

Soc205H1S Urban Sociology

University of Toronto
Winter 2014
Thursday 12:00 – 2:00pm
Room 1016, Wilson Hall, 40 Willcocks St.
Course website: <https://portal.utoronto.ca> (login using your utorid)

Instructor: Brent Berry, Associate Professor, Sociology Dept, University of Toronto
brent.berry@utoronto.ca
Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:30-2:00pm & by appointment
Room 366, 725 Spadina Ave

Teaching Assistants: Guang Ying Mo, Graduate Student in Sociology, University of Toronto
guangying.mo@utoronto.ca
Office Hours: TBA
Milos Bracic, Graduate Student in Sociology, University of Toronto
milos.brocic@mail.utoronto.ca

Overview

The theoretical and methodological underpinnings of urban sociology are broad, reflecting a range of disciplines and approaches. This course first reviews theories of urban genesis and urban form; the interrelationship of urbanization, industrialization and modernization, issues in urban living (housing, transportation, urban-renewal, poverty, unemployment, etc.); urban social networks (ethnic and cultural heterogeneity, neighbourhood, community and other voluntary associations). In doing so, we will compare and contrast different theoretical and methodological approaches for understanding urban life. Second, the course covers several special topic areas in urban sociology: homelessness, gentrification, multiethnic cities, globalization, residential segregation, crime, and public space. Third, the course offers real world observation and examples that speak to the strength and limitations of particular theory, data, and methods for studying urban problems.

Evaluation

Final marks will be based on three grades. There is an in-class midterm test worth 32.5%, a final exam worth 32.5% that is not cumulative, and an independent research project worth the remaining 35%. Choice of paper topics will be discussed in class. We strive to securely post grades within two weeks of the midterm and final exam.

Prerequisites

Completion of SOC101Y or SOC102H or SOC103H -- is required to take this course. Students without this prerequisite will be removed from the course.

Lecture Slides/Notes

Lecture slides will be posted the evening before class. They are provided to benefit in-class note taking. Besides the posted lecture slides, I often incorporate a range of audiovisual material into lectures. It is important to complete all required readings and attend class because the midterm and final exam will cover both required readings and in-class material.

Email and the Course Webpage

Email and the ability to access the course webpage is important. The instructor and TA's will use e-mail for reminders, clarifications, and notifications, etc. Feel free to contact us via your utoronto e-mail account with questions, requests or problems. Any email sent to the instructor or TA's should have Soc205H in the subject to ensure that it gets read.

Accessibility Needs

If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility> as soon as possible.

Make-Up Tests

Students who miss a test will receive a mark of zero unless **within three days** of the missed test he/she contacts the instructor requesting special consideration and explaining why the test was missed. The instructor or TA will communicate the time and location of the make-up test. In order to take the make-up test, students must bring **proper documentation from a physician or college registrar** to the make-up test.

- In case of **illness**, you must supply a duly completed **Verification of Student Illness** or Injury form (available at www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca). A doctor's note is not acceptable. The form must be placed in a sealed envelope, addressed to the instructor, and submitted when you take the make-up test.
- If a **personal or family crisis** prevents you from meeting a deadline, you must get a letter from your college registrar (it is a good idea anyway to advise your college registrar if a crisis is interfering with your studies). The letter must be placed in a sealed envelope, addressed to the instructor, and submitted when you take the make-up.

Deadlines for Submitting Projects

Late work will not be accepted without proper documentation from a student's physician or college registrar (described above).

Plagiarism

Cheating and misrepresentation will not be tolerated. Students who commit an academic offense face serious penalties. Avoid plagiarism by citing properly: practices acceptable in high school may prove unacceptable in university. Know where you stand by reading the "Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters" in the Calendar of the Faculty of Arts and Science.

Readings

- Most readings are from our course textbook -- *Urban Canada: Sociological Perspectives* edited by Harry Hiller (3rd Edition, 2014), which can be purchased at the University Bookstore after the 2nd-3rd week of January. The instructor has posted PDFs of the readings for the first three weeks so you have them before the textbooks are available.
- The remaining readings are available either as weblinks in the class schedule below, or as downloadable files on our course webpage
- Any readings listed as "supplemental" are NOT required. They are listed in case you wish to read further into a particular topic.

Comments on Writing

The instructor and TA's are willing to read over drafts of your work during visits to office hours. However, we are more able to help students who come early. All too often, papers are one or two drafts short of excellence when time expires. Revisions can make the difference between "C" and "A" work. We also encourage you to use the university's writing resources.

Class Schedule

Jan 9th -- Introduction, opening remarks, discuss syllabus and mutual expectations

We will begin with an overview on the history and development of urban sociology, and will discuss a range of issues to set the tone for the course.

