

**MODERN AMERICAN COMMUNITIES
COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIOLOGY 645
SPRING 2014**

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Office Hours:
Tuesday/Thursday
9:00-10:30

Course Objectives: This course examines the trends and issues in contemporary American communities. Although we focus primarily on urban communities, much of the conceptual discussion can be applied to rural areas as well. A central conceptual issue throughout this course is the continuing role of place in shaping economic and social opportunities for individuals. I expect students to develop an understanding of the major conceptual debates in community and urban sociology. In addition, students will gain some basic analytical skills for examining social and economic changes in American communities. Students are expected to develop an analysis of a specific city and look at the impacts of several key social and economic issues, including demographic change, economic restructuring, poverty and inequality, sprawl, residential segregation, and gentrification.

Required Reading:

Peter Dreier, John Mollenkopf, and Todd Swanstrom. 2004. *Place Matters: Metropolitcs for the Twenty-first Century*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press.

Patrick Sharkey. 2013. *Stuck in Place: Urban Neighborhoods and the End of Progress toward Racial Equality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Sharon Zukin. 2010. *Naked City: The Death and life of Authentic Urban Places*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Plus additional readings are available on Learn@UW.

Course Requirements:

Grades will be based on two take-home exams, a term paper, and participation. Each exam will consist of short answer and essay questions and will be worth 30% of the final grade. The exams will cover lectures, readings, videos, and class discussion. The final exam is not comprehensive—it will only include the material from the last half of the course. Grades on exams will be based on the following scale:

A	=93 +
AB	=89-92
B	=83-87
BC	=78-82
C	=70-77
D	=60-69

The term paper will examine the social and economic changes occurring in a metropolitan area. The paper should be 15-20 pages and is due **May 8**. The term paper will constitute 30% of your final grade. Please submit the term paper in the dropbox in Learn@UW. At a minimum, the paper should cover the major topics in this course, including inequality, segregation and sprawl. Other topics that might be included are poverty, employment, immigration, gentrification, and economic change. In addition to using census data and other sources to examine these issues, it will be helpful to access newspaper articles and reports on your metropolitan area. We will discuss these issues each week in class and review on you might examine these issues in your case study.

I also expect students to attend class and participate regularly in class discussion. I will assign 10% of the final grade on participation and class discussion.

Graduate students in this class will be expected to meet separately with me every three weeks to discuss some extra readings. In addition, I will hold graduate students papers and exams to a higher standard.

Attendance and Participation. Class attendance is extremely important for this course. Coming to class prepared and participating in the discussion will enhance your ability to learn the material presented in class. I will include material from each class on the exams (in many cases this material is not available in the readings or on Learn@UW). An official note is required if students miss more than three classes. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to obtain notes from classmates and any other information missed during class.

Academic Honesty. Cheating on exams and response papers will not be tolerated. Students caught cheating will receive a grade of F on the exam and the case will be reported to the Dean of Students. Given the amount of writing required in the class you should familiarize yourself with rules at the University regarding plagiarism (<http://www.wisc.edu/students/conduct/uws14.htm#special>).

Lecture Notes. Lecture notes will be posted on Learn@UW before class. These notes are intended to provide you with a broad outline of the discussion, not specific details. It would help if you print out the notes in advance and bring them to class. The notes will not provide a lot of detail, so you will still need to take notes in class. If you miss a class, you should contact another student to obtain these notes from the class.

Readings. You are expected to read the assignments *before* class each week. I normally do not lecture from the readings, but try to make linkages with the discussions in class.

Disruptive Behavior. One of my responsibilities is to ensure that the environment in the classroom is conducive to learning. If you are late, you should find a seat in the back of the classroom. If you need to leave early, please let me know in advance and sit in a location where it will be easy to quietly leave the room. Turn off all cell phones and put away newspapers at the beginning of class. Finally, please hold side-conversations and discussions until after class.

