

Fall 2023

## **HSS121 A(B) Intro to Urban Studies**

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00 to 11:00 A.M. or by appointment.

**Contact Information:** Email: All questions/Issues: kchun@stevens.edu

**Instructor:** Kyungtek(KT) Chun, Ph.D.

### **Course Description**

This course explores what the earliest cities were like and how urban life has changed over the centuries; what forces guided the evolution of cities into centers of industry, commerce, finance, recreation, entertainment, higher education, and media communications; why cities face problems of inadequate mass transit, congestion, housing decay, pollution, crime, and fiscal bankruptcy; how city life shapes personalities and attitudes and influences lifestyles and life chances; what solutions have been proposed for urban problems; and how different everyday life will be in the city of the future.

### **Course Objective**

In this course, we will enter into a large ongoing discussion about cities and urban life using sociological theories, concepts, and perspectives. In particular, we will focus on some of the most basic elements of cities, namely neighborhoods and communities, how people define them and their importance in their lives, how they change, and how they impact the larger city. Drawing from our readings and discussions of urban sociology as well as contemporary places, events, and groups, this course will introduce students to key concepts and debates in urban sociology and provide them with the theories and knowledge to examine their own urban environment. We will also take a critical view of cities, which means that we will question some assumptions about them and how they work. Since everyone's experience of the city is different and any urbanite can provide insight into what cities mean and what it means to live in them, this is very much an interactive course that will give us a better understanding of urban life.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

During this course, students will learn the following:

- Fundamental concepts and theories that urban sociologists use to examine contemporary cities, such as community and gentrification.
- How cities develop and change, and the numerous everyday conflicts that occur as a result, focusing on the concept of community.
- The differences between studying cities quantitatively and qualitatively.
- How to think critically about the urban issues they see in the city around them.

### **Required Book:**

**John J. Macionis, Vincent N. Parrillo:** *Cities and Urban Life, Books a La Carte Edition (7th Edition) 7th Edition*, Pearson 2017. ISBN-13: 978-0134377513

### **Course Requirement:**

You must fulfill ALL of the following requirements to complete this course. A Non-submission of any of the requirements can result in a failing grade for the course. The submission itself does not guarantee a passing grade (In other words, you may receive zero points for an assignment if your work is not at a passable level). The sum of your

performances in these requirements will determine your course grade. Feel free to come and discuss with me early on to develop strategies to improve your grades.

**You will not get a good grade (A or A-) if you are absent more than 3 times without providing proper documentation. You are expected to get actively involved with our class discussion in the class. You are allowed, at most, 2 absences if you can provide me with a proper document explaining your absence. If you miss more than 2 classes, there will be 30 points deductions for each additional absence. (10% of grade). I will deduct points for continuous lateness to the class(10 points without proper excuse)**

**I may give you a chance to do extra credit work only if I am convinced that you are serious about your study. Extra credit work doesn't guarantee the change of your overall grade.**

### **Grading Scale**

A	93-100
A-	92-90
B+	89-85
B	84-80
B-	79-75
C+	74-70
C	69-65
C-	64-60
D	59-55
F	54 and below

### **Determination of Grade:**

1. Two Examinations.....50% of grade
2. Group Presentation..... 20% of grade
3. Term Paper..... 10% of grade
4. Class participation, quiz, attendance and assignment----- 20% of grade

### **Exams**

#### **50% Two Exams (25% each)**

The exams measure your understanding of class materials (including whether you actually read the assigned textbook chapter) and your ability to critically discuss issues reviewed in class. The exam will consist mostly of essay questions.

#### **20% Class Participation, Quiz, Assignment, and Attendance**

Active class participation is necessary. I encourage everybody to engage in debate and ask questions if any of the topics we discuss in class are not clearly understood. Attendance is very important for this class. We will also have a small group presentation in each class. And your group is required to respond to each presentation. Lateness and inappropriate behavior during class hours will result in the deduction of points toward the final grade. Excessive use of a laptop except for taking a note during class will result in a deduction of points(10 points for each violation)---I will check it by asking questions, and you must able to answer my questions.

If you are presenting, you can use the content of a group presentation to fulfill an assignment (each group member can post the same content the group presented). I may have a quiz unannounced if I suspect you are not doing a reading.

**30%**

**Group or Individual Presentation (3-5 people)**

You will be required to present the topic assigned as a group or individual. You are encouraged to use examples or cases (newsworthy events) relevant to your topic and lead a class discussion. Your group's score will be notified after all other group presentations. Each group member should prepare at least, 4-5 PP slides. If you are presenting as an individual, you must use 8 to 10 PP slides. PP slides should include 1) introduction 2) main thesis 3) conclusion 4) reference.

**Honor Board Policies:**

Enrollment into the undergraduate class of Stevens Institute of Technology signifies a student's commitment to the Honor System. Each student's responsibility is to become acquainted with and uphold the ideals set forth in the Honor System Constitution. Specific student responsibilities include: Maintaining honesty and fair play in all aspects of academic life at Stevens; Writing and signing the pledge, in full, on all submitted academic work; Reporting any suspected violations to an Honor Board member or to the Dean of Student Development; Cooperating with the Honor Board during investigations and hearings.

The pledge signifies that the work submitted by a student is indeed his/her own. One designated pledge will be used for tests, homework assignments, lab reports, and computer projects. The pledge shall be written in full and signed by the student on all submitted academic work. Any references used (including texts, tutors, classmates, etc.) should be listed below the written pledge: "I pledge my honor that I have abided by the Stevens Honor System."

**Students with Disabilities:**

If you require special accommodations due to a disability, or if you need individual arrangements should the building be evacuated, you must inform the office of Student Counseling and Psychological Services in the Howe Center, 7<sup>th</sup> floor, and ask that he inform the instructor as early as possible.

**The syllabus content is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.**

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Weekly Schedule**

Week 1(January19-24) ***Introduction and Exploring the City*** (Chapter 1)

Week 2(January 26-31)      **Evolution of World Cities** (Chapter 2)

Week 3(Feb. 2-7)      **The Development of North American Cities** (Chapter 3)

Week 4(Feb. 14-16)   **Today's Cities and Suburbs** (Chapter 4)

Week 5(Feb.21-23)   **Urban Sociology** (Chapter 5)

Week 6 (Feb. 28-March 2) **Review of Exam 1 and Exam 1**

Week 7 (March 7-9)   **Spatial Perspective** (Chapter 6)

**Spring Break (March 14, 16) No Class**

Week 8 (March 21-23) **The Context of Cities** (Chapter 8)

Week 10 (March 28-30) **Comparative Urbanism** (Chapter 9)

Week 11 (April 4-6) **Stratification and Social Class** (Chapter 10)

Week 12(April 11-13)**Group Presentation**

Week 13(April 18-20) **Group Presentation**

Week 14(April 25-27) **Group Presentation**

Week 15 (May 2-May 4) **Review of Exam 2 and Exam 2**

**Term Paper is due by the same day as exam 2.**