No required readings for today

Jan 16th -- Canadian Urbanization in Historical and Global Perspective

“Urbanization and the City” (Introduction, *Urban Canada*)

“Canadian Urbanization in Historical and Global Perspective” (Chapter 1, *Urban Canada*)

Michelson, William “Boom Time for Urban Sociology”

Additional discussion of global urban problems; we will watch a short film about “shadow cities”

Jan 23th – Dynamics of Canadian Urbanization

“The Dynamics of Canadian Urbanization” (Chapter 2, *Urban Canada*)

“Toronto: The Form of the City” (Chapter 15, *Urban Canada*)

Jan 30st – Perspectives for Analyzing and Interpreting Cities and their Inhabitants

“Analyzing and Interpreting the City: Theory and Method” (Chapter 3, *Urban Canada*)

“Rural and Urban: Differences and Common Ground” (Chapter 4, *Urban Canada*)

Feb 6th – Social Ties, Social Capital, and Community

“Social Ties and Community in Urban Places” (Chapter 5, *Urban Canada*)

Read “Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft” entry from Wikipedia:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gemeinschaft_and_Gesellschaft”

Read “community” entry from Wikipedia:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community>

Feb 13th – Poverty and Inequality in Canadian Cities

“Urban Inequality and Urban Social Movements” (Chapter 6, *Urban Canada*)

Hulchanski, David J. 2010. “The Three Cities within Toronto: Income polarization among Toronto’s neighbourhoods, 1970-2005.”

Feb 20st – Reading Week, No Class

Feb 27th – Midterm Test in class (2 hours)
--

Mar 6th – Immigration, Race, and Ethnicity in the City

“Immigration and Race in the City” (Chapter 7, *Urban Canada*)

Buzzelli, M. 2001. From Little Britain to Little Italy: An urban ethnic landscape study in Toronto. *Journal of Historical Geography* 27, 4, 583 – 587

Short In-Class film (time permitting)

Flemingdon Park: The global village – 2002, audiovisual library (Media commons, 3rd floor, Robarts library), videocassette #00672, 46 minutes

Mar 13th – The New Urban Political Economy

“The New Urban Political Economy” (Chapter 11, *Urban Canada*)

Mommaas, Hans 2004. “Culture clusters and the post-industrial city: towards the remapping of urban cultural policy” *Urban Studies* 41(3) 507-532

Further reading (optional):

Michelson, William 2005 “The City as a Social Organization” Chapter 12 of the first edition of *Urban Canada* (Ed. Harry Hiller).

Stren, Richard, et al. 2010 (June) “Governance in Toronto: Issues and Questions” Discussion Paper #1, Cities Centre, University of Toronto. (11 pages)

Mar 20st – Cities and Social Pathology

“Cities and Social Pathology” (Chapter 9, *Urban Canada*)

Bannister, Jon and Nick Fyfe. 2001. “Fear and the City.” *Urban Studies*, 38(5-6) 807 - 813

Pain, Rachel. 2001. “Gender, Race, Age and Fear in the City” *Urban Studies* 38(5-6): 899 - 913

Special Discussion: Gun violence in Toronto, The role of the media, television, and entertainment on our perceptions of crime and its urban dimensions?

Short In-class Film (time-permitting):

Indian Posse: Life in Aboriginal Gang Territory (1999) 40 min (audiovisual library 005358). A documentary of the lives of aboriginal youth in Winnipeg

Mar 27th -- Consumer Society, Public Space and the Regulation of Visual Order in the City

* *project due today*

“Consumer Culture, City Space, and Urban Life” (Chapter 12, *Urban Canada*)

Special Discussion: Urban signage as a lens for social inquiry

In-class film (time permitting)

Parts of: ***The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*** 1988 (50 min)

Presents an engaging and informative tour of the urban landscape, while exploring how it can be made more hospitable for those who must live in it. This film also shows what can be learned through systematic observation of people in urban environments.

April 3rd – Sociology of Housing and Homelessness

Berry, Brent 2014. “Sociology of Housing and Homelessness”. (Chapter 13, *Urban Canada*)

Stephen W. Hwang. 2001. "Homelessness and Health." *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 164(1): 229-33.

Ben-Shahar, Danny. 2007. "Tenure choice in the housing market: Psychological versus economic factors" *Environment and Behavior* 39: 841-858

**Non-cumulative Final Exam will take place during the exam period
** Date, Time, and Location to be announced ****

Other Course Resources

We will examine data from two websites in class:

Toronto Neighbourhood Profiles: <http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/neighbourhoods.htm>:

Toronto Community Health Profiles: <http://www.torontohealthprofiles.ca/>

Short video Robert Neuwirth on "shadow cities" (time-permitting, 15 minutes)
(http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/robert_neuwirth_on_our_shadow_cities.html)

Short video "Rob Forbes on ways of seeing" (time-permitting, 15 minutes)
http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/rob_forbes_on_ways_of_seeing.html

Short Video: "Steven Johnson tours the Ghost Map" [about the cholera outbreak in 1854 London and the impact it had on science, cities and modern society] (time-permitting, 10 minutes)
http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/steven_johnson_tours_the_ghost_map.html

Short Video: "Carolyn Steel: How food shapes our cities" (time permitting, 15 minutes)
http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/carolyn_steel_how_food_shapes_our_cities.html

Short video: "Ellen Dunham-Jones: Retrofitting suburbia" (time permitting, 19 minutes)
http://www.ted.com/talks/ellen_dunham_jones_retrofitting_suburbia.html

Short video – "Steven Johnson on the Web as a city" (time-permitting, 16 minutes)
(http://www.ted.com/talks/steven_johnson_on_the_web_as_a_city.html)