

# **HISTORY 318: The City in the Modern World**

Spring 2019, Section 1, TR 4:10-6pm, Room 192-242



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## **Course Description:**

Whether as political center, economic hub, or cultural standard-bearer, the modern city has long been an object of scholarly interest to historians. And as more and more people worldwide find themselves living in urban environments in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a historical perspective on how urban landscapes and the societies that both shape and are shaped by those landscapes have changed over the previous two centuries is essential for understanding many of the problems that urban-dwellers face today. So much of what we read about in the news today—from the Arab uprisings of 2011 to the ongoing migrant crisis in Europe to the 2017 riots in Charlottesville over Civil War memorials—present us with questions on the social and political role of the city in the modern world, particularly in relation to social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusivity.

In this course, we will incorporate comparative and interdisciplinary approaches to examine both the spatial and the social experiential aspects of urban life around the world from the nineteenth century to the present, with a particular view to fostering a more critical understanding of the (urbanized) world in which we live today. The course begins with an overview of the making of the modern city in both the Western and non-Western worlds, with special focus on modernity/modernism, colonialism, urban planning, capitalism, and questions of citizenship and belonging. Against this theoretical and conceptual background, it then focuses on particular social dynamics, challenges, and everyday realities that are common to all cities and urban societies across the world, albeit in diverse socio-spatial contexts, with topics ranging from race and immigration, to gender and sexuality, to violence and crime. The course ends with an examination of how urban-dwellers' rights to their city are claimed, contested, challenged, and commemorated within the urban landscape, and with a concluding question on the future of diversity and inclusivity in the modern world city.

## **Course Learning Objectives:**

After completing this course, students should have an enhanced ability to:

- Understand and analyze the diverse sources used by historians, including written texts, maps and images, and films;
- Synthesize historical information for the purpose of discussion and as part of analytical writing assignments;
- Develop critical thinking skills necessary to evaluate, analyze, and critique scholarly arguments and the primary sources on which they are based;
- Relate and integrate historical scholarship with other disciplines (sociology, anthropology, urban studies, architecture, etc.) in the formation of perspective and knowledge;
- Analyze multiple perspectives and interpretations of the city and urban life based on different research methodologies and analytical approaches;
- Understand how diverse social, political, economic, and cultural factors have contributed to the historical development of cities and urban life in different regions of the world;
- Analyze diverse social and political problems facing the world today—and in students' own lives—in both historical and urban contexts;
- Achieve [Cal Poly's Diversity Learning Objectives](#)

### **Course Format:**

This course incorporates both lecture and class discussion, though it is weighted more towards the latter. To make the most of the time we spend in class together, you must do all listed readings before each class so that you are prepared to share your thoughts, reactions, and analyses of the topic with each other. The course is designed to allow you to initiate class discussions based on your interests, and the productivity of each class session therefore largely relies on you and your commitment to and engagement with the material. I will assume that you have read the required materials for that day and will not therefore spend lecture time summarizing the readings. Rather, I will synthesize the main themes and issues that emerged from the readings, explain difficult or confusing points or arguments, fill in some gaps or provide background that might not have been covered in the readings, and help link the material for that day with what we covered in previous classes (and with what is still to come). Our in-class analyses of the reading materials will mainly be led by you during class discussion—which will take up most of our time—and I will be there to moderate your discussions/debates.

### **Readings:**

All readings listed in the daily schedule below are posted on PolyLearn and should be completed before the start of each class session. You should bring the readings with you to class (digitally or in hard copy), along with your reading notes (see below on class participation).

This course does not use a textbook, mainly because no one book covers the wide variety of topics, disciplinary approaches, and urban regions we will be discussing. Instead, you will have the opportunity to read and engage with a wide variety of scholarly literature—book chapters, journal articles, and primary sources—that will expose you to different interpretations, approaches, and ways of thinking about the city in the modern world. Some of this literature will consist of the classics in urban studies and urban history; others represent some of the most current and innovative research in the field.

