inquiry: Analyzing Social Structures (SS)

Participation in our complex society and world relies on an understanding of the organization and function of different societies and cultures, of the nature of power and how different systems of politics and governance operate, of the development of states and nations and the relations among them, and of the organization and operation of economic systems. The study of a social science provides insight into a specific problem and knowledge of the data, methods, perspectives, and theories of social inquiry and understanding.

Courses that contribute to an awareness of social structures will teach the major methods, concepts, and models used in the social sciences, will provide an understanding of the relations among the social sciences, and will emphasize such important themes as the historical development of states and societies, governmental and societal organizations, the role of ideas within human societies, and social and economic structures.

Contexts of Experience: United States (US)

The college’s educational goals are an expression of American political and cultural history, and one of the College’s most important aims is the preparation of students to contribute to American society. Understanding the emergence and operation of the United States as a distinct nation and as self-consciously defined and proclaimed democracy provides part of the context for the students’ own educational experience.

A course that contributes to the goal of understanding the United States experience will examine its culture, history, or political and social institutions by studying such topics as the founding of US society and government; the role of migration in US society and its changing racial, ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversity; the development of democratic values and institutions and the contests over inclusion and exclusion; the history of US expansion and its accompanying intellectual and ideological developments, and the place and role of the United States in global contexts, in the past and in the present.

URBST 101 must:

a) Introduce students to how the discipline of Urban Studies creates knowledge and understanding. Going beyond mere description, the course must explore the history of inequality and urban restructuring in the United States *and* expose students to the major social scientific models and methods for studying urban poverty and inequality. It must expose students to basic urban research methods such as fieldwork, survey research, census data analysis, policy analysis and/or historical analysis, and enable students to begin the process of learning to critically analyze urban policy proposals on a variety of topics. The course should discuss different theories of urban poverty and inequality and, depending on the instructor, examine the impact of such factors as immigration, racial segregation, suburbanization, environmentalism, public policies, and/or social movements on U.S. cities and their inhabitants.

b) Position the field of urban studies within the liberal arts and the larger society. It must introduce students to urban studies' multidisciplinary approach, which combines research methodologies and theoretical paradigms from across the social sciences to create innovative, real-world knowledge of the challenges and opportunities of city life. It must explain to students how this orientation distinguishes the field from related disciplines including political science, sociology, history, anthropology and from disciplines in the humanities. Given the urban character of our college and of our student body, this course should also help students to make sense of their own experiences and of the experiences of others with whom they interact on a daily basis, and to enhance their capacity to act as citizens and to engage effectively in civic life.

c) Address the goals defined for the Analyzing Social Structures (SS) Area of Knowledge and Inquiry. The course must direct careful attention to the problems, limitations and ongoing need to rethink various paradigms for analyzing the structural and institutional forces that shape how cities work and that produce and reproduce differing patterns of difference and inequality.

d) Emphasize the United States (US) Context of Experience. It should teach students to recognize that cities have played an important role in shaping American political, economic and cultural history, and that they have been important yet contradictory sites of civic engagement and democratic practice. URBST 101 should also address the role of migration in US society, its changing racial, ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversity, the development of democratic values and institutions, contests over inclusion and exclusion, and/or the history of US expansion from the unique vantage point of its urban residents.

e) Introduce Urban Studies as a Major and Minor. Many of the students who take URBST 101 are in their first year of college or are transfer students. They have never taken Urban Studies courses before, and many of them don't know what it is—they simply choose URBST 101 because it fits into their schedule and fulfills general education requirements. So we view this course as a means to inform students about Urban Studies and to encourage them to take more Urban Studies courses. It should therefore introduce themes, concepts, theories and methods that are of use in our upper division courses, and introduce the Major and Minor requirements to the students.

In addition, URBST 101 will, where possible,

f) Be global or comparative in approach. It might compare relevant social scientific models, paradigms and policy statements. For example, students could learn to make connections between different theories of impoverishment and the prescriptions for poverty alleviation with which the

theories correlate. It might also compare urban forms, though how exactly these comparisons might be made will depend on the instructor. The course might also compare urban life with life in the suburbs, exurbs and in rural areas. It might also compare pre-industrial, industrial and post-industrial urban economies. It might compare the diversity of urban groups across historical periods and between different regions and areas. It might compare patterns of political and/or economic incorporation or forms of urban governance across US regions or time periods. And although the substantive empirical referent for the course is cities in the United States, the course might also compare US cities to those in other countries, or compare global cities or second-tier cities or declining cities within and across national boundaries. International comparisons of poverty rates and the wealth gap might also be included in discussions of inequality. Different sections may emphasize one axis of comparison more than another, depending upon the backgrounds and experience of the instructor.

