

Course Information

Course Number: GEOG 306
Course Title: INTRODUCTION TO URBAN GEOGRAPHY
Section: 500
Credit Hours: 3
Online Course Info: <https://canvas.tamu.edu/>
Time: TR 2:20 pm – 3:35 pm
Location: O&M 103

Instructor Details

Instructor: Dr. Burak Güneralp
Office: O&M 804
Phone: (979) 845-6422
E-Mail: bguneralp@tamu.edu
Office Hours: TR 12:50 pm – 2:20 pm (Remote)
Location: via Zoom (<https://tamu.zoom.us/j/95215415523>)

Course Description

Geography 306 is an introductory urban geography course. The *purpose of this course* is to acquaint the students with the basic principles of urban geography. The course is divided into three main topic areas. The first deals with the emergence of cities and their role within the larger society, the second examines the spatial structure of cities themselves, and the third explores the spatial aspects of urban management and development as well as the interactions of cities within the planetary system. Within a society, cities have several functions. They serve as cultural, economic, transportation, and population centers. Urban areas have important relationships with each other and the areas around them. In a city, the locations of land uses are determined by economic, historical, political, and social factors. These forces are considered separately and simultaneously by urban geographers. Finally, many urban problems have causes or solutions that have an important spatial component. Urban growth and associated changes in human activities have profound consequences at local, regional, and global scales. These include land-use and land-cover change, impacts on ecosystems, and alteration of geochemical processes. The demands for food and natural resources that originate in urban areas create and reshape interactions between urban and rural areas. Haphazard urban growth has implications for vulnerability of people to natural hazards. Geographers have contributed to both the applied and theoretical work in these areas.

This is primarily a lecture course. Class participation in the lecture sessions is strongly encouraged and will influence your grade positively. You should be aware that ***you will be responsible for all the material contained in the assigned readings as well as what is covered in the lecture.*** Furthermore, these two sources of information are not identical. Material which you read but is not discussed in class will appear on examinations (and vice versa). Do not assume that material in the text which is not discussed in class is unimportant. In fact, I will assign you material to read because I do not have time to cover the topic in class. Note that the images/slides used during class sessions are available via Canvas, but they do not include my comments or remarks about them. Therefore, I encourage you to use them for review, but you should not assume that you can substitute viewing the slides for attending class.

Course Prerequisites

Junior and senior classification or approval of instructor.

Special Course Designation

GEOG 306 is an international and cultural diversity (ICD) course.

Course Learning Outcomes

If students attend lectures, complete reading and other class assignments, they will be able to achieve the following learning objectives in this course:

- Receive a solid introduction to urban geography;
- Understand and explain the role of cities in society, how cities are arranged, and how they operate;
- Identify important urban issues, problems, and concepts;
- Connect what they learn in class to the real-world;
- Illustrate, analyze, and explain the examples of the issues, problems, and concepts that they find/observe in the urban environment;
- Articulate the importance of living and working effectively in a diverse, global, and increasingly urban society; of the value of a diverse and global perspective in such a society;
- Recognize diverse opinions, different points of view, and practices in relation to the historical and future development of urbanization.

I expect that students will attend lectures faithfully, take quizzes at the scheduled times, be prepared for class, and respect classmates and instructor by arriving on time and maintaining a proper and polite attitude in class.

Textbook and/or Resource Materials

Pacione, M. 2009. *Urban Geography: A Global Perspective*. 3rd edition. London and New York: Routledge. 703 pp.

Grading Policy

The grading system follows the Texas A&M University grading system:

A = Excellent, B = Good, C = Satisfactory, D = Passing, F = Failing

Grades will be assigned based on the following cutoffs: A \geq 90%, B = 80-89%, C = 70-79%, D = 60-69%, F < 60%. An average performance in this class will receive a satisfactory grade (C). Coursework will comprise the following. The percentages in parentheses indicate **grade distribution of final grade**:

Quizzes (50%)

You will take approximately one quiz every two weeks in this course. Each quiz will be made up of 10-12 questions. In addition to multiple-choice, true-false questions will sometimes appear on quizzes. Some questions will ask about textbook material; the remainder will ask about lecture. Sometimes the book and lecture will cover the same topics so that the book and lecture questions will be similar. You might be able to answer a "book" question from what you learned in lecture, for example. This will not always be the case, however. Therefore, you should read the textbook and review your notes before quizzes.

Ordinarily quizzes will be given on Thursdays. If folks begin to skip class on Tuesday, I will change gears and give a quiz on Tuesday. To be safe, read early so that you are prepared to take the quiz on Tuesday. It will pay off during the semester. If you think that this amounts to reading ahead, then read ahead.

