

**Cities of the 21st Century Seminar
Geography 488-02
Macalester College**

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Office Hours: T/W/R 1 – 2:30 pm, and by appointment

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T/R: 2:45-4:15 pm

Carnegie 105

Course description

Cities of the 21st century is a capstone course and research seminar designed to evaluate some of the contemporary debates and critical issues that define cities today and will shape tomorrow's urban experiences in the North American context. We will investigate literatures that explore some of the key themes in urban studies: determinants of urban development; gentrification; social polarization; sustainable growth; and suburbanization. Additional themes can be included, depending on student interest. Students will focus on one of these themes and advance their learning through an original research project. The project will investigate a selected theme in the context of growth and change in a study area defined by the Crow River and Elm Creek watersheds, which is located to the northwest of the Twin Cities. This rapidly developing region faces environmental, social, economic, and cultural issues as the communities grow from rural outposts to vital parts of the urban landscape. Student's individual projects will feature a case study that contributes to an atlas of community issues. The atlas will be the joint project of three classes: GIS: concepts and applications (GEOG 394), Urban Geography Field Seminar (GEOG 488-01), and our seminar. These classes will work cooperatively to produce an annotated atlas that will be shared with the local governments, community organizations, and residents of the study area (most importantly, the GIS course will work with you to generate maps for your project). We are fortunate to have some funding from Project Pericles, which we will use to buy data pertinent to the study area and to support travel to and from the study area for your fieldwork.

Learning goals

Satisfactory work in this seminar will help you develop your abilities in areas that will help you work towards excellence in your life after college, whatever vocation you choose.

- Critical thinking – routine activities in this class, including discussion, application of theory, and writing will help you to enhance your analytical reasoning skills.
- Project management – successful research demands careful planning and organization as well as thoughtful implementation and reflection. Your original research will help you learn how to manage a complex project that takes several weeks to complete.
- Research design and data collection – As part of your original research project you will develop research questions that connect theoretical concepts with empirical data. You will also develop and implement a plan to collect and analyze data that answers your research questions.

- Writing – You will enhance your ability to communicate with lay audiences through writing. One of the challenges presented by the atlas is that you must prepare your research to be read by the members of the public, i.e., individuals who will have little to no familiarity with the academic literature and lexicon of the issue about which you will write.

Seminar format and capstone expectations

Cities of the 21st Century will follow the format of a research seminar. As such, learning from each other is a high priority, which you will do through discussions, workshops, and sharing your independent research. Furthermore, I expect that you will take charge of your own learning outside of our class meetings through research devoted to your contribution to the atlas. This is not meant to be an isolating experience, however. Talk to your fellow classmates about successes and complications, they will have helpful insights and suggestions. And, of course, I invite—and expect—you to meet with me and discuss your research.

This class is also designed to provide a capstone experience for Urban Studies concentrators and Geography majors. The assignments in this course are intended to create a culminating experience in which you draw on what you have learned over the past four years. Moreover, your research and contribution to the atlas will provide you with a great challenge. I expect your work in this class to represent your best research, best writing, and best ability to communicate your ideas. As part of the capstone experience, you are required to make a public presentation. You will present your research findings at the Midwestern Undergraduate Geography Symposium on April 26th, 2008, at Gustavus Adolphus in St. Peter, MN. The Geography Department will arrange transportation to this event.

Text and readings

There is one required text for this course, which is listed below. Other required readings include websites and (e-)reserve readings at the library.

- Hayden, Dolores (2004). *Building Suburbia: Green Fields and Urban Growth, 1820-2000*. New York: Vintage Books.

A couple notes about our schedule

1. I am an expectant father. My wife's due date is March 25th. There are no guarantees she will be in labor that day. However, I can guarantee that I will be with her during that event and several days afterwards. Consequently, the schedule I have planned may need to be revised if the baby comes earlier or later than expected.
2. We are not scheduled to meet everyday of the Tuesday-Thursday schedule, especially during the middle third of the semester. I have prepared our schedule with respect for the fact that your independent research will be time-consuming. I expect you will use the "time off" to complete class-related work.
3. There are three out-of-class events you are required to attend. Dates for (1) a field trip, (2) movie night, and (3) the undergraduate symposium are listed in the class schedule. Note these dates in your calendar and make arrangements to attend.

POLICIES

Academic honesty. I expect the work you do in this course will be your own. Furthermore, take care to properly cite any and all of the work on which you draw. Instances of plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Plagiarism and cheating will result in a failing grade for the class. Furthermore, I will report such instances to the Dean, which may result in suspension or even dismissal from the college.

Being there. The success of the seminar depends upon how much we can learn from each other. The interactive nature of our meetings therefore requires that you come to class prepared. Plan your schedule so that you can arrive and depart on time.

Changes. As the semester unfolds, there may be reason to make changes to the course (see above note about expectant fatherhood). In the event of a change to readings, topics, or the schedule, I will announce the changes in class and over email. It is your responsibility to keep up with any changes.

Communication. Do not hesitate to let me know if your peers or I can do anything to help improve the learning environment in our class. I encourage you to talk to me about any changes you would like to see in the course. You are welcome to meet with me before and after class, visit me in my office, or contact me by email.