g) Consider diversity and the nature and construction of forms of difference. The course should deal directly with diversity and difference by helping students to recognize the political and economic bases of inequalities based on racial, gendered, sexual, and/or ethnic differences and the ways that urban restructuring and policy reform can exacerbate or alleviate those inequalities.

h) Engage students in active inquiry. As a supplement to traditional lectures during which students sit passively and absorb information primarily by listening and writing down notes, URBST 101 instructors are encouraged to incorporate active learning exercises into their courses. Active learning involves assignments or in class activities that encourage students to engage in higher-order thinking tasks such as analysis, interpretation, evaluation and synthesis. The purpose of active learning is to increase the level of student engagement, to encourage them to learn by doing, not just by listening, and extend their ability to engage in critical thinking. Examples of appropriate active learning exercises for URBST 101 are included below in Section 4.

4) Course Materials, Assignments, and Activities

a) Course Material. A broad range of course material is appropriate for this course. The texts described below exemplify the kinds of material that could be used to meet course objectives. This is hardly an exhaustive list.

John J. Macionis and Vincent N. Parrillo. 2006. "The Development of North American Cities." In *Cities and Urban Life*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, pp. 62-104.

This chapter can be used to help students to learn about the historical development of US cities and to compare different urban forms. It describes the history of US and Canadian cities from the pre-industrial period to the industrial period, to the post-industrial period. It describes important changes in urban economy as cities shifted their economic focus from trade to manufacturing to service delivery. It also includes descriptions of the political, demographic and spatial organization of cities during different historical epochs and contains a brief synopsis of New York City's historical development from a Dutch colony to the global financial center that it is today. Excerpts from texts, such as Sassen's *The Global City*, Harvey's *The Urban Experience*, or Logan and Molotch's *The Growth Machine* may also be appropriate for establishing the historical and comparative basis of knowledge about cities.

Goldsmith and Blakely. 1992. Chapter 1. In *Separate Societies: Poverty and Inequality in US Cities*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, pp. 1-14.

This chapter can help students to gain familiarity with contemporary approaches to the study of poverty and inequality from a variety of social scientific perspectives and disciplines. Written by two sociologists, it compares three theories of impoverishment: poverty as pathology, poverty as accident

and poverty as structure. It explains the political and policy proscriptions that typically align themselves with each theory. Additional texts such as Wilson's *The Truly Disadvantaged* (sociology), Maskovsky and Goode's *The New Poverty Studies* (Anthropology), Piven and Cloward's *Regulating the Poor* (Political Science), Alice O'Conner's *Poverty Knowledge* (History), and Michael Katz' *The Undeserving Poor* (History), among other texts, may also be appropriate for introducing students to different paradigms for studying urban poverty.

Laura Maggi, "The Poor Count," *American Prospect* (Nov. 30, 2002).

This article can be used to describe how poverty and income inequality are calculated and tracked. It describes the formula used by the US government to establish the poverty line, and explains why this formula may not be accurate in determining who is actually living in poverty.

The Economist. 2004. "Meritocracy in America: Ever higher society, ever harder to ascend." In *The Economist* (Dec 29th 2004).

This piece summarizes several multi-generational studies on class mobility, explaining the chances for upward mobility for people on different rungs of the US income ladder. It can be used to shatter the myth of upward mobility.

Devah Pager and Bruce Western. 2005. "Race at Work." A paper published by the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture (December 9, 2005).

This audit, conducted by sociologists, shows the effects of racial discrimination at the bottom end of the NYC labor market. It can be used to show the contribution of audit studies to the analysis of labor market participation.

Massey and Denton. 1993. *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

A classic in the field of sociology, this book summarizes the findings in several quantitative studies to test the validity of various theories of residential segregation. It can be used to show the contribution of audits and survey research to the study of racial inequality.

Gregory Pappas. 1989. *The Magic City*. Ithaca, New York : Cornell University Press.

This is an ethnographic account of the effects of deindustrialization on a factory town and its inhabitants. It can be used to show the contribution of ethnography to the study of poverty.

Peter Eisinger. 2000. "The Politics of Bread and Circuses" *Urban Affairs Review*, Vol. 35, No. 3, 316-333 (2000)

This is a critique of large-scale urban development plans involving city-subsidized stadium construction. It is but one example of the kinds of texts that can be read alongside NYC planning documents to help students to gain critical insights into the urban planning process.

b) Major Assignments

To supplement lectures, homework assignments should be designed to emphasize active learning by students. Here are some sample assignments:

1) Students are asked to pretend that they are reporters or photojournalists. Their editors have given them the assignment to write a short, two to three paragraph article about the militarization of public space in New York City. In the article, the student should document this phenomenon in journalistic fashion. They must pick a building, park, street corner, etc. that they think best exemplifies the militarization of public space in New York and describe it in detail for the readership. They must explain to their readers how architectural design, surveillance technology and policing discourage people from gaining free, unfettered access to what could be public places.

