

**NEW TOPICS IN SOCIOLOGY: SOCIAL POLICY AND HOUSING**  
SOC350H1S – Winter 2020

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University College – UC, room 52  
Monday 12:00 – 3:00

### **Course Description**

Affordable housing is a world-wide problem, the consequences of which are experienced particularly acutely by young people. This course will give students the tools to engage the complexities of this problem. We will consider what housing is—a consumption good, a social right, or an investment asset? We will consider how these different understandings of housing affect how societies develop the institutional structure of their housing systems. We will also consider how housing systems impact wealth distribution and preferences regarding social welfare policies. The first part of the course will cover housing finance systems and social housing policies—essential foundations for the rest of the course. We will examine who has access to mortgage credit and how lending is regulated, as well as subsidized and community housing programs.

### **Prerequisites**

The prerequisite to take this course is SOC201H1, SOC202H1, SOC204H1 plus two of the following (1.0 FCE): SOC251H1, SOC252H1, SOC254H1. Students without the full prerequisite will be removed from the class and without notice.

### **Learning Objectives**

1. Build a nuanced understanding of what housing is.
2. Develop knowledge regarding the different components of complex housing systems.
3. Critically consider the broader issues in which housing is implicated, including social policy and inequality.
4. Improve communication skills through in-class discussions.
5. Improve critical thinking, reading, and writing skills through a policy proposal or research paper.

### **Grading**

Your overall course grade is meant to assess your academic performance in this course. This grade does not measure your overall potential as a person nor do they assess your overall

intelligence or worth. A variety of assessment tools, assignments, and exams were designed to assess your knowledge, skills, and achievement of the course objectives.

Component	Weight	Due Date
<b>Participation</b>	<b>10%</b>	
Personal profile	1%	Jan. 16
Self-assessment essay	5%	Mar. 23
In-class activities and discussions	4%	each class
<b>Proposal or paper</b>	<b>45%</b>	
Prospectus/outline	10%	Feb. 3
Draft	15%	Mar. 9
Final version	20%	Mar. 30
<b>Midterm</b>	<b>20%</b>	Feb. 10
<b>Final exam</b>	<b>25%</b>	final exam period, April 6-25, 2020

**Participation.** Each class will consist of a lecture as well as some form of interactive exercise, activity, or discussion. In order to participate, you have to be in class. I will take attendance to encourage you to be there. I will grade you on your participation, which means your thoughtful and informed contributions to the activity or discussion. Learning only happens when you practice using the material we cover.

**Personal profile.** On Jan. 13<sup>th</sup>, please email me a profile of yourself. Include: a recent photo, your major(s)/minor(s), one thing you expect to get from this class, what you hope to do after college, one non-academic activity you enjoy, anything else you wish to include about yourself.

**Self-assessment essay.** On Mar. 23<sup>th</sup>, please submit via Quercus your participation self-assessment essay. This should be a 200 to 300-word essay evaluating your participation in the course. You should ask yourself the following questions: 1) How have I contributed to the classroom environment? 2) Did I treat all those around me with respect and dignity? How? 3) What did I learn? What did I take away? You should demonstrate your answers to these questions in the essay with evidence from your participation throughout the semester. You may wish to write down a few sentences after each class to summarize your involvement. That way, you can immediately evaluate your participation, as well as keep evidence/examples for when you write your essay.

**Policy proposal/research paper.** This proposal/paper is another opportunity for you to practice using the material we cover in the course. You may choose to write a policy proposal in which you propose a particular housing-related policy and make a case for it, including what issue the policy is meant to address. You may also choose to write a research paper in which you pose a housing-related research question and conduct research to answer it. You will be expected to draw on appropriate course material to inform your proposal or research. You will develop the final proposal/paper in stages.

*Prospectus/outline.* On Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup>, please submit via Quercus a detailed prospectus or outline. Your policy or research question should be clearly stated. The prospectus/outline should also include several topic sentences for the body of your paper, along with detailed notes on supporting documentation for the topic sentences.

*Draft.* On Mar. 9<sup>th</sup>, please submit via Quercus a complete rough draft of your proposal/research paper. Please also bring a hard copy to class that day for peer evaluations.

*Final version.* On Mar. 30<sup>th</sup>, please submit via Quercus the final draft of your proposal or research paper.

You should submit your written responses via Quercus and Turnitin before class start time (12:00 pm) on the day that they are due. Turning in written assignments through Turnitin is voluntary. If you wish not to submit via Turnitin, please email me your written assignment before class start time instead and explain that you do not wish to use Turnitin.

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

Assignments not submitted through *Turnitin* will receive a grade of zero (0 %) **unless a student instead provides, along with their position paper**, sufficient secondary material (e.g., reading notes, outlines of the paper, rough drafts of the final draft, etc.) to establish that the paper they submit is truly their own. The alternative (not submitting via *Turnitin*) is in place because, strictly speaking, using *Turnitin* is voluntary for students at the University of Toronto.

