

URBAN STUDIES 101
URBAN POVERTY AND AFFLUENCE
(A "Perspectives on the Liberal Arts and Sciences" Course)
Sections 10M2A-G
Spring 2010
Lectures Presented by

Professor Jeff Maskovsky
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Tel: 718-997-5129
Email: jeff.maskovsky@qc.cuny.edu
Office Hours: M 12:30-2:30pm; or by appointment

Discussion Sessions Led by

<p>Instructor Manissa Maharawal PH, Room 250J 718-997-5130 Mmaharawal@qc.cuny.edu Office Hours: W 12:15-1:15; or by appointment</p>	<p>Instructor Bradley Gardener PH, Room 250J 718-997-5130 BGardener@qc.cuny.edu Office Hours: W 3-4; or by appointment</p>
<p>Instructor Alan Takeall PH, Room 250J Tel: 718-997-5130 atakeall@hotmail.com Office Hours: W12:15-1:15; or by appointment</p>	<p>Instructor David Spataro PH, Room 250J Tel: 718-997-5130 DSpataro@qc.cuny.edu Office Hours: W 12:15-1:15; or by appointment</p>

Instructor
Glenn Dyer
PH, Room 250J
Tel: 718-997-5130
gddyer1@yahoo.com
Office Hours: W12:15-1:15; 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 on their inhabitants. Paying particular attention to inequalities based on race, class, gender, and sexuality, we will analyze proposals to reduce these inequalities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The students will:

1. Learn the history of US urban restructuring from the latter half of the 20th century 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, statistical 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.

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 10:50am to 12:05pm in RE101. Review sessions are scheduled for Wednesdays. Please **ONLY** attend the review session that corresponds with the section for which you are registered. You may not switch or "sit in" on another section!!!!

Section 10M2A, W9:25am-10:40am, PH 115 (Maharawal)
Section 10M2B, W10:50am-12:05pm, PH 115 (Maharawal)
Section 10M2C, W10:50am-12:05pm, PH 202 (Spataro)
Section 10M2D, W 1:40pm-2:55pm, RE310 (Gardener)
Section 10M2E, W9:25am-10:40am, RA219 (Spataro)
Section 10M2F, W10:50am-12:05pm, PH106 (Takeall)
Section 10M2G, W10:50am-12:05pm, RA219 (Glenn Dyer)

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. PowerPoint lecture notes will be posted to BlackBoard every Monday morning by 10am. We encourage you to download them,

print them out and to use them during class.

2) Discussion Preparation. In order to encourage advanced preparation for discussion sessions, we ask you to complete **six** (out of a total of ten) 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 six of the ten assignments (and therefore can choose which four to miss). Please also keep the following guidelines in mind:

a) Assignments must be submitted electronically via our BlackBoard course website, no later than MONDAY at 9am. Each week, you must follow the instructions posted to the ASSIGNMENTS button on our BlackBoard course website. If you experience technical difficulties that prevent you from submitting your homework assignment electronically before the Monday 9am deadline, you must do two things: 1) submit a hard copy during class on Monday; and 2) submit your assignment electronically no later than Tuesday at 9am. We cannot accept assignments by email; nor can we accept assignments left in our department mailboxes during or after class. You must put your name, section letter (A-G), and section leader's name on every homework assignment!

b) Assignments will be posted to our course Blackboard website **on the WEDNESDAY before they are due**. 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 four assignments for any reason, it follows that no late assignments will be accepted. It also follows that we cannot accept excuses after you have already skipped four assignments. We know that some of you will try anyway, but we really mean this. You read it here first: No exceptions!

d) Homework assignments will be graded on a 3-point scale as follows:

- 3: Student has read, reflected upon, and applied the assignment to larger, ongoing themes/issues either within or outside of the course in an above average way.
- 2: Student has read and reflected upon the assignment in a satisfactory way.
- 1: Student has inadequately reflected on the assignment.

You must receive the grade of 2 or better to receive credit for the assignment.

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 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 class.

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 exam covers the second half of the course primarily; however, you may be asked conceptual questions from the first half of the semester. 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, I-phone, 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.
- Grade Change Policy (for all assignments): Students wanting clarification on a particular grade must submit a request in writing explaining their question and, if they are disputing an answer marked wrong, documentation of the grading error with evidence from the text.
- If you are using email to contact us, please use formal etiquette. This means that you must a) include a meaningful subject line; b) format the message as if it were a letter (with a salutation, body and closing); and c) end the email with your full name and telephone number. Please don't email us from an email account with an obscene or immature log in name. Believe me, we've seen it all.

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. The one required text for the course is:

Massey, D. S. (2007). *Categorically Unequal: The American Stratification System*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation Publications. (Available for purchase at the QC bookstore.)

Additional 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: mas101.

Note: Our course is extremely timely and on occasion, we will assign you a specific newspaper or magazine article that is relevant to our course. In these cases, we will notify you ahead of time and post links to those articles on Blackboard.

OFFICE HOURS/CONTACT INFO

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. His office hours are **Mondays: 12:30-2:30 pm**. If you cannot make it during the office hours listed, please contact him by email or phone to schedule an appointment.

Instructors Bradley Gardener, David Spataro, Manissa Maharawal, Glenn Dyer, and Alan Takeall's offices are **Room 250J in Powdermaker Hall**. Their office phone #s are **718-997-5130**. Their office hours are **Wednesdays 12:15-1:15 p.m.**

If you cannot make it during the office hours listed above, please contact your instructor by email or phone to schedule an appointment.