Course information. A fair amount of course information will be disseminated via email. Check your Macalester email account regularly.

Deadlines. Deadlines for assignments are firm. Penalties for missed deadlines are noted in the assignment descriptions below. Note: in a couple of cases, assignments will not be accepted past their deadlines. If you have obligations that conflict with this class' scheduled assignments, you must see me no later than Friday, February 8th so that we can discuss appropriate accommodations.

Disabilities. If you have a documented disability or any other problem that you think may affect your ability to perform well in this course please see me as soon as possible so that we can discuss appropriate accommodations.

Input. Given the scope of the seminar, I will be happy to work with you to tailor the class to your interests provided that it will work within the context of the atlas. I invite your input on readings assignments and access to news sources that will enrich our discussions.

No extra credit. The number of assignments on which grades in this course are based is non-negotiable.

Respect for learning. Respect for your peers and professor are absolutely essential to create and sustain a supportive learning environment. As we engage in critical discussion and debate, keep your critiques focused on ideas (and not the person voicing the idea) and maintain a climate of civility.

ASSIGNMENTS (1000 points total)

Atlas Essay (350 points total) An essay that communicates to a public audience your original research on an issue in the study area. Student collaboration is welcome.

- The first draft is due April 10 (50 points)
- The second draft, for peer review, is due April 15 (50 points)
- The final draft, which will appear in print, is due April 23 by 12 pm (250 points)
 - Deadlines are firm. We need to get the atlas produced and printed in time for the senior reception so you and the other seniors can share copies with parents, friends and potential employers.
 - Late assignments will be penalized 20 % per calendar day.

Critical Literature Review (150 points) A 10-12 page paper in which you critically review the scholarly literature on the issue you have chosen to study. By “critically review” I mean that you take an evaluative stance on the literature and thereby insert yourself into the debates and/or conversations about which you are reading. A literature review of this nature is thus not just a summary of what has been written. This assignment represents a crucial step in conducting theoretically-informed research.

- The review is due March 14th by 12 pm.
 - Late literature reviews will be penalized 10% per calendar day.

Discussion Leadership (100 points) Students will lead class discussion on a particular topic. Students can co-lead if they choose the same topic. You are not required to submit a reflection essay on the day you lead the discussion. As discussion leader you are responsible for laying out the main themes and/or debates relevant to the chosen topic and organizing discussion of comments submitted by your peers via their reflection papers. *I strongly encourage you to choose a topic that works to your advantage.* That is, lead discussion on a topic you will be researching in the study area and writing about in your critical literature review.

- Dates for discussion leadership assigned on January 31.
 - Unexcused absences from discussion leadership will receive no credit.

Meetings with Professor (60 points total, 20 points each) You are required to schedule three meetings with me. These meetings will serve as tutorials for your research. We will meet for about 30 minutes to review progress and discuss strategies for further work on your research. It is the student’s responsibility to schedule meetings with the professor by the following deadlines:

- First meeting by February 26
- Second meeting by March 7
- Third meeting by April 3

Out-of-class assignments. Since we are cooperating with two classes on the atlas project, there are a couple of activities that have been scheduled outside of our regular meeting times. These activities are intended to be engaging and educational. They also provide opportunities to meet with all the students and faculty who are working on the atlas. Your attendance is required; please make the necessary arrangements to attend.

- Reconnaissance field trip to our study area: February 2, 9 am to 3:30 pm, leave from Carnegie Hall. If you are unable to join us on this trip, you will need to make arrangements to see the area in the first two weeks of the semester.

- Movie night: *End of Suburbia*, February 7, 6:30 – 8:30 pm in Carnegie 06. If you are unable to attend, you must make arrangements to see the film by February 11.

Presentation of Research (100 points) Students will share their research findings in a 15-minute presentation at the Midwestern Undergraduate Geography Symposium. The Symposium takes place on April 26 at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN.

- You are required to give a dry run of your presentation on either April 22 or 24.

Reflection essays (100 points total, 25 points each) You are required to write four brief essays (1-2 pages) in which you reflect on claims, arguments, and insights presented in one or more assigned readings for a particular discussion day (see schedule for specific dates). Your essay should exhibit a line of reflective thought in which you position yourself in respect to ideas presented in the readings. Your essays must include at least one question, relevant to the readings, which you would like to ask of your classmates. Thus, these essays should help you prepare for participation in the discussion.

Reflection essays are to be submitted online via Moodle no later than 24 hours before the discussion date. This is to allow the discussion leader(s) to review them in advance in order to better plan the discussion. Proofread your essays so that they are free of grammatical and spelling errors.

- You are required to complete four essays and have five opportunities to write them. I will grade the essays in a credit/no credit fashion
 - Late reflection essays will receive no credit.

Research Memos (50 points total, 25 points each) You will write me two memos in which you describe successes, insights, and/or complications you have experience while conducting your research. I will use these memos to tailor some of our group and individual meetings to your specific needs.

- First memo due February 22
- Second memo due March 13
 - Late memos will be penalized 20% per calendar day.