**Exams.** The midterm and final exam will consist of a combination of multiple choice and short-answer, essay-style questions. The exams will cover all material from readings, lectures, cases, and in-class activities.

*Midterm.* The midterm will cover material through February 3<sup>rd</sup>. The midterm will occur in class on February 10<sup>th</sup>. Please mark this date on your calendar, as alternative arrangements are available only on an exceptional basis. You will have three hours to complete the test.

*Final.* The final will cover material from February 24<sup>th</sup> through the end of the course. The final will occur during the April Examination Period. The schedule and location of the final exam will be posted on the Faculty of Arts and Science website closer to that time.

## Course Policies

***Assistance and accessibility.*** Please let me know of any difficulties that you may be experiencing as soon as possible so that I can provide appropriate assistance and/or direct you to someone who can. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom, or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: [www.accessibility.utoronto.ca](http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca).

***Make-up test.*** As a matter of fairness to all students, you will be required to provide appropriate supporting documentation for make-ups necessary due to approved reasons—a documented illness, personal or family crisis, or accessibility-related issue. Supporting documentation for an illness is a Verification of Student Illness or Injury form (available at [www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca](http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca)). A doctor's note is also acceptable and must contain the start date and anticipated end date of the illness. Supporting documentation for a personal or family crisis is 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). For documentation for accessibility-related issues, please visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>. Students will not be given a make-up test due to personal conflicts such as travel, weddings, employment, etc. You are expected to plan ahead. Mis-reading the syllabus is also not an approved reason for a make-up. You are expected to take responsibility for yourself. If you require a make-up for an approved reason, you must inform me as soon as possible and this timeframe should correspond to the timeframe indicated on your supporting documentation, otherwise the make-up may not be granted.

***Late assignments.*** Similar to the policy on make-ups for tests, if you are going to be late with an assignment for an approved reason—a documented illness, personal or family crisis, or accessibility-related issue—you must provide appropriate documentation. Supporting documentation for an illness is a Verification of Student Illness or Injury form (available at [www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca](http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca)). A doctor's note is also acceptable and must contain the start date and anticipated end date of the illness. Supporting documentation for a personal or family crisis is 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). For documentation for accessibility-related issues, please visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>. You must also inform me as soon as possible and this timeframe should correspond to the timeframe indicated on your supporting documentation, otherwise late penalties will apply.

If you are going to be late with an assignment for an unapproved reason, I do not want to be informed about your reason. Instead, please take responsibility for yourself by gracefully accepting the late penalty and being better prepared next time. However,

please do inform me once the assignment is submitted. 5% of the grade will be deducted for each 24-hour period that the assignment is late. If the assignment is submitted 1 week (7 days, including weekends) late, the grade will be reduced by 35%. Assignments submitted more than 1 week (7 days, including weekends) late will not be graded and given a 0.

**Remarkings.** Please submit a detailed memo in writing, which should specify the questions or portions of the assignment or test that you believe were marked incorrectly, and why you think the marking was incorrect. Please also submit the assignment or test along with the memo. We will not remark any work based on a student's verbal request. The deadline for requesting a remarking is no sooner than 24 hours after receiving your grade and no later than 2 weeks after the graded work was made available for students to pick up. Late requests will not be accepted.

To request a re-grade, you must submit your written request explaining precisely why you believe your assignment should receive a different grade. You should highlight the specific portion of the assessment you felt was marked incorrectly and provide a rationale outlining why. **During the re-grading process, grades can increase, decrease, or remain the same.** The teaching assistant will review the assessment that has been submitted for a re-grade. The grade after the re-grade will be the grade recorded for your assignment.

If you are not satisfied after the teaching assistant has reviewed your assessment, you should immediately (within 3 days of receiving it back from the TA) request that the instructor re-grade your assignment. Please note that any work re-graded by the instructor will involve the entire assessment, not simply the questions or portion you believe was scored improperly. As mentioned previously, your revised grade may increase, decrease, or stay the same.

**Final Exams:** The final examination for this course will take place during the April examination period: April 6 to 25, 2020. The examination schedule for S courses will be posted on the Faculty of Arts and Science website in early March. Instructors are not authorized to re-schedule or excuse students from final faculty examinations. Students who are unable to write their examinations due to illness, domestic affliction, etc., must petition for a deferred examination. Check the calendar for procedural information. Students who make personal commitments during the examination period do so at their own risk. No special consideration is given and no special arrangements are made in the event of conflicts. Students who cannot write a final examination due to illness or other serious causes must file an online petition with the Office of the Registrar. The procedures are posted [here](#).