2) Students must pretend that they are a Republican Senator, a Democratic City Council member, and a welfare rights activist. They must write a paragraph explaining their view of urban poverty from each of these perspectives. They must describe why they think that some urban residents are poor, and tell us what should be done about urban poverty, from their conservative, liberal and left points of view.

3) Students must imagine that they are urban planners who must decide the fate of New York City. They must write an essay in support of each of the following economic development plans.

1) The City as an Entertainment Venue. New York, like other cities, has fallen on hard times. We are receiving only a fraction of the funding from the federal government that we once received. Affluent residents and businesses are leaving the city in droves. The city tax base is seriously eroded. We have no choice but to devote all of our political and fiscal resources to support entertainment facilities. Explain how this plan will help the city's economy. Explain how different groups – politicians, developers, residents, small- business owners – will benefit from this plan. Explain what sacrifices must be made to develop the city as an entertainment venue and who will have to make them.

2) The City to Accommodate Residential Interest. New York, like other cities, has indeed fallen on hard times. We must devote all possible resources to maintaining the city's infrastructure and to providing services and resources to our residential neighborhoods. Explain why big development projects are bad for the city and how you would establish a balanced set of urban priorities. Explain how this plan will help the city's economy. Explain how different groups – politicians, developers, residents, small-business owners – will benefit from this plan. Explain what sacrifices must be made to develop the city for its residents and who will have to make them.

c) Exams

The purpose of exams should not be to ask students to memorize facts in isolation. Rather, they should be used to help students to synthesize course material. Here are a few examples of good exam questions:

1) Multiple Choice (2 points each):

A. Transnationalism

A. Moving to one country but maintaining extensive ties to your home country.

B. Moving to one country and cutting off all ties to your home country.

C. Living on the East Coast while frequently visiting the West Coast.

D. The political goals of transgender activists.

B. Model minority

A. A seldom-told tale about how models created the world.

B. A myth that certain minorities get ahead because their culture inspires them to be disciplined and to have strong family ties.

C. Idea that certain minorities get ahead because they make the best models.

D. A very beautiful person of color.

2) Why are people of color under-represented in New York City electoral politics? Does individual voting behavior account for lower registration and turnout in people of color assembly districts? If not, what are the alternative explanations? (10 pts)

3) Urban restructuring since WWII has caused an increase in political and economic inequality in major metropolitan areas such as New York. Describe how changes in employment policies and practices, the persistence of segregation, immigration policies, the militarization of public space, the advent of new development policies, and shifts in social policy such as welfare “reform” have created new patterns of inequality in many urban areas. Discuss the consequences of these developments for the urban poor. You must provide concrete, detailed examples from course materials. (30 pts)

5) Outcomes Assessment

As part of the College’s General Education requirement, starting in Fall 2009, URBST 101 instructors should administer a brief outcomes assessment protocol to determine how successfully the course meets its objectives. The protocol should include these **six** simple steps.

- 1) Decide what learning objective (identified previously in your syllabus) you will assess (each semester you only need to pick one);
- 2) Decide what assignment you will use to assess it.
- 3) Define in advance the characteristics of a not good enough, good enough, and better than good enough performance on the assignment.
- 4) As you grade the response to the assignment, count the number of student responses that fall into each category.
- 5) Make a photocopy of a sample response for each category.
- 6) After the semester is over, send a report and sample assignments to the URBST Curriculum Committee; and please use the information you gathered to refine the course before offering it again.

Here is an example of a successful assessment report:

Urban Studies 101

Date

Instructor’s Name

Section #

Teaching Objective: Students will gain familiarity with a broad range of contemporary theories of impoverishment and learn to identify their use in the creation of welfare policy prescriptions.

Mastery of theory is assessed based on student performance on a required exam essay question on this topic.

Failed to master theories and/or to understand the basic contours of welfare policy making.

Mastered basic theories but failed to understand their relevance in policy making.

Mastered basic theories and demonstrated a good understanding of their relevance to the policy-making process.