Instructor Emails:

- David Spataro DSpataro@qc.cuny.edu
- Bradley Gardener BGardener@qc.cuny.edu
- Manissa Maharawal Mmaharawal@qc.cuny.edu
- Alan Takeall ATakeall@hotmail.com
- Glenn Dyer gddyer1@yahoo.com

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 (CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity, adapted June 28, 2004. See <http://web.cuny.edu/academics/info-central/policies/academic-integrity.pdf>).

COURSE SCHEDULE

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

Date Readings/discussion topics

- 2/1 **Introduction: What is Urban Studies?**
Assignments:
- **Please read this entire syllabus by 2/3.**
 - **Please log onto our Blackboard course page and read all of the announcements by 2/3.**
 - **Please take the syllabus quiz on the Blackboard site and bring your score to Discussion Session #1.**
- 2/3 **Discussion Session # 1** (Syllabus Quiz Due)
- 2/8 **Lecture # 1: Rich and Poor in the 21st Century**
- Massey, *Categorically Unequal*, Chapter 1. How Stratification Works.
 - The Economist, "Meritocracy in America: Ever higher society, ever harder to ascend"
 - Meizhu Lui, "The Wealth Gap Gets Wider"
 - Devah Pager and Bruce Western, "Race at Work"
 - (HW#1 Due)
- 2/10 **Discussion Session # 2**
- 2/15 **No Class – President's Day**
- 2/17 **Discussion Session # 3: The Poverty Line**
- Laura Maggi, "The Poor Count," American Prospect
 - Cara Buckley, "City Refines Formula to Measure Poverty Rate"
 - Arloc Sherman, "Safety Net Effective at Fighting Poverty but has

Weakened for the Very Poorest”.

******PLEASE NOTE SPECIAL THURSDAY LECTURE (THANKS, CUNY)******

2/18 Lecture # 2: The Historical Development of US Cities

- Massey, *Categorically Unequal*, Chapter 2: The Rise and Fall of Egalitarian Capitalism
- John J. Macionis and Vincent N. Parrillo, "The Development of North American Cities."

2/22 Lecture # 3: Urban Segregation, Gentrification and Displacement

- Massey, *Categorically Unequal*, Chapter 3: Reworking the Color Line
- Douglass Massey. "The Race Case." In *American Prospect*, 2003.
- (HW#2 Due)

2/24 Discussion Session #4

3/01 Lecture #4: Theories of Impoverishment

- Massey, *Categorically Unequal*, Chapter 4: Building a Better Underclass
- Goldsmith and Blakely, *Separate Societies*, Chapter 1, pp. 1-14.
- (HW#3 Due)

3/03 Discussion Session #5

3/08 Lecture # 5: Globalization and Underemployment

- Massey, *Categorically Unequal*, Chapter 5: Remaking the Political Economy.
- Katherine Newman, *No Shame in My Game*, Chapter 1, p. 3-35.
- Michael, Luo, "Months After Plant Closed, Most Workers Are Still Struggling"
- (HW#4 Due)

3/10 Discussion Session #6

3/15 Lecture # 6: The New Urban Economy and the End of Public Space

- Peter Eisinger, "The Politics of Bread and Circuses"
- Mike Davis, "Fortress Los Angeles: the Militarization of Urban Space Pp. 154-157 + 160-167 ONLY!!! (*Entire article recommended*)
- (HW#5 Due)

3/17 Discussion Session #7

3/22 MIDTERM EXAM

3/24 NO DISCUSSION SESSION!!

3/29-4/05 - No Class; Happy Spring Break

4/07 **Discussion Session #8**

4/12 **Lecture # 7: Migration and Inequality**

- Peter Kwong, "Poverty Despite Family Ties"
- Robert G. Lee, "Making the Model Minority Myth"
- (HW#6 Due)

4/14 **Discussion Session #9**

4/19 **Lecture # 8: Welfare, Workfare and The Impoverishment of Women**

- Massey, *Categorically Unequal*, Chapter 6: Engendering Inequality
- Jane Collins, "The Specter of Slavery: Workfare and the Economic Citizenship of Poor Women"
- (HW#7 Due)

4/21 **Discussion Session #10**

POVERTY LINE/LIVING WAGE ASSIGNMENT DUE!!!

4/26 **Lecture # 9: Political Inequality**

- Massey, *Categorically Unequal*, Chapter 7: America Unequal
- American Political Science Association, "American Democracy in an Age of Rising Inequality"
- Todd Swanstrom, Peter Dreier and John Mollenkopf, "Economic Inequality and Public Policy: The Power of Place."
- (HW #8 Due)

4/28 **Discussion Session # 11**

5/03 **Lecture # 10: Criminal Injustice**

- Marc Mauer, "Giving the Public What it Wants: Media Images and Crime Policy."
- Ronald Weich and Carlos Angulo, "Racial Disparities in the American Criminal Justice System."
- (HW#9 Due)

5/05 **Discussion Session #12**

5/10 **Lecture #11: Environmental Racism, Sustainable Cities, and Climate Justice**

- Tom Angotti, "From Environmental Justice to Community Planning."
- Melissa Checker, "'Like Nixon Coming to China': Finding Common Ground in a Multi-ethnic Coalition for Environmental Justice"
- (HW #10 Due)

5/12 **Discussion Session # 13**

5/17 **Wrap Up and Review**

*****Final Exam – Week of 5/18-5/25 – NO MAKEUPS!!! Please make your holiday travel plans accordingly*****