### **Course Requirements:**

### *Class participation: 20%*

Attendance in this class is required, unless you have a documented emergency (e.g. an illness or a death in the family) or you are participating in an official university event. But regular attendance is not the same as participation. As mentioned above, this course is designed to allow you to lead class discussions on the readings and weekly topics. If you miss class, you will lose out on vital information and will not be able to participate. If you don't participate regularly and actively in class discussions, you will lose participation points even if your attendance record is perfect.

Doing the readings and participating in class are both essential to helping you fully understand the course material and achieve the course learning objectives. So, to be prepared to engage productively in class discussions and to be able to articulate your ideas coherently, I would like you to note down at least three interesting points of discussion gleaned from the readings for each class session, which you should be prepared to share and discuss in class (three ideas overall per session, not for each reading). These should not be summaries of the readings, but rather your reactions to and/or analyses of particular points that you found interesting or thought-provoking. I will not collect these notes, but during each class I may call on you to share your thoughts in order to encourage you to participate (if necessary). This exercise will get you into the habit of reading purposefully, synthesizing material from different sources, and formulating your own reactions and thoughts—all skills that will be useful not only in your written work but in your academic studies in general.

As you will see below, during some class sessions we will divide some readings between the class—where some of you do will one set of readings, and the rest others. You will share your analyses of the materials you read with your classmates who did other readings, so it is imperative that you are prepared to reciprocate with each other.

To calculate your class participation grade, I will give each student a score of 0-5 per day for participation, beginning on Thursday, April 4, as per the following scale:

Absent without excuse as stated above	0
Present but no participation	1
Did not read but some intelligent participation	2
Read with minimal participation	3
Read with intermediate participation	4
Read with full participation	5

I will drop one day's participation (your lowest score) before calculating the final grade. As you will see, doing the reading before class is the only way to score a 3 or above, regardless of how much you participate in discussion.

### *4 short essays: (10% each) 40%*

You will write four short essays of about three pages (approximately 800-1,000 words) each. These essays are meant to be reflective pieces in which you will be prompted to respond critically to questions related to the topic being discussed on the day the essay is due. The objective is to give you the opportunity to develop your own thoughts and arguments about cities in relation to the course material, and to expose you to different kinds of primary sources through which to study the urban landscape: maps and diagrams, films, photos, and your own experiences in urban space. My feedback, in turn, should help prepare you for your final paper (see below).

The question for each of the essays is included in the weekly topics schedule below, under the day on which the essay is due. Each essay will be due before the start of class on the following days:

Short essay 1: Friday, April 12

Short essay 2: Friday, April 26

Short essay 3: Friday, May 10

Short essay 4: Friday, May 24

As the short essays will each be discussed in class on the due date, I cannot accept late assignments (unless you missed class with a valid excuse as mentioned above).

#### *Take-home midterm: 15%*

You will be given one take-home midterm consisting of short answer questions covering the main theoretical concepts covered in the first four weeks of class. The main objective of the midterm is to ensure that you have a solid grasp of these main themes before we move on to the more specific course topics and case studies in the remaining six weeks, during which these ideas will consistently be revisited. The midterm will be distributed in class on Tuesday, April 30 and will be due at the beginning of class on Friday, May 3. As it is a take-home exam, you are allowed to use your notes and readings to respond to the questions, but you are not allowed to work together. Sharing or borrowing answers from other students is a form of academic dishonesty and will be considered cheating as per the policy outlined below under *Academic Integrity*.

#### *Final paper: 25%*

In lieu of a final exam, you will write a final paper of around 8-10 pages (approximately 2,500-3,000 words). For the paper, you will choose a current event that was prominent in the news in recent years that interests you (e.g. the Arab spring, the migrant crisis in Europe, the controversy over Civil War monuments, etc.) and write a paper analyzing the topic from an urban historical perspective, integrating the theoretical concepts discussed throughout the semester with primary and secondary sources of your choosing. You will have the chance to discuss your paper topics with me, and more specific information on the paper requirements will be distributed and discussed in class. The final paper will be due on the day of our scheduled final exam (Thursday, June 13 at 10pm). For this reason, I cannot accept late papers.