**Technology.** You will be expected to turn off your cell phone and store it during lecture. If you might need to receive a call during class for some reason, put your phone on vibrate and step out quietly. Similarly, please store your laptop during class. Some research indicates that using a laptop during class impedes both your learning and the learning of students around you (see, e.g., Sana et al. 2013, and Dynarski 2017). You will have an opportunity during each class to check your devices, when we take our break. Otherwise, please refrain from using them.

We will designate one area of the classroom as a “laptops permitted” zone. Students may sit in this zone if they feel, for any reason, that they would benefit from using a laptop to take notes. Students using laptops or cellphones for purposes other than note taking will receive no participation points for that day.

***Academic integrity.*** The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct seriously. Academic integrity is a fundamental value of learning and scholarship at the UofT. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that your UofT degree is valued and respected as a true signifier of your individual academic achievement.

The University of Toronto’s Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters outlines the behaviours that constitute academic misconduct, the processes for addressing academic offences, and the penalties that may be imposed. You are expected to be familiar with the contents of this document. Please be advised that Instructors are required to report any instance of suspected academic dishonesty to the Employment Relations Program Office. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else’s ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment (this includes working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work).

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone.
- Looking at someone else’s answers.
- Letting someone else look at your answers.
- Misrepresenting your identity.
- Submitting an altered test for re-grading.

Misrepresentation:

- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor’s notes.
- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.
- Signing attendance reports on behalf of other students.

***Copyright.*** Lectures and course materials prepared by the instructor are considered by the University to be an instructor’s intellectual property covered by the Canadian Copyright Act. Students wishing to record lecture or other course material in any way are required to ask the instructor’s explicit permission and may not do so unless permission is granted.

This includes tape recording, filming, photographing PowerPoint slides, Quercus materials, etc. Such permission is only for that individual student's own study purposes and does not include permission to "publish" them in any way. It is absolutely forbidden for a student to publish an instructor's notes to a website or sell them in any form without formal permission.

## **CLASS, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS SCHEDULE**

### **MODULE I: What Is Housing?**

#### ***1 - Monday, January 6*** – Welcome and introduction to the course

Reading:

- 1) Watts, Duncan. 2011. *Everything is Obvious: Once You Know the Answer*. Crown Business. Preface and Chapter 1.
- 2) Bourne, Larry. 1981. *The Geography of Housing*. Pg. 1-4.
- 3) Riis, Jacob. 1957. *How the Other Half Lives*. Pg. 5-12.

Optional reading:

- 1) Special issue in 1910 of the *American Journal of Sociology* on "Chicago Housing Conditions".

#### ***2 - Monday, January 13*** – Housing as Market Commodity or Social Right, Part I

Reading:

- 1) Bratt, Rachel, et al. 2006. "Why a Right to Housing is Needed and Makes Sense: Editor's Introduction." In *A Right to Housing: Foundation for a New Social Agenda*. Pg. 1-9.

Available on Google Scholar.

- 2) Basu, Kaushik, and Patrick M. Emerson. 2000. "The Economics of Tenancy Rent Control." *The Economic Journal* 110 (466): 939-962.

Assignment:

- 1) Personal profile DUE

Optional reading:

- 1) Saval, Nikil. 2019. "The Plight of the Urban Planner." *The New Yorker*, November 20, 2019.
- 2) Dachis, Ben, Gilles Duranton, and Matthew A. Turner. 2011. "The Effects of Land Transfer Taxes on Real Estate Markets: Evidence from a Natural Experiment in Toronto." *Journal of Economic Geography* 12 (2): 327-354.
- 3) Glaeser, Edward L., and Erzo FP Luttmer. 2003. "The Misallocation of Housing Under Rent Control." *American Economic Review*, 93 (4): 1027-1046.

### **3 - Monday, January 20** – Housing as Market Commodity or Social Right, Part II

Reading:

- 1) Been, Vicki, Ingrid Gould Ellen, and Katherine O'Regan. 2019. "Supply skepticism: Housing supply and affordability." *Housing Policy Debate* 29 (1): 25-40.
- 2) Farha, Leilani. 2017. "Housing is a Human Right, Not A Commodity." *The Globe and Mail*, March 30, 2017.

### **4 - Monday, January 27** – Housing Tenure and Social Housing

Reading:

- 1) Dreier, Peter. 1982. "The Status of Tenants in the United States." *Social Problems* 30: 179–188. (Read up to the section on "zoning regulations".)
- 2) Suttor, Greg. 2016. *Still Renovating: A History of Canadian Social Housing Policy* (Vol. 6), McGill-Queen's Press-MQUP. Chapter 1 Introduction.

Available in electronic form through the U of T library.

Optional reading:

- 1) Van Dyk, Nick. 1995. "Financing Social Housing in Canada." *Housing Policy Debate* 6 (4): 815-848.