**Number of
Students**

4

15

8

6) Syllabus

Below please find a sample syllabus that fulfills all Perspectives criteria, and here are some additional resources to guide syllabus construction:

- The Provost's page outlining guidelines for syllabi:
http://qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/provost/Cur_stud/Syllabus_expectations.htm
- Sample syllabi for W courses, from Writing Across the Curriculum:
<http://qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/writing/wsyllabi.htm>
- Goals for Student Writing at Queens College:
<http://qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/writing/Goals.htm>
- Harvard's Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, suggestions for syllabus planning:
<http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k1985&pageid=icb.page29695>
- Lehman College's Gen Ed Syllabi Project:
http://www.lehman.edu/lehman/programs/generaledu/gened_syllabi_project.html

**URBAN STUDIES 101
URBAN POVERTY AND AFFLUENCE
Sections 10M2A-F
Fall 2008**

Lectures Presented by

Professor Jeff Maskovsky
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Office Hours: M 12:15pm-2:15pm;
Or by appointment

Discussion Sessions Led by

Instructor Bradley Gardener
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Instructor David Spataro
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Office Hours: W 12:15-2:15; or
by appointment

Email: DSpataro@gc.cuny.edu
Office Hours: W 12:15-2:15; or
by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome. This course will introduce you to the field of Urban Studies. We will investigate why cities are places of economic and political opportunity for some and places of deprivation, discrimination, violence and impoverishment for others. We will explore how urban restructuring since WWII has increased the income gap in major metropolitan areas such as New York. We will also discuss different theories of urban poverty and inequality and examine the impact of immigration, racial segregation, suburbanization, public policies, and social movements on U.S. cities and their inhabitants. We will pay special attention to the existence of inequalities based on race, class, gender, and sexuality and will analyze proposals to reduce these inequalities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The students will:

1. Learn the history of US urban restructuring from the pre-industrial period to the present.
2. Gain familiarity with contemporary approaches to the study of poverty and inequality from a variety of social scientific perspectives and disciplines.
3. Gain familiarity with basic urban research methods such as fieldwork, survey research and historical analysis.
4. Learn to read and critically analyze urban policy proposals.

GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

This course fulfills two general education requirements. Through its discussion of urban studies approaches for studying the social systems, this course fulfills the “Analyzing Social Structures” Area of Knowledge and Inquiry requirement. Because this course engages in discussions of the American political system, social values and attitudes toward government and society, and the role of urban residents in shaping those institutions and values, it fulfills the “United States” Context of Experience requirement.

TIME AND PLACE

Class lectures are scheduled for Mondays from 10:50 to 12:05 in KY170. Review sessions are scheduled for Wednesdays. Please attend the review session that corresponds with the section for which you are registered.

Section 10M2A, W8am-9:15am, PH 116
Section 10M2B, W9:25am-10:40am, PH 116

Section 10M2C, W10:50am-12:05am, PH 116
Section 10M2D, W1:40PM-2:55PM, KY416
Section 10M2E, W9:25am-10:40am, TBA
Section 10M2F, W10:50am-12:05am, RZ208

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Class participation. Please come to lectures and review sessions prepared to discuss the assigned readings, to ask questions, and to listen and respond to others' questions and comments. Regular attendance is the best way for you to ensure your success in this course.

- 2) Discussion Preparation. In order to encourage advanced preparation for discussion sessions, we ask you to complete eight (out of a total of ten) short assignments over the course of the semester. You will receive credit only for accurate, timely and original work. You are free to choose any eight of the ten assignments (and can therefore also choose which two assignments to miss). Please also keep the following guidelines in mind:
 - a) Assignments must be handed in anytime before the eleventh minute of class on the date upon which they are due. You must submit a paper copy. We cannot accept assignments by email; nor can we accept assignments left in our department mailboxes during or after class.
 - b) Assignments will be handed out during lectures or discussion sessions or posted to our course Blackboard website. As a matter of course policy, we cannot send assignments to you by email. Sorry about this, but there are simply too many of you for us to be able to provide this level of individualized administrative support.
 - c) Because we allow you to miss two assignments for any reason, it follows then that no late assignments will be accepted. It also follows that we cannot accept excuses after you have already skipped two assignments. We know that some of you will try anyway, but we really mean this. You read it here first: No exceptions! Note that we might give out an extra, optional eleventh assignment towards the end of the semester if the class as a whole is respectful of these guidelines.

- 3) Midterm Exam. This exam covers the first half of the course (weeks 1-8). The exam is comprised of multiple choice and medium-length questions. We will distribute a study sheet the week before the exam.

- 4) Final exam. This is a cumulative exam. The exam is comprised of multiple choice, medium-length and essay questions. We will distribute a study sheet the week before the exam.

Grading: Discussion Preparation, 25%
 Midterm Exam, 30%
 Final Exam, 45%

Please note also the following:

- People come to this class with different kinds of academic expertise, different life experiences, and different customs (both individual and cultural). These differences can, and hopefully will, contribute positively to the substance and quality of class discussion. However, because these differences are often related to social inequalities, they can also be a source of misunderstanding and frustration. It is thus important to keep in mind that active, respectful class participation is as much about listening to and engaging the ideas of others as it is about speaking one's own mind.

