Course Description

This course offers a broad overview of the politics of American cities. We will be examining the economic, social, and political interaction of different individuals and institutions in an urban environment. Although this is not a course in St. Louis politics, we will spend time discussing the issues facing our home city. At the end of the course, you should have the basic foundation and knowledge of urban politics in the United States.

Course Objectives and Goals

This course serves as an introduction to the study of urban politics in the United States. This course has several goals, including:

1. To understand the basic structure and mechanisms of urban political institutions and how they operate in a modern city setting.

2. To understand the increasing suburban sprawl and the economic, social, and political repercussions for those in the suburbs as well as those remaining in traditional urban areas.

3. To understand race and ethnic politics within the urban political and social climate, as well as the historical context in which they were established.

4. To further develop critical thinking, writing, and speaking skills as they apply to the course material.

Course Structure

This course is designed as a seminar. As such, an emphasis will be placed on critical discussion of the assigned reading material. Students should come to class prepared and ready to participate actively in these discussions.

My Teaching Philosophy

I believe that my role in the classroom is to help you learn the class material, as well as skills such as clear writing, speaking, and critical thinking. Towards this end, I develop a class that calls upon students to engage in reading, writing, talking, and listening. I want you to learn; I try to help make the material and tasks as clear as possible so that you are able to learn. I have an open door policy and will work with you to help you master class and reading material, as well as critical thinking skills.
Your Learning Philosophy

If you want a high grade with a minimum amount of work, you should enroll in another class. You will need to be dedicated to keeping up with the reading load and course assignments. If you want to learn as much as possible on the topic of urban politics, this class should be highly satisfactory. As upper-level students, I expect that you will consistently come to class prepared and ready to participate. All work turned in will be your own. If you are caught cheating or plagiarizing, you will automatically fail the course.

Readings

The following books have been ordered for the course. Please get the most updated editions listed below, as the content is different in older versions. These books are available at the University bookstore.


All additional readings will be posted on the course blackboard webpage.

Assignments and Grading

Exams

There will be a cumulative final exam. The final exam counts for 30% of your final grade. The exam will be essay format. The final exam is scheduled for Tuesday, May 14 at 12:00.

Attendance and Class Participation

Attendance and participation account for 30% of your overall course grade. You are expected to be an active participant in our discussions and classroom activities. An emphasis will be put not only on quantity of participation, but the quality of comments. If speaking in class is difficult for you, come see me. I reserve the right to administer quizzes if participation becomes a problem.

Class attendance is required. You will be allowed two unexcused absence over the course of the semester. After that, each additional unexcused absence will lower your attendance grade by one letter grade. If you know you will be missing a class, please let me know as soon as possible. Interrupting the class conversation due to tardiness will not be tolerated. If you are late to class, do not bother coming in as I will ask you to leave. You will receive an unexcused absence.

Paper

The paper accounts for 30% of your overall course grade (5% for the prospectus and 25% for the final paper). A 10 point deduction will be made for every half page less than 10. I also reserve the right to deduct fractions of this amount. I will stop reading if it is too long. The typesetting standards are 1 or 1.25 inch margins, 12 point font, Times New Roman, double spacing. Papers are due in class on the day listed on the syllabus,
and will be lowered by 10 points for each day late. Papers turned in after class but on the due date will be considered one day late. A separate handout outlining the paper will be given at a later date.

**Peer Review of Paper**

You will offer a critique and review of one of your classmate’s research project which will count for 5% of your final grade. You are to give comments and recommendations on how to improve the final product. This should be 2-3 pages, double spaced.

**Presentation**

You will give a brief 8-10 minute presentation of your research project to your classmates at the end of the semester which will count for 5% of your final grade. You should prepare a powerpoint presentation highlighting your theory, hypothesis, data, and findings.

**Grade Scale**

Final grades for the course will be based on the following scale. I reserve the right to make adjustments to grades based on overall performance in the course. There will be no extra credit offered in the course, nor will there be curving grades.

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**Honor Code**

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonesty such as soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of work submitted toward academic credit. While not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, examples include copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed book exam, submitting materials authored by or revised by another person as the students own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination or quiz without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, sharing or receiving the questions from an on-line quiz with another student, taking an on-line quiz with the help of another student, and colluding with another student or students to engage in academic dishonesty.