## **MODULE II: Social Actors and Components of Housing Systems**

## **5 - Monday, February 3 – Zoning and Developers**

Reading:

- 1) Dreier, Peter. 1982. “The Status of Tenants in the United States.” *Social Problems* 30: 188–189.
- 2) Rudel, Thomas K. 2009. “How Do People Transform Landscapes? A Sociological Perspective on Suburban Sprawl and Tropical Deforestation.” *American Journal of Sociology* 115 (1): 129-154.
- 3) Urban Toronto, “Considering Inclusionary Zoning: Toronto's Giant Leap Toward Affordable Housing” <https://urbantoronto.ca/news/2019/08/considering-inclusionary-zoning-torontos-giant-leap-toward-affordable-housing>
- 4) REVIEW FOR TEST—come with questions

Assignment:

- 1) Prospectus for policy proposal or research paper DUE.

Optional reading:

- 1) Massey, Douglas S., Len Albright, Rebecca Casciano, Elizabeth Derickson, and David N. Kinsey. 2013. *Climbing Mount Laurel: The Struggle for Affordable Housing and Social Mobility in an American Suburb*. Princeton University Press.
- 2) Saval, Nikil. 2019. “The Plight of the Urban Planner.” *The New Yorker*, November 20, 2019.
- 3) Prevost, Lisa. 2019. “‘She Build’: Creating an All-Women Real Estate Development Team.” *New York Times*, November 12, 2019.

## **6 - Monday, February 10 – MIDTERM**

**Monday, February 17 – NO CLASS, READING WEEK**

## **7 - Monday, February 24 – Regulation and Lenders**

Reading:

- 1) Green, Richard, K., and Susan M. Wachter. 2005. “The American Mortgage in Historical and International Context.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 19 (4): 93-114.

- 2) Immergluck Dan. 2009. "Core of the Crisis: Deregulation, the Global Savings Glut, and Financial Innovation in the Subprime Debacle." *City Community*, 8: 341–45.

### **8 - Monday, March 2** – Housing Finance and Global Capital

Reading:

- 1) Sassen, Saskia. 2008. "Mortgage Capital and its Particularities: A New Frontier for Global Finance." *Journal of International Affairs*: 187-212.

Optional Reading:

- 1) Gotham, Kevin Fox. 2006. "The Secondary Circuit of Capital Reconsidered: Globalization and the US Real Estate Sector." *American journal of sociology* 112 (1): 231-275.

## **MODULE III: Broader Issues of Housing**

### **9 - Monday, March 9** – Housing and Economic Growth

Reading:

- 1) Reisenbichler, Alexander. 2019. "The Politics of Quantitative Easing and Housing Stimulus by the Federal Reserve and European Central Bank, 2008–2018." *West European Politics*: 1-21.

Assignment:

- 1) Draft of policy proposal or research paper DUE. Bring hard copy to class for in-class peer evaluation.

### **10 - Monday, March 16** – Housing and Social Policy

Reading:

- 1) Quinn, Sarah. 2019. *American Bonds: How Credit Markets Shaped a Nation*. Princeton University Press. Pg. 13-19.
- 2) Conley, Dalton, and Brian Gifford. 2006. "Home Ownership, Social Insurance, and the Welfare State." *Sociological forum*. Vol. 21. No. 1.

Optional Reading:

- 1) Schwartz, Herman M., and Leonard Seabrooke. 2009. "Varieties of Residential Capitalism in the International Political Economy: Old Welfare States and the New Politics of Housing." *The politics of housing booms and busts*. Palgrave Macmillan, London. 1-27.

**11 - Monday, March 23** – Housing and Inequality Part I

Reading:

- 1) Adkins, Lisa, Melinda Cooper, and Martijn Konings. 2019. "Class in the 21st Century: Asset Inflation and the New Logic of Inequality." *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*: 0308518X19873673.

Assignment:

- 1) Participation self-assessment essay DUE

Optional reading:

- 1) Kahrl, Andrew. 2019. "Black People's Land Was Stolen." *New York Times*, June 20, 2019.
- 2) Taylor, Keeanga-Yamahtta. 2019. *Race for Profit: How Banks and the Real Estate Industry Undermined Black Homeownership*. UNC Press Books.
- 3) Cohen, Daniel Aldana. 2019. "A Green New Deal for Housing." *Jacobin*, February 8, 2019.
- 4) Saval, Nikil. 2019. "The Plight of the Urban Planner." *The New Yorker*, November 20, 2019.

**12 - Monday, March 30** – Housing and Inequality Part II

Reading:

- 1) Christophers, Brett. 2018. "Intergenerational Inequality? Labour, Capital, and Housing Through the Ages." *Antipode* 50 (1): 101-121.
- 2) REVIEW FOR EXAM—come with questions

Assignment:

- 1) Policy proposal or research paper—DUE.

***Final Exam*** – held during the Faculty Final Exam period, April 6-25, 2020. Exam schedule TBA.