

**Shelter in America: Fundamentals of United States Housing Policy**  
(POLS – 321.01)  
**Spring 2012**

Rev. Dr. Richard Quirk, Ph.D.  
Class: Tuesday, Thursday – 3:45 to 5:00 PM  
McGannon Hall 121

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Hours: By appointment

*Texts (Required):* Housing Policy in the United States: An Introduction (HP)  
By Alex F. Schwartz, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

The Federal Government and Urban Housing (FG)  
By R. Allen Hays

Colored Property: State Policy and White Racial Policies in  
Suburban America (CP)  
By David M. Freund

Overall Dimensions of the Saint Louis University Classroom/Course Experience

- Scholarships and Knowledge
- Intellectual Inquiry and Communications
- Community Building
- Leadership and Service
- Spirituality and Values

**Political Science Department Student Learning Objectives**

Students will be able to:

- Understand and critically evaluate theoretical explanations of how political systems operate ethically at the local, national and global levels.
- Understand and critically evaluate the moral values and philosophical assumptions that inform political institutions, behavior and policies.
- Make empirical, theoretical and normative arguments through original research, written work and oral presentations in a methodologically-sound, persuasive, and ethical manner.
- Evaluate the impact of their own actions and moral choices on their community, their country and the world.

## **Course Description**

For millions of people in America and around the world 2008 was a most difficult year. Many of them had worked long years to enjoy the American dream of a quiet retirement prematurely. They would enjoy their mortgage-free near free. By late September their dreams turned to dust. By in large it began with something called the sub-prime mortgage crisis and more generally the "housing crisis".

This course will examine the legislative history of United States Housing policy beginning in the mid-1930s, the most significant piece being the enactment, and implementation of the 1949 Housing Act. To this day the nation's goal of home ownership and sound shelter for most is found in its contents. It is considered the most vital piece of social legislation of the Truman presidency.

This course will explore the nature of housing subsidy programs, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, tax financing options, a history of public housing programs, and the growing list of special needs shelters. It will also address issues related to neighborhood rehabilitation and community development.

The topic of affordable rental housing is back on the agenda. Rental programs and policies have all been ignored in an age of over evaluated properties and long term equity. The class will also look at the way the free market views renters and their impact on the social/economic condition of a neighborhood. Housing policy is politically linked with how we rally witness to family values and what we believe as a people when it comes to shelter rights.

## **Learning Outcomes**

- Increase knowledge of housing programs and goals (in contemporary political history).
- Being aware of competing political ideologies in the construction of a national housing policy.
- Housing as an issue of social justice and human rights.
- Understanding housing as a separate and unequal political/financial reality.
- Learning the language of housing finance and community development.
- Becoming more aware of the financial and employment factors of housing as central to the well being of the United States and global economy.
- A bottom-up view of the mortgage crisis.
- The "good" and "bad" of public housing and its justice.
- Rental properties as an option in these economic times.

## **Grade Determination Mix**

The reading assignments are the basic requirement for active class participation. Your willingness to participate is assumed. Participation in class discussion is vital to the success of your overall learning experience. As such, it is important that everyone read the assignments and reflect analytically before each class.

### **Mid-term Exam – Take Home**

There is a required 2-page summary of an article from a scholarly housing journal, after the mid-term exam.

### **Final Exam**

7 to 8 page research paper on a topic we mutually agree upon

### **Other Assignments**

2 one-page reflection papers will be required. One due before the Mid-term Exam and one due the week before the Final Exam. We will discuss topics and mutually agree before the assignment is due.

### **Grading Scale**

A	100-93	C+	79-77
A-	92-90	C	76-73
B+	89-87	C-	72-70
B	86-83	D	69-60
B-	82-80	F	Below 60

Only in rare cases will "extra credit" be considered – check with me.

## Reading Assignments by Week and Other Activities

Class attendance is expected. (See note on class attendance.) The semester's reading requirements are provided here. Supplemental reading will be distributed. Lectures and discussions will evolve from the readings. The Mid-term Exam will primarily focus on the readings.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Class Topic/Reading Assignment</u>
January 17/19	Introductions, Review Syllabus Read: FG, pgs 1-56
January 24/26	<u>Ongoing Trends and Political Ideology</u> Read: HP, pgs 1-51
January 31/ February 2	<u>Markets and Submarkets</u> Read: FG, pgs 57-82
February 7/9	<u>Policy Development 1973-1980</u> Read: FG, pgs 83-138
February 14/16	<u>Housing Act of 1949</u> Assigned readings
February 21/23	<u>Housing Act of 1949</u> Assigned readings
February 28/ March 1	Community Development Read: FG, pgs 139-186 HP, pgs 51-123
March 6/8	<b>MID-TERM EXAM</b> (in-class exam)
March 13, 15	<b>NO CLASSES</b> – Spring Break
March 20/22	<u>Public Housing</u> Read: FG, pgs 131, 280, 98-101; 93-95; 112, 154, 132, 101-104, 257, 92-93, 132-134, 164-166
March 27/29	<u>Block Grant and Rental Issues</u> Read: HP, pgs 157-205 FG, pgs 167-231