No make-up quizzes will be given unless a university-accepted excuse is presented as laid out in the University's policy (Section 7 of the student rules: <http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07>). Students who do not take a quiz without a valid excuse will receive a grade of zero from that quiz.

Assignments (40%)

Rationale

The outside assignments are intended to give you an opportunity to delve more deeply into a topic of your choice by reading carefully and reflecting on what you have read. They will also get you into the urban environment to apply what you have learned to the real world. Two of assignments will be on specific topics. In one of these assignments, you will examine several options discussed in the class for *urban sustainability* and evaluate them critically; in the other, you will be asked to pick a city of your choice from anywhere around the world and examine the *prevailing urban form and urban planning practices* in that city. For the rest, you can pick a topic that is of particular interest to you from the syllabus. What you will submit as a product might appear simple and small but it should represent the level of thinking, analysis, and effort you devoted to the task. Because these assignments correspond to 40% of your total grade, their importance is equivalent to a term paper or final exam. I expect the work you submit to reflect the credit assigned to them.

Assessment

There will be four assignments (each 10%). In order for you to receive a high score on these assignments, respect the minimum word limit (250 words) *and* make sure your photographs and captions show that you have thought about how the images you have submitted illustrate a concept **relevant** and **important** to urban geography. Avoid illustrating overly simplistic concepts. Strive to illustrate and explain an **interesting, high-level or complex idea**. More information on the assignments will be provided during the first week of the semester.

Breakout sessions (10%)

Throughout the semester, there will be 3 breakout sessions. During each breakout session, students, in groups, will discuss a specific aspect of one of the lecture topics covered that week. Each group will consist of 5 to 6 students. At the end of the breakout sessions, students will be invited to share their notes with the rest of the class. Each breakout session is planned to take about 60 minutes.

Late Work Policy

- *No late submission of assignments will be accepted. Students who do not submit an assignment by its due date will receive a grade of zero from that assignment.*
- *Work submitted by a student as makeup work for an excused absence is not considered late work and is exempted from the late work policy (See Student Rule 7).*

Course Schedule

This schedule is tentative and subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

WEEK 1: Aug 20 and Aug 22

Introduction and overview of topics (*Pacione, Chapter 1, p. 1-17*)

WEEK 2: Aug 27 and Aug 29

Urban geography: an overview (*Pacione, Chapter 2, p. 18-34*)

WEEK 3: Sep 3 and Sep 5

Emergence of first cities, characteristics of urban civilizations
Spread of urbanism (*Pacione, Chapter 3, p. 35-67*)

WEEK 4: Sep 10 and Sep 12

Urbanization and cities in global context (*Pacione, Chapter 4, p. 68-93*)
Urban demographics: past, present, and future trends (*No reading*)

ASSIGNMENT #1 due: Sep 12, Thursday, 5pm

WEEK 5: Sep 17 and Sep 19

Urban demographics: past, present, and future trends (*No reading*) [CNT'D]
Regional perspectives on urbanization (*Pacione, Chapter 5, p. 94-120*)

WEEK 6: Sep 24 and Sep 26

Regional perspectives on urbanization (*Pacione, Chapter 5, p. 94-120*) [CNT'D]

WEEK 7: Oct 1 and Oct 3

Central-place theory, rank-size rule (*Pacione, Chapter 6, p. 121-134*)

BREAKOUT SESSION #1: Oct 3, Thursday

WEEK 8: Oct 10

Urban land use; Internal structure of the city (*Pacione, Chapter 7, p. 137-163*)

ASSIGNMENT #2 due: Oct 10, Thursday, 5pm

NO CLASS ON Oct 8, TUESDAY (Fall Break)

WEEK 9: Oct 15 and Oct 17

Urban land use; Internal structure of the city (*Pacione, Chapter 7, p. 137-163*) [CNT'D]
Urban planning, sprawl, and land-use policies (*Pacione, Chapter 8, p. 164-188*)

WEEK 10: Oct 22 and Oct 24

Urban planning, sprawl, and land-use policies (*Pacione, Chapter 8, p. 164-188*)
[CNT'D]
Housing and gentrification (*Pacione, Chapter 11, p. 225-239*)

WEEK 11: Oct 29 and Oct 31

Housing and gentrification (*Pacione, Chapter 11, p. 225-239*) [CNT'D]

BREAKOUT SESSION #2: Oct 31, Thursday**WEEK 12: Nov 5 and Nov 7**

Urban retailing; The economy of cities (*Pacione, Chapter 12, p. 240-252 and Chapter 14, p. 283-307*)
Power, politics, and urban governance (*Pacione, Chapter 20, p. 418-446*)