Research Proposal (40 points) A 2-3 page essay in which you identify an issue that you want to research, why it is a matter of significance for society, and provide a list of at least 12 credible sources that will help you learn more about the issue.

- The proposal is due February 14
 - Late proposals will be penalized 10% per calendar day.

Review of Atlas Essay (50 points) Review and provide written and oral feedback on the essays of two classmates. You will also receive feedback on your essay from two classmates.

- Written and oral feedback shared on April 17.
 - Late reviews will receive no credit.

Your final grade will be based on performance in all parts of the course. Letter grades will be assigned according to the following distribution:

<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory</u>	<u>Failing</u>
A (1000-930)	B+ (899-880)	C+ (799-780)	D+ (699-680)	NC (< 600)
A- (929-900)	B (879-830)	C (779-730)	D (679-630)	
	B- (829-800)	C- (729-700)	D- (629-600)	

SCHEDULE of READINGS and ASSIGNMENTS

Topic	Day	Readings	Assignment/Deadlines
<u>Week 1: Cities of the 21st Century</u>			
Introductions	Jan 29		
Urban Futures	Jan 31	Calthorpe Fishman, "American Metropolis" (2000) Platt	Students identify interests, write about their questions in order to prepare for writing a proposal
Field Trip to Study area	Feb 2	9 am – 3:30 pm	Meet at Carnegie Hall
<u>Week 2: A Suburban Nation</u>			
Discussion of Suburban Myths and Realities in America	Feb 5	Katz Kunstler Orfield Chapter 2 Walker	Reading reflection 1 due Feb 4
Building Suburbia	Feb 7	Hayden, chapters 1-7	
Film: <i>The End of Suburbia</i>	Feb 7	6:30 – 8:30 pm	Meet in Carnegie 107
<u>Week 3: The Suburban Question</u>			
The End of Suburbia?	Feb 12	Fishman "Cities after the end" (1997)	
New American Suburbs	Feb 14	Hayden, chapters 8-11	Research proposals due
<u>Week 4: Urban Fortunes</u>			
City as a growth machine	Feb 19	Logan and Molotch	Reading Reflection 2 due Feb 18
Share proposals, brainstorm map and data needs.	Feb 21	No readings	Memo #1 due Feb 22

Topic	Day	Readings	Assignment/Deadlines
<u>Week 5: Suburban Melting Pot?</u> Discussion of Suburban Diversity	Feb 26	Anthony Galster & Cutsinger Jones-Correa	Reading reflection 3 due Feb 25 Deadline for meeting #1 with Dan to discuss proposal
Case study research	Feb 28	Yin	
<u>Week 6: Gentrification</u> Discussion of Gentrification	Mar 4	Lees, Slater, & Wyly <u>Bruegemann</u> Niedt	Reading reflection 4 due Mar 3
No class	Mar 6	No readings; work on your research	Mar 7 Deadline for meeting #2 with Dan
<u>Week 7: Green Building and Smart Growth</u> Discussion of Smart growth	Mar 11	Pelletier Cathcart Bjelland Benfield Recommended: <u>Smart Growth</u> primer	Reading reflection 5 due Mar 10
No class	Mar 13	No readings; work on your research	Memo #2 due Critical literature reviews due Mar 14
<u>Week 8: Spring Break</u> No class No class	Mar 18 Mar 20	<i>Spring Break</i> <i>Spring Break</i>	
<u>Week 9: Work in Progress</u> Case study analysis No class	Mar 25 Mar 27	No readings No readings	Attend the Civic Forum on "The Environment, Citizenship, and Public Good"

Topic	Day	Readings	Assignment/Deadlines
<u>Week 10: Work in Progress</u>			
Checking in, updates, troubleshooting	April 1	To be determined	Prepare for discussion of civic forum and its relationship to your project for the atlas.
No class	April 3	No readings; work on your research	Deadline for meeting #3 with Dan
<u>Week 11: Public scholarship</u>			
Public scholarship, Atlas as a form of public scholarship	April 8	Graubard	In class: generate standards for essays On your own: bring example of good writing for lay audience
No class	April 10	No readings; work on your research	First draft of essay due
<u>Week 12: Research Workshop</u>			
Atlas design	April 15	No readings	Second draft of essay due to reviewers April 15 by 7 pm
Peer review	April 17	<i>Dan at AAG</i>	In class peer review of Atlas entry
<u>Week 13: Presentation Workshop</u>			
Practice presentations	April 22	No readings	Third draft of essay due April 23
Practice presentations	April 24	No readings	
Midwestern Undergraduate Geography Conference	April 26		Travel arrangements to Gustavus Adolphus to be determined

Topic	Day	Readings	Assignment/Deadlines
<u>Week 14: Completing the Atlas</u> Final revisions to atlas	April 29	No readings	
Reflections on writing for the public	May 1	No readings	
<u>Week 15: Final Class</u> Debriefing	May 6	Debriefing of class	

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ASSIGNED READINGS

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- Benefeld, F. Kaid, Terris, Jutka, and Nancy Vorsanger (2001). *Solving Sprawl: Models of Smart Growth in Communities Across America*. New York City: The National Resources Defense Council.
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