- Laptop use is only permitted in the front row of the classroom, so if you use your laptop to take notes, you should plan on arriving early for class to make sure that you will get a seat. If you need to use your cell phone, BlackBerry, I-Pod, Sidekick or any other electronic equipment, please do so outside of the classroom; using these devices during class may be distracting to your fellow classmates. The recording of lectures or class discussions is not permitted.
 - Incompletes will not be granted, except in extraordinary circumstances and with proper documentation. After-the-fact requests for extensions and incompletes will not be considered. We really mean this.
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BLACKBOARD

Weekly lecture outlines, homework assignments, and grades will be posted to our course web page on the CUNY Blackboard server. Information on how to log on to Blackboard is available through the Office of Converging Technologies.

REQUIRED READING

You will be assigned approximately 50 pages of reading each week. There is one required book:

Moody, Kim. *From Welfare State to Real Estate: Regime Change in New York City, 1974 to the Present*. New York: The New Press, 2007.

Additional reading material is available from the library e-reserve system.

OFFICE HOURS

Professor Maskovsky's office is Room 250M in Powdermaker Hall. His office phone number is 718-997-5129. His e-mail address is Jeff.Maskovsky@qc.cuny.edu. If you cannot make it during the office hours listed below, please contact him by email or phone to schedule an appointment.

Mondays 12:15am-2:15am; or by appointment.

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Wednesdays, 12:15pm to 1:15pm; or by appointment.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND PLAGIARISM

Queens College takes cheating and plagiarism very seriously; if caught you may fail the course and/or be suspended from the college. Don't copy other people's work. This means that you should not take the words or ideas of another person and submit them without acknowledging the original author. Examples of plagiarism include copying from another student's homework assignment or taking phrases, sentences, paragraphs, or statistical findings from a variety of sources and piecing them together without citing them. Taking phrases, paragraphs or papers from course readings, the internet or other students and representing them as your own falls under this category. You must always indicate when you have used an idea from someone else's work; anything else constitutes stealing from others and violates both the ethics of this class and established academic standards. There are now sophisticated search engines that prove beyond a reasonable doubt when students have downloaded web-based material and submitted it as their own.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Required readings are listed below. This schedule may be adjusted.

Wk Date Readings/discussion topics

1 8/27 **Introduction: What is Urban Studies?**

2 9/1 **No Class: Labor Day**

 9/3 **Discussion Session # 1**

Assignments:

- **Please read this entire syllabus before 9/3**
- **Please log onto our Blackboard course page and read all of the announcements by 9/3.**

You will be QUIZZED on these two assignments during Discussion Session #1.

3 9/8 **Lecture # 1: Theories of Impoverishment**

- Goldsmith and Blakely, *Separate Societies*, Chapter 1, pp. 1-14
- Laura Maggi, "The Poor Count," *American Prospect*
- Cara Buckley, "City Refines Formula to Measure Poverty Rate"

 9/10 **Discussion Session # 2**

3 9/15 **Lecture # 2: Rich and Poor in the 21st Century**

- Jared Bernstein, "Updated CBO data reveal unprecedented increase in inequality," *Economic Policy Institute*
- *The Economist*, "Meritocracy in America: Ever higher society, ever harder to ascend"
- Devah Pager and Bruce Western, "Race at Work"

 9/17 **Discussion Session # 3**

4 9/22 **Lecture # 3: The Historical Development of U.S. Cities**

- John J. Macionis and Vincent N. Parrillo, "The Development of North American Cities"

9/24 **Discussion Session # 4**

5 9/29 **No Class: Rosh Hashanah**
10/1 **No Class: Rosh Hashanah**

6 10/6 **Lecture # 4: The Fiscal Crisis and Urban Neoliberalism**
• Moody, Introduction, Chapters 1-2

10/8 **No Class: Yom Kippur**

7 10/13 **No Class: Columbus Day**

10/14 **Lecture # 5: Globalization and Underemployment**
• Moody, Chapter 3
• Gregory Pappas, The Magic City, Chapters 2 and 3

NOTE: Tuesday is Monday at Queens College on 10/14; please follow Monday schedule; class meets in KY170.

10/15 **Discussion Session # 5**

8 10/20 **Lecture # 6: Urban Politics**
• Moody, Chapters 4 and 5

10/22 **Discussion Session # 6**

9 10/27 **Lecture # 7: Urban Development Policy**
• Moody, Chapters 6 and 7, Conclusion

10/29 **Midterm Exam (Weeks 1-8)**

10 11/3 **Lecture # 8: Migration and Inequality**
• Peter Kwong, "Poverty Despite Family Ties"

11/5 **Discussion Session # 8**

11 11/10 **Lecture # 9: The New Urban Segregation**
• Massey and Denton, American Apartheid, Chapter 4, The Continuing Causes of Segregation
• Gregory Squires, "The Indelible Color Line: The Persistence of Housing Discrimination," American Prospect