<u>Date</u>	<u>Class Topic/Reading Assignment</u>
April 3/5	Ibid <b>NO CLASS</b> – Holy Thursday, April 5
April 10/12	<u>Vouchers and the Non-profit Sector</u> Read: HP, pgs 157-237
April 17/19	<u>Special Needs Housing and Homelessness</u> Read: HP, pgs 239-251, 291-309
April 24/26	Read: <u>Colored Property</u>
May 1/3	<u>What the Future May Hold</u> Read: HP, 311-319
May 8	<b>Study Day</b>
May 10	<b>Final Exam – In Classroom</b> 2:15 PM

## **Basic Administration Guidelines**

I will attempt to respond to your e-mails generally within 24 hours on weekdays only.

### **\* NEW \* Disability Statement**

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 (BCS 331) or by going to [slu.edu/success](http://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.

### **Statement on Academic Honesty**

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 a student's 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 without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, and colluding with another student or students in academic dishonesty.

All clear violation of academic integrity will be met with appropriate sanctions. In this course, academic dishonesty on an assignment will result in *an automatic grade of 0 for that assignment* and a report of academic dishonesty sent to the Academic Honesty Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences. 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 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>.

## **Promoting Civility in the Classroom**

The purpose of these principles is to create an educational climate of excellence and civility that is rooted in the principles of the Jesuit, Catholic tradition. These principles challenge all members of our learning community to strive for excellence, to become men and women for others, to integrate classroom and out-of-classroom learning, to develop their talents through discovery and reflection, and to be concerned for each person (*cura personalis*). All members of the university community are expected to contribute to the development and sustainability of community through word and action. Our community is characterized by respect for the dignity of others, honesty, and the pursuit of truth. These principles are created to ensure the rights and privileges of all and to preserve the integrity of our learning.

### Scholarship and Knowledge

Contribute to an environment that promotes the creation and exchange of knowledge.

### Intellectual Inquiry and Communication

Demonstrate a commitment to learning and the personal growth of one's self. Take responsibility for one's own words and actions and approach any conflicts in a spirit of mutual cooperation.

### Community Building

Show openness, compassion, and respect for others in order to promote the common good.

### Leadership and Service

Assume an active role in sustaining the learning community.

### Spirituality and Values

Value the whole person (yourself and others) by practicing integrity in your work and relationships.

## **Attendance Policy – Reprinted with Permission**

**Class attendance is highly recommended.** When you register for POLS 201.01, you make a commitment to put forth your best effort. Attending class is a significant step towards achieving this goal. Although a syllabus and textbook are provided, reading the textbook is not an adequate substitute for attending class. The textbook is meant to supplement what happens in class, not replace it. Additionally, lectures will often include material either not covered in the textbook or covered from a different perspective than the material in the textbook. If you try to learn the material on your own, you will waste a lot of time and miss out on the opportunity to ask questions as the material is discussed. Absences will be understood but repeated absences will be noted and will negatively effect your grade. If you plan to be absent, let me know.

Of course, you may need to miss a class a couple of times during the semester, but it is to your benefit to keep the number of absences as low as possible. If unavoidable circumstances necessitate an extended absence, please make arrangements with the instructor as soon as possible, preferably in advance.

## **Writing Center**

I encourage you to take advantage of the Writing Center's services. The Center helps with projects, multimedia, and oral presentations. They offer one-on-one consultation on developing ideas and crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. Call 314.977.2930 or visit <http://www.slu.edu/x13305.xml>.

## **Cell Phones**

Please turn off cell phones before class. There is no cell phone use or text messaging allowed during class. Also, no use of a PDA, Blackberry, Bluetooth, iPod, iPhone/iTouch, or any 3G or 4G network devices.

## **Laptops**

Use of laptop computers for any purpose other than note taking is not allowed. Laptops may only be used, with my permission. If use is approved, please sit toward the back or on the side of the classroom.

## **Weather Policy**

In cases of extreme weather, call 314.977.SNOW (314.977.7669) for more information.



## **Evaluation**

Toward the end of the semester you will be encouraged to evaluate the class on-line or in the classroom. Please do so! It is an important element of the classroom experience.

NOTE: I reserve the right to modify the syllabus and provide you with notice. All of these items and other concerns are subject to the discretion of the institutor. My sincere hope is that class will be an enjoyable learning experience for all.