No Laptops: Although computers are a valuable tool for research and study, they are inimical to participation and collegiality in the classroom. The use of laptops or other electronic devices for note taking or other purposes in class, therefore, will not be permitted. If you need some accommodation regarding use of computers in class, please see me. There will be several times during the semester when it will be necessary to use a laptop in class. I will let you know in advance when this will be required.

1. Introduction

Reading: *Place Matters* (Pp. 1-63)

Demographic and economic change in metropolitan and rural areas

2. Conceptual approaches to community

Reading: *Place Matters* (Pp. 64-151)

Concepts and Theories in Community Sociology

An introduction to census Data

3. Why place matters

Reading: *Place Matters* (Pp. 247-309)

Reading: Marc Parry. 2012. "The neighborhood effect." *Chronical of Higher*

Education: <http://chronicle.com/article/The-Neighborhood-Effect/135492/>

Neighborhood effects

4. Urban policy: people versus place

Reading: *Place Matters* (Pp. 152-246)

Reading: David Imbroscio. 2011. "Beyond mobility: the limits of liberal urban policy."

Journal of Urban Affairs 34: 1-20.

History of urban policy

5. Urban poverty

Reading: *Stuck in Place* (Ch. 1 & 2)

Reading: Maurio Small and Katherine Newman. 2001. "Urban poverty after *The*

Truly Disadvantaged." *Annual Review of Sociology* 27: 23-45.

Urban poverty

No class--Feb. 20—View online and prepare discussion questions for:

Two American Families:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/two-american-families/>

6. Economic restructuring & skills mismatch

Reading: *Stuck in Place* (Ch. 3 & 4)

Reading: Richard Florida. 2009. "How the crash will reshape America." *The Atlantic* (March):

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2009/03/how-the-crash-will-reshape-america/307293/>

Economic restructuring & Skills Mismatch

7. Suburban sprawl

Reading: *Stuck in Place* (Ch. 5 & 6)

Reading: Leigh Gallagher. 2013. *The End of the Suburbs*. New York: Penguin (Chapter 1).

Film: *Radiant City*: <http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/radiant-city/>
Sprawl

8. Residential segregation

Reading: *Stuck in Place* (Ch. 7)

Reading: Sean Reardon and Kendra Bischoff. 2011. *Growth in the Residential Segregation of Families by Income, 1970-2009*. Available at:

<http://www.s4.brown.edu/us2010/Data/Report/report111111.pdf>

Racial and income segregation

MID-TERM EXAM—Due 3/14

9. Immigration

Reading: Robert Putnam. 2007. "E Pluribus Unum." *Scandinavia Political Studies* 30: 137-174.

<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/118510920/PDFSTART>

Immigration and community

10. Gentrification

Reading: *Naked City* (Pp. 1-62)

Reading: Reading: Alan Ehrenhalt. 2008. "Trading places." *New Republic*:

<http://www.newrepublic.com/article/urban-policy/trading-places>

Film: *American Makeover*, Episode 1:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XoVXoB6x3vM>

Gentrification

11. Redevelopment

Reading: *Naked City* (Pp. 63-124)

Reading: Allen J. Scott. 2006. "Creative cities: conceptual issues and policy questions." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 28: 1-17.

Community and economic development

12. Environmental Justice

Reading: *Naked City* (pp. 125-193)

Reading: Robert D. Bullard and Glenn S. Johnson. 2000. "Environmental justice: Activism and its impact on public policy decision making." *Journal of Social Issues* 56: 555-578.

Environmental justice

13. Community Sustainability

Reading: *Naked City* (pp. 193-246)

Reading: Joan Fitzgerald. 2010. "Renewable cities." Pp. 31-77 in *Emerald cities: Urban sustainability and economic development*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Community sustainability

14. Civil Society & Urban Democracy

Reading: Archon Fung and Erik Wright. 2001. "Deepening democracy." *Politics and Society* 29: 5-41.

Public participation and civil society

15. The Future of American Cities

Reading: Edward Glaeser. 2011. *Triumph of the City* (pp. 247-273). New York: The Penguin Press.

Summary & review

FINAL EXAM--Due: 5/15