11/12 **Discussion Session # 9**

12 11/17 **Lecture # 10: The Militarization of Urban Space**
• Mike Davis, "Fortress Los Angeles: the Militarization of Urban Space"

11/19 **Discussion Session # 10**

- 13 11/24 **Lecture # 11: Women, Poverty and Welfare**
- Randy Albelda and Chris Tilly, “It’s a Family Affair: Women, Poverty and Welfare”
- 11/26 **Discussion Session # 11**
- 14 12/1 **Lecture # 12: Racial Inequalities and the Criminal Justice System**
- David Cole, “No Equal Justice: Race and Class in the American Criminal Justice System”
 - Christian Parenti, “The ‘New’ Criminal Justice System: State Repression from 1968 to 2001”
- 12/3 **Discussion Session # 12**
- 15 12/8 **Lecture # 13: Environmental Racism and Sustainable Cities**
- Julie Sze, “The Racial Geography of New York City Garbage: Local and Global Trash Politics”
 - Melissa Checker, “Like Nixon Coming to China: Finding Common Ground in a Multi-Ethnic Coalition for Environmental Justice.”
- 12/10 **Discussion Session # 13**
- 16 12/15 **Wrap Up and Review**

Final Exam – To be scheduled between 12/17 and 12/23

**URBAN STUDIES 101
URBAN POVERTY AND AFFLUENCE
Sections 10M2A-D
Spring 2009**

Lectures Presented by:

**Professor Melissa Checker
Powdermaker Hall, Room 250P
Tel: 718-997-5148**

Email: mchecker@gc.cuny.edu

**Office Hours: M 9:45-10:45am; 1:00-2:00pm; W 4:00-5:00pm
Or by appointment**

Discussion Sessions Led by

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| Instructor Bradley Gardener Powdermaker Hall, Room 250 Tel: 718-997-5130 BGardener@gc.cuny.edu Office Hours: W 12:15-1:15pm; appointment | | Instructor David Spataro Powdermaker Hall, Room 250 Tel: 718-997-5130 DSpataro@gc.cuny.edu Office Hours: W 12:15-1:15pm; appointment |
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome. This course will introduce you to the field of Urban Studies. We will investigate why cities are places of economic and political opportunity for some and places of deprivation, discrimination, violence and impoverishment for others. We will explore how urban restructuring since WWII has increased the income gap in major metropolitan areas such as New York. We will also discuss different theories of urban poverty and inequality and examine the impact of immigration, racial segregation, suburbanization, public policies, and social movements on the landscape of U.S. cities and on their inhabitants. Paying particular attention to inequalities based on race, class, gender, and sexuality, we will analyze proposals to reduce these inequalities. During the first half of the course, we will take a more macroscopic approach, exploring some of the political and economic reasons behind income and wealth disparities in urban areas. During the second half of the course, we will look more microscopically at some of the specific mechanisms of control and exclusion that perpetuate urban inequalities, especially for certain groups of people.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The students will:

1. Learn the history of US urban restructuring concentrating on the industrial period to the present
2. Gain familiarity with contemporary approaches to the study of poverty and inequality from a variety of social scientific perspectives and disciplines.

3. Gain familiarity with basic urban research methods such as fieldwork, survey research and historical analysis.
4. Understand the difference between different disciplinary approaches to the study of urban areas.
5. Learn to read and critically analyze urban policy proposals.

TIME AND PLACE

Class lectures are scheduled for Mondays from 10:50am to 12:05pm in RE100. Review sessions are scheduled for Wednesdays. Please attend the review session that corresponds with the section for which you are registered.

Section 10M2A, W9:25am-10:40am, PH 106 (Gardener)
Section 10M2B, W9:25am-10:40am, PH 116 (Spataro)
Section 10M2C, W10:50am-12:05pm, PH 116 (Gardener)
Section 10M2D, W 1:40pm-2:30pm, KY 323 (Spataro)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Class participation. Please come to lectures and review sessions prepared to discuss the assigned readings, to ask questions, and to listen and respond to others' questions and comments. Regular attendance is the best way for you to ensure your success in this course.
- 2) Discussion Preparation. In order to encourage advanced preparation for discussion sessions, we ask you to complete seven (out of a total of nine) short homework assignments over the course of the semester. Assignments can be found in the Assignments Folder of the Blackboard site. You will receive credit only for accurate, timely and original work. You are free to choose any seven of the nine assignments (and therefore can choose which two to miss). Please also keep the following guidelines in mind:
 - a) Assignments must be handed in anytime before the eleventh minute of class on the date upon which they are due. You must submit a paper copy. We cannot accept assignments by email; nor can we accept assignments left in our department mailboxes during or after class.
 - b) Assignments will be handed out during lectures or discussion sessions or posted to our course Blackboard website. As a matter of course policy, we cannot send assignments to you by email. Sorry about this, but there are simply too many of you for us to be able to provide this level of individualized administrative support.
 - c) Because we allow you to miss two assignments for any reason, it follows then that no late assignments will be accepted. It also follows that we cannot accept excuses after you have already skipped two assignments. We know that some of you will try anyway, but we really mean this. You read it here first: No exceptions! Note that we might give out an extra, optional tenth assignment towards the end of the semester if the class as a whole

is respectful of these guidelines.

