

Soc205H1S Urban Sociology

University of Toronto
Winter 2013
Thursday 12:00 – 2:00pm
Room 102, Mechanical Engineering Building, 5 King's College Rd
Course website: <https://portal.utoronto.ca> (login using your utoid)

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

Teaching Assistant: Matthew Parbst, Graduate Student in Sociology, University of Toronto
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Office Hours: time TBA, Room 225 of the Sociology Department on the following Wednesdays – Feb 13th, 20th, 27th, Mar 18th, 25th, April 1st, 8th

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 abundant examples that speak to the strength and limitations of particular theory, data, and methods for studying urban problems.

For 35% of your grade, you will undertake a research project that poses and answers a question relevant to the course. A term test during class time and a final exam during the exam period are each worth 32.5% of your final grade.

Important information

- Late submissions are discouraged; 10% will be deducted for each business day late, including part of a day.
- Students who have been absent from class for medical reasons, must submit the U of T Medical Certificate, within 1 week of the missed test.
- Plagiarism is taken seriously at the University of Toronto. The University has prepared documents to make clear what differentiates acceptable from unacceptable practice. See <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>. By taking this course, you acknowledge that your submitted work may be reviewed for textual similarity for the detection of plagiarism.
- Completion of SOC101H or SOC102H or SOC103H -- is required to take this course. Students without this prerequisite will be removed from the course.

- Accessibility Needs: The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility> as soon as possible.

Readings

- Most readings are from our course textbook -- *Urban Canada: Sociological Perspectives* edited by Harry Hiller (2nd Edition, 2010), which can be purchased at the University Bookstore.
- 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” is not required. They are listed in case you wish to read further into a particular topic.

Email

Please ensure that any email to the instructor has Soc205H in the subject to ensure that it gets read. Email communication and the ability to access the course webpage are important for this course. Be sure that the email linked to your name on Blackboard is one that you check regularly. Email will be used for reminders, clarifications, and notifications that cannot be made in class. Feel free to contact the instructor or the teaching assistant if you have questions, requests or problems that were not --or could not be-- addressed in class. We are here to help and want you to do well.

Comments on Writing

I encourage you to use the university's writing resources, which are described on their website). The instructor and TA are willing to read over drafts of your work during visits to office hours. All too often, students’ papers are one or two drafts short of excellence when time expires. One rewrite can often make the difference between "C" and "A" work.

Jan 10th -- Introduction, opening remarks, discuss syllabus and mutual expectations

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

Time permitting; we may watch a short film

No required readings for today

Jan 17th -- 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

Robert Neuwirth on “shadow cities” (time-permitting, 15 minutes)

(http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/robert_neuwirth_on_our_shadow_cities.html)

Jan 24th – Dynamics of Canadian Urbanization

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

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

Jan 31st – 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 7th – 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>

We will also discuss how the internet is changing communities and cities, and watch the short film – “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)

Feb 14th – Poverty and Inequality in Canadian Cities

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

Hulchanski, David J. 2007. “The Three Cities within Toronto: Income polarization among Toronto’s neighbourhoods, 1970-2000.” Centre for Urban & Community Studies Research Bulletin 41, December 2007, 12 pages.

Feb 21st – Reading Week, No Class

Feb 28th – Test 1

Mar 7th – 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 14th – 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)

Discussion of current issues of city finances, services, regionalism, city politics, conflict across levels of government, Toronto's Harbourfront, the island airport and modernist and post-modernist visions of the city.

Mar 21st – 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 28th -- 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

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 In-class film (time permitting)

Parts of: *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces* 1988 (40 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 4th – Sociology of Housing and Homelessness

"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

In-Class film (time permitting)

**Final Exam will take place during the exam period
It will cover material since test 1
** Date, Time, and Location to be announced ****

We strive to securely post grades within two weeks of the tests, exams, and assignment due dates

Other Course Resources not listed above

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: “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” (15 minutes)

http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/carolyn_steel_how_food_shapes_our_cities.html

Short video: “Ellen Dunham-Jones: Retrofitting suburbia” (19 minutes)

http://www.ted.com/talks/ellen_dunham_jones_retrofitting_suburbia.html