ASSIGNMENT #3 due: Nov 7, Thursday, 5pm**WEEK 13: Nov 12 and Nov 14**

Third-world urbanization and internal structure of third-world cities (*Pacione, Chapters 21-22, p. 449-483*)

WEEK 14: Nov 19 and Nov 21

Third-world urbanization and internal structure of third-world cities (*Pacione, Chapters 21-22, p. 449-483*) [CNT'D]
Urban diets, urban food systems, and (urban) agriculture (*No reading*);

BREAKOUT SESSION #3: Nov 19, Tuesday**WEEK 15: Nov 26**

Urban sustainability: challenges, future prospects (*Pacione, Chapter 30, p. 605-626*)

ASSIGNMENT #4 due: Nov 26, Thursday, 5pm**NO CLASS ON Nov 28, THURSDAY (Thanksgiving)**

University Policies

Attendance Policy

The university views class attendance and participation as an individual student responsibility. Students are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Makeup Work Policy

Students will be excused from attending class on the day of a graded activity or when attendance contributes to a student's grade, for the reasons stated in Student Rule 7, or other reason deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about makeup work, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Absences related to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 may necessitate a period of more than 30 days for make-up work, and the timeframe for make-up work should be agreed upon by the student and instructor" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.1](#)).

"The instructor is under no obligation to provide an opportunity for the student to make up work missed because of an unexcused absence" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.2](#)).

Students who request an excused absence are expected to uphold the Aggie Honor Code and Student Conduct Code. (See [Student Rule 24](#))

Academic Integrity Statement and Policy

"An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do."

"Texas A&M University students are responsible for authenticating all work submitted to an instructor. If asked, students must be able to produce proof that the item submitted is indeed the work of that student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one's work, should the instructor request it, may be sufficient grounds to initiate an academic misconduct case" ([Section 20.1.2.3, Student Rule 20](#)).

You can learn more about the Aggie Honor System Office Rules and Procedures, academic integrity, and your rights and responsibilities at [aggiehonor.tamu.edu](#).

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy

Texas A&M University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact Disability Resources in the Student Services Building or at (979) 845-1637 or visit [disability.tamu.edu](#). Disabilities may include, but are not limited to attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability related needs with Disability Resources and their instructors as soon as possible. Disability Resources is located in the Student Services Building or at (979) 845-1637 or visit [disability.tamu.edu](#).

Title IX and Statement on Limits to Confidentiality

Texas A&M University is committed to fostering a learning environment that is safe and productive for all. University policies and federal and state laws prohibit gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

With the exception of some medical and mental health providers, all university employees (including full and part-time faculty, staff, paid graduate assistants, student workers, etc.) are Mandatory Reporters and must report to the Title IX Office if the employee experiences, observes, or becomes aware of an incident that meets the following conditions (see [University Rule o8.01.01.M1](#)):

- The incident is reasonably believed to be discrimination or harassment.
- The incident is alleged to have been committed by or against a person who, at the time of the incident, was (1) a student enrolled at the University or (2) an employee of the University.

Mandatory Reporters must file a report regardless of how the information comes to their attention – including but not limited to face-to-face conversations, a written class assignment or paper, class discussion, email, text, or social media post. Although Mandatory Reporters must file a report, in most instances, you will be able to control how the report is handled, including whether or not to pursue a formal investigation. The University's goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and to ensure access to the resources you need.

Students wishing to discuss concerns in a confidential setting are encouraged to make an appointment with [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS).

Students can learn more about filing a report, accessing supportive resources, and navigating the Title IX investigation and resolution process on the University's [Title IX webpage](#).

Statement on Mental Health and Wellness

Texas A&M University recognizes that mental health and wellness are critical factors that influence a student's academic success and overall wellbeing. Students are encouraged to engage in proper self-care by utilizing the resources and services available from Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS). Students who need someone to talk to can call the TAMU Helpline (979-845-2700) from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. weekdays and 24 hours on weekends. 24-hour emergency help is also available through the National Suicide Prevention Hotline (800-273-8255) or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

"To help protect Aggieland and stop the spread of COVID-19, Texas A&M University urges students to be vaccinated and to wear masks in classrooms and all other academic facilities on campus, including labs. Doing so exemplifies the Aggie Core Values of respect, leadership, integrity, and selfless service by putting community concerns above individual preferences. COVID-19 vaccines and masking — regardless of vaccination status — have been shown to be safe and effective at reducing spread to others, infection, hospitalization, and death."