d) Syllabus Quiz! Your first **graded** assignment will be **due** in your **very first discussion** session. It is a quiz on the syllabus. You must take it online – it is available through the Blackboard site, under the folder marked Tests. Please bring your results (and questions) to your first discussion session. Your score will be added into your other homework grades.

3) Poverty Line/Living Wage Assignment. Details for this short assignment will be posted to the Blackboard site and explained in Lecture 2 & Discussion Session 3.

4) Midterm Exam. This exam covers the first half of the course. The exam is comprised of multiple choice and medium-length questions. We will distribute a study sheet the week before the exam.

5) Final exam. This is a cumulative exam. The exam is comprised of multiple choice, medium-length and essay questions. We will distribute a study sheet the week before the exam.

Grading: Discussion Preparation/Homework (including syllabus quiz), 25%
Poverty Line/Living Wage Assignment, 15%
Midterm Exam, 30%
Final Exam, 30%

Please note also the following:

- People come to this class with different kinds of academic expertise, different life experiences, and different customs (both individual and cultural). These differences can, and hopefully will, contribute positively to the substance and quality of class discussion. However, because these differences are often related to social inequalities, they can also be a source of misunderstanding and frustration. It is thus important to keep in mind that active, respectful class participation is as much about listening to and engaging the ideas of others as it is about speaking one's own mind.

- Laptop use is only permitted in the front row of the classroom, so if you use your laptop to take notes, you should plan on arriving early for class to make sure that you will get a seat. If you need to use your cell phone, BlackBerry, I-Pod, Sidekick or any other electronic equipment, please do so outside of the classroom; using these devices during class may be distracting to your fellow classmates. The recording of lectures or class discussions is not permitted. These rules will be strictly enforced without exception.

- Incompletes will not be granted, except in extraordinary circumstances and with proper documentation. After-the-fact requests for extensions and incompletes will not be considered. We really mean this.

BLACKBOARD

The Syllabus, weekly lecture outlines, homework assignments, and grades will be posted to our course web page on the CUNY Blackboard server. On that site you will also find useful materials designed to enhance your understanding of the course and its related topics. Information on how to log on to Blackboard is available through the Office of Converging Technologies.

REQUIRED READING

You will be assigned approximately 50 pages of reading each week, due on the day they are assigned. Reading materials are available via e-reserve, which can be accessed through the library home page, or at: <http://www.reserve.qc.edu/eres/default.aspx>.

Our course password is: che101.

OFFICE HOURS/CONTACT INFO

Professor Checkers's office is Room 250P in Powdermaker Hall. Her office phone number is 718-997-5148. Her e-mail address is mchecker@qc.cuny.edu. If you cannot make it during the office hours listed below, please contact her by email or phone to schedule an appointment.

Mondays 9:45am-10:45am; 1:00-2:00 pm; Wednesdays 4:00-5:00 pm; or by appointment.

Instructor Bradley Gardener's office is Room 250J in Powdermaker Hall. His office phone number is 718-997-5130. His e-mail address is BGardener@qc.cuny.edu. If you cannot make it during the office hours listed below, please contact him by email or phone to schedule an appointment.

Wednesdays, 12:15pm to 1:15pm; or by appointment.

Instructor David Spataro's office is Room 250J in Powdermaker Hall. His office phone number is 718-997-5130. His e-mail address is DSpataro@qc.cuny.edu. If you cannot make it during the office hours listed below, please contact him by email or phone to schedule an appointment.

Wednesdays, 12:15pm to 1:15pm; or by appointment.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND PLAGIARISM

Queens College takes cheating and plagiarism very seriously; if caught you may fail the course and/or be suspended from the college. Don't copy other people's work. This means that you should not take the words or ideas of another person and submit them without acknowledging the original author. Examples of plagiarism include copying from another student's homework assignment or taking phrases, sentences, paragraphs, or statistical findings from a variety of sources and piecing them together without citing them. Taking phrases, paragraphs or papers from course readings, the internet or other students and representing them as your own falls under this category. You must always indicate when you have used an idea from someone else's work; anything else constitutes stealing from others and violates both the ethics of this class and established academic standards. There are now sophisticated search engines that prove beyond a reasonable doubt when students have downloaded web-based material and submitted it as their own.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Required readings are listed below. This schedule may be adjusted.