All clear violations of academic integrity will be met with appropriate sanctions. In this course, academic dishonesty on an assignment will result in an automatic grade of F for the course and a report of academic dishonesty sent to the Academic Honesty Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences. (Instructors can change the sanction specified in the italicized text.) In the case of Class B violations, the Academic Honesty Committee may impose a larger sanction including, but not limited to, assigning a failing grade in the course, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University. Students should refer to the following SLU website for more information about Class A and B violations and the procedures following a report of academic dishonesty: [http://www.slu.edu/x12657.xml](http://www.slu.edu/x12657.xml)
Expectations and Procedures

Technology

Put everything on mute. You do not need to use your laptop for this course. Please take notes the old fashioned way. This will dissuade the trend of college students to browse the web, check e-mail, and frequent social networking sites during lecture. I will post all lecture powerpoints on blackboard after the daily lecture. If I use additional material I will post it on blackboard so you may access it at a later point.

Communication

I will post grades, send class e-mails, etc. . . with Blackboard. Be sure that you can access the e-mail address listed. I will only send e-mail out to your SLU e-mail accounts listed on the course roster in Blackboard. I will not keep track of any other e-mail addresses you may use.

I am very accessible both during and after normal work days. Please feel free to contact me or stop by my office if you need to talk. Also, please contact me immediately if you are going to miss an exam or need to reschedule. I do not like to give make up exams, but under extenuating situations, I will make allowances. Please contact me prior to the exam if you need to reschedule, I will not allow make up exams if contacted after the exam period.

Disabilities

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Student Success Center (BSC 331) or by going to www.slu.edu/success.

Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at 314-977-8885 or visit the Student Success Center. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries.

Course instructors support student accommodation requests when an approved letter from Disability Services has been received and when students discuss these accommodations with the instructor after receipt of the approved letter.

Tentative Course Schedule

All assigned readings must be completed before our class meeting. If it becomes evident that the readings are not being completed, I will give pop quizzes.

Section I City Politics: Institutions and Behavior

Jan 14 Introduction and course overview. What is a city? What is a suburb? Why do they matter?

Jan 16 Theories of Power and Who Governs? Selected Readings on Blackboard

Jan 18 City Politics 1 and 2
Jan 21 No Class: MLK Day
Jan 23 City Politics 3. Skim Chapter 4
Jan 25 City Politics 5
Jan 28 City Politics 10 and 11
Jan 30 City Politics 12
Feb 1 City Politics 13

Section II Governing the New Metropolis? The Socio-Economic Battles Between Suburbs and Cities
Feb 4 City Politics 14 and 15
Feb 6 Metropolitics 1 and 2
Feb 8 Metropolitics 4
Feb 11 Metropolitics 5
Feb 13 **Paper Prospectus due in class**
Metropolitics 6 and 7
Feb 15 Metropolitics 8
Feb 18 Metropolitics 9
Feb 20 Beyond Privatopia Preface, 1 and 2
Feb 22 Beyond Privatopia 3 and 4
Feb 25 Beyond Privatopia 5 and 6

Section III Race and Ethnicity in American Cities
Feb 27 City Politics 8
The Crisis in Levittown (in class)
Mar 1 Metropolitics 3
Mar 4 Racial Politics Part I: Introduction and Chapter 1
Mar 6 Film: The Pruitt-Igoe Myth
Mar 8 Film: The Pruitt-Igoe Myth
Mar 11-15 No Class: Spring Break
Mar 18 Racial Politics Part II: Bi-Racial Coalitions
Mar 20 Racial Politics Part III: Barriers to Coalitions: Chapter 5 and 6
Mar 22 Racial Politics Part IV: 8 and 9
Mar 25 Racial Politics Part V: Latinos
Mar 27 **Paper Draft due in class**
Racial Politics Part VI: Strategies and Prospects
Mar 29 No Class: Good Friday
Section IV The Case of St. Louis

Apr 3 In class paper session. Bring Peer Reviews to Class.

Apr 5 St. Louis: The Triumph of Tradition. Readings on Blackboard

Apr 8 Mapping Decline: Introduction

Apr 10 Mapping Decline: Chapter 1

Apr 12 No Class: Midwest Political Science Association Annual Conference

Apr 15 Mapping Decline: Chapter 2

Apr 17 Mapping Decline: Chapter 3

Apr 19 Mapping Decline Chapter 4

Apr 22 Mapping Decline: Chapter 5 and Conclusion

Apr 24 Student Presentations

Apr 26 Student Presentations

Apr 29 Student Presentations

May 1 Student Presentations

May 3 SLU Gender and Politics Conference

May 6 Last Day of Class: Catch Up on Presentations

May 14 Final Exam: 12:00