**POSC 318 Advanced Topics in Urban Politics**

This course is a discussion seminar for students who seek to build on previous knowledge of public policy within the cities and suburbs of the United States or in comparisons of the U.S. to other urban cases. Focus will be on Housing, Education, Policing, Infrastructure and Social Regulation. Students will produce a research essay using Social Science and Humanities methods.

One goal of this course is for students to gain a deeper mastery of urban policy issues that are both US and global. Countries across the globe have never borrowed more policy ideas from each other than in the present period and the leading producer in this process of diffusion of policy innovation is the USA. This in depth examination will enable students to fulfill a second goal of the course, the completion of a research project that may be used as a stepping stone towards a comps project.

We will discuss the topic of Spatial Regulation, which includes urban practices from zero-tolerance policing to seemingly innocuous zoning practices and spans powers from coercion to the creation of behavioral norms that are more likely to be enforced by fellow citizens than by local officials. Housing codes that define blight, school regulations that define attendance boundaries, loitering codes that limit where and how long one can occupy space, and environmental regulations that create sustainable public spaces that arguably cost the many and benefit the few, will be on our radar.

But many of these rules seem to fall far more heavily on some citizens than others and this prompts an investigation of what constitutes de facto citizenship in the democracy of the US and in other democracies that may, or may not, import ideas from the USA. We will examine this topic in a few contexts including the processes of gentrification and displacement.

We will also examine the increasingly evident issue of battles between big city residents and residents of the state. Cities may declare wage regulations, immigration sanctuary law enforcement, or civil rights protections for transgender residents that States, in the form of legislatures, reject and seek to revoke. What does this tell us about citizenship, rights, equal protection under the law, and sorting?

Finally, in the midst of so many threats to urban democratic liberty and equality, what tools exist for urban residents to reclaim their de jure rights?

Because this course is a 300-level course it will be organized as a discussion seminar with significant weight put on Class Participation and Attendance (40%). If you are absent, you should submit about two typed pages of prose that present the ideas, synthesis, and arguments you would have made if you had been in attendance. This is not a substitute for attendance and participation, however. The final essay will comprise the remainder of the grade (60%).
Office hours are posted on the Political Science Department Web Page and my office is 417 Willis.

**Week One**

*If white middle class flight to the suburbs is the problem for city finances, then ...*

Monday:
Intro to Urban Renewal, “The Fillmore” (PBS).

Not Required:

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Wednesday:

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Friday:
T. Chronopoulos, *Spatial Regulation in New York City*, chs. 3-4.

**Week Two**

T. Chronopoulos, *Spatial Regulation in New York City*, ch. 5.
C. McAullife, “Graffiti or Street Art? Negotiating the Moral Geographies of the Creative City.”
What is moral geography? How is this a theoretical framework? What other contexts could be analyzed by using this scaffold or lens?


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T. Chronopoulos, *Spatial Regulation in New York City*, chs. 6-7.
M. LaSusa, “Rudy Giuliani is crisscrossing the Americas ...”

Not Required:
**What is your THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK?** We are looking for frameworks, theoretical scaffolds on which we might hang our own interests. These scaffolds serve as lenses that enable us to see more clearly beyond description, snapshot, and history to analyses of alternative paths and critical differences or junctures. More frameworks will be included in later parts of the syllabus; although we will arrive at those deductively (embedded in a narrative), they too can be lifted to different questions that reflect your own interests. Many of your classes have given you these Theoretical Frameworks already (e.g., neoliberalism; patriarchy; class conflict; racial hierarchy and privilege; the tyranny of institutional rules) but it sometimes is hard to liberate these lenses from the context in which you discovered them.

H. Giroux, “Reading Hurricane Katrina: Race, Class and the Biopolitics of Disposability” *College Literature* (Summer 2006).

**Week Three**

**Filling the doughnut hole**

**Assignment:** Choose one article and explain how it relates to our course materials (complements/corroborates/extends and/or critiques/challenges causality/alternative variables. Be specific about which preceding chapters/articles you are discussing. Four page maximum, submit attachment to email, 10 am.

- Becker and M. Muller, “The securitization of urban space and the rescue of downtown Mexico City.” *Latin American Perspectives* (March 2013).

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S. Dooling, “Ecological Gentrification ...”
S. Howell, “Cracking Down on Diaspora: Arab Detroit and the War on Terror.”

**Not Required:**
G. Ford, “Detroit: Dispersal of urban black America.”
L. Gottesdiener, “A Tale of Two Detroits: Separate and Unequal.”
Alternatives to the Suburbs? Urban Housing

M. Pattillo, *Black on the Block*, chs. 1-2. Chapter one can be skimmed.

Week Four

M. Pattillo, *Black on the Block*, chs. 3-4.

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M. Pattillo, *Black on the Block*, chs. 5-6

Not Required:

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M. Pattillo, *Black on the Block*, chs. 7-Conclusion.

Week Five

Schools and their role in changing the Geography of Opportunity

“After mass school closings, impacted students lagged academically” *Chicago Reporter* (5/22/18).
“US charter schools put growing numbers in racial isolation.” *APNews.com*
“Behind sale of closed schools, a legacy of segregation,” *Chicago Reporter* (1/13/17).

Not Required:


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M. Checker, “Wiped out by the “Greenwave”: Environmental Gentrification ...”
Think about “democratic process,” inclusion, citizenship and biopolitics, and reconsider the battle in the Fremont schools.

Week Six

MIDTERM BREAK

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Student Presentation?

Urban Power in a Federal System

Urbanites flex the muscles of democracy – Who? How, what is enabling the collective action of otherwise demobilized citizens?

R. DeLeon, “The Birth of the Slow Growth Movement and the Battle for Proposition M.” In Left Coast City


Not Required:

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R. Freeman, “Fighting for Other Folks’ Wages: The Logic and Illogic of Living Wage Campaigns,” Industrial Relations 44:1 (January 2005).


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Week Seven

“As protests escalate under Trump, states seek new ways to deter them.”
“Raising the Minimum Wage” [Map only], Governing (May 2018).
“When a state balks at a city’s minimum wage.” NYT (2/22/16).
“Cities clash with state governments over social and environmental policies ... smoking bans, plastic bags and bathrooms,” Wall Street Journal (July 2016).
“How states and localities are filling the gaps left by Washington’s gridlock.”
Washington Post
“Southern cities split with states on social issues,” NYT (4/15/16).
“Arkansas cities pass LGBT protections that defy state’s new discrimination law.”
Governing (5/11/15).

“Corporate suppression of direct democracy fuels fight for community rights” Truth-out.org


More on Urban Housing, Opportunity & the role of the State

M. Desmond, “How homeownership became the engine of American inequality,”
NYT.
“With markets hot, landlords slam the door on Section 8 tenants,” NYT (10/12/18).

Week Eight


Not Required Assignment:
Update on Chappaqua and on HUD under Trump/Carson?
More Scholarship on this topic?
What further activity from these authors?

Another Form of Spatial Regulation? Or back to Street art and graffiti?
P. Roth, “Eli the Fanatic,” Goodbye, Columbus.

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And a final education idea, another way to change the geography of opportunity


Remainder of the term: Informal and then formal student presentations on research.