Date Readings/discussion topics

1/26 **Introduction: What is Urban Studies?**

Assignments:

- **Please read this entire syllabus before 1/28**
- **Please log onto our Blackboard course page and read all of the announcements by 1/28.**
- **Please take the syllabus quiz on the Blackboard site and bring your results to Discussion Session #1.**

1/28 **Discussion Session # 1** (Syllabus Quiz Due)

2/2 **Lecture # 1: Theories of Impoverishment**

- Goldsmith and Blakely, *Separate Societies*, Chapter 1, pp. 1-14
- Laura Maggi, "The Poor Count," *American Prospect*
- Cara Buckley, "City Refines Formula to Measure Poverty Rate"

2/4 **Discussion Session # 2** (HW#1 Due)

2/9 **Lecture # 2: Rich and Poor in the 21st Century**

- Barbara Ehrenreich, "This Land is Their Land" *The Nation*. June 11, 2008.
- *The Economist*, "Meritocracy in America: Ever higher society, ever harder to ascend"
- Gabriel Thompson. "Meet the Wealth Gap" *The Nation* June 11, 2008.
- Emmanuel Saez, "Striking it Richer: The Evolution of Top Incomes in the United States" (updated from *Pathways Magazine*, Winter 2008).
- Dedrick Muhammad, "Race and Extreme Inequality" *The Nation* June 11, 2008.
- Devah Pager and Bruce Western, "Race at Work"

2/11 **Discussion Session # 3** (HW #2 Due)

2/16 **NO CLASS -- PRESIDENT'S DAY**

2/18 **NO Discussion Session this week due to President's Day**

2/23 **Lecture # 3: Historic Fiscal Crisis & Urban Neoliberalism**

- Alex Vitale, *City of Disorder*, Chapters 3 & 5

2/25 **Discussion Session #4** (HW #3 Due)

3/2 **Lecture # 4: Globalization & Underemployment**

- Kim Moody, *From Welfare State to Real Estate*, Chapter 3
- Gregory Pappas, *The Magic City*, Chapter 3: Not Hiring
- View (In-Class): "Roger and Me", Part I*

- 3/4 **Discussion Session #5**
POVERTY LINE/LIVING WAGE ASSIGNMENT DUE!!!
- 3/9 **Lecture # 5: Urban Politics**
- Kim Moody, From Welfare State to Real Estate, Chapter 4
- 3/11 **Discussion Session # 6** (HW #4 Due)
- 3/16 **Lecture # 6: Redefining the City as Entertainment Venue**
- Arlene Davila, "Empowered Culture"
 - Peter Eisinger, "The Politics of Bread and Circuses"
 - View (In-Class): "Brooklyn at Eye Level"
- 3/18 **Discussion Session #7** (HW #5 Due)
- 3/23 **Midterm Exam**
- 3/25 **Discussion Session #8**
- 3/30 **Lecture # 8: The New Urban Segregation/Urban Credit & Debt**
- Massey and Denton, American Apartheid, Chapter 4, The Continuing Causes of Segregation
 - Gregory Squires, "The Indelible Color Line: The Persistence of Housing Discrimination," American Prospect
 - Brett Williams, "What's Debt Got to Do with it?"
- 4/1 **Discussion Session # 9** (HW #6 Due)
- 4/6 **Lecture # 9: Gentrification**
- Alex Vitale, City of Disorder, Chapter 7
 - Neil Smith, "Class War on Avenue B"
 - GUEST SPEAKER **CLAYTON PATTERSON**!!!!
- 4/8 **No Discussion Section today – Spring Break!**
- 4/20 **Lecture # 10: The Militarization of Urban Space**
- Mike Davis, "Fortress Los Angeles: the Militarization of Urban Space"
 - Benjamin Chesluk, "Visible Signs of a City Out of Control" Cultural Anthropology 19(2):250-275 (2008).
- 4/22 **Discussion Session # 10** (HW #7 Due)
- 4/27 **Lecture # 11: Urban Climate Justice and Health**
- Tom Angotti, "From Environmental Justice to Community Planning."
 - Elizabeth Royte, Garbage Land, Chapter 1: "Quantifying the Kitchen"
 - Helen Epstein "Ghetto Miasma: Enough to Make You Sick?"
 - View (In-Class): "Bodega Down the Bronx"

4/29 **Discussion Session # 11** (HW #8 Due)

5/4 **Lecture # 12: Women, Poverty and Welfare**

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- Davis, Dana, "Working it Off"
- GUEST LECTURE: DANA DAVIS

5/6 **Discussion Session # 12** (HW #9 Due)

5/11 **Wrap Up and Review**

5/13 **Discussion Session #13**

******Final Exam – Wednesday, May 20, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.******