## Grading Standards:

### *For participation:*

An **A** in participation is awarded to a student who attends class regularly, has read the material thoroughly, and has prepared notes to share his/her reactions and ideas with the class. He/she helps initiate class discussion by offering thoughtful comments and questions on the readings and class topic. Rather than dominating the conversation, the student engages other students in the discussion, respects the opinions of his/her peers, and consistently elevates the level of discussion.

A **B** in participation is awarded to a student who attends class regularly but is not always prepared to contribute to the discussion. He/she does not always read all the required materials, and often waits for others to initiate discussions or raise interesting issues. While generally courteous and able to express his/her ideas, the student does not always relate their comments adequately to the material or to the discussion at hand.

A **C** in participation is awarded to a student who attends class regularly, does some reading, but is an infrequent or unwilling participant in discussion.

A **D or F** in participation is awarded to a student who fails to attend class regularly, who clearly does not do the readings, and who does not participate in class discussion.

### *For written work:*

Written work must be submitted via PolyLearn before class on the due date. All papers must be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point font, with 1-inch margins all around, and must use proper and consistent citations.

I grade all written work for 1) content (argument, analysis, and examples); 2) structure (clarity and organization); 3) use and integration of relevant evidence/sources (including citations); and 4) presentation, grammar, spelling, citations. The following breakdown lets you know what a paper must achieve/include to fulfill a particular grade.

An **A range (90-100)** paper develops a sophisticated, intelligent, and convincing argument and/or answer to the question; shows clear evidence of wide and relevant reading and an engagement with key conceptual issues and/or academic debates on the subject; shows rigorous use and a good understanding of relevant source materials (primary and secondary); achieves an appropriate balance between factual detail and critical analysis; may provide evidence of original thinking that goes beyond simply restating course material; is structurally well organized, progressing logically from one point to the next; is clearly, coherently, and articulately written; contains next to no typos or spelling/grammatical errors; integrates evidence effectively and cites sources correctly.

A **B range (80-89)** paper offers a sound discussion of the topic though may sometimes be unclear; makes an attempt to offer critical insights and shows some evidence of critical thinking

though is not necessarily original; shows a sound understanding of the major factual and/or theoretical issues, and addresses some relevant literature on the topic; develops a focused argument and articulates a sustained train of thought; shows evidence of planning and is generally well-structured with a logical progression of ideas, but may be better organized to be more effective; is easily readable with occasional grammatical and spelling errors; uses mostly appropriate examples and references to the literature to support most points, albeit with some possible citation errors.

A **C range (70-79)** paper primarily summarizes or paraphrases course/source material with no in-depth analysis; shows some awareness of relevant theoretical and/or factual issues but demonstrates limited ability to develop these; shows some evidence of planning and demonstrates some knowledge of the literature, but also may include material or arguments which are irrelevant or unrelated to the assignment or argument; shows, at various points if not throughout the entire text, examples of a focused train of thought; contains some structural problems (jumping around from one thought to the next, without clear transitions); includes some irrelevant examples or references to sources, and may offer serious misinterpretations of sources; contains several spelling and grammatical errors, though the writing is still comprehensible; does not cite sources correctly.

A **D (60-69)** or **F (59 and below)** paper does not fulfill the requirements of the assignment, and shows a serious lack of effort to complete the assignment; fails to answer the question or develop an argument; fails to demonstrate knowledge of the key issues; contains clear conceptual or factual errors or misunderstandings; is poorly organized and/or poorly written; does not adequately organize material together and lacks coherence; does not use evidence and examples to support claims (or these are used inappropriately and/or ineffectively); contains serious problems in sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, and spelling to the point of interfering with the understanding of the prose; contains serious signs of plagiarism (see below).

### **Important Information and Policies:**

#### *Disability*

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both me and the Disability Resource Center, Building 124, Room 119, at (805) 756-1395, as early as possible in the term.

#### *Mental Health*

A recent American College Health Survey found stress, sleep problems, anxiety, depression, interpersonal concerns, deaths of loved ones, and alcohol use to be among the top ten health impediments to academic performance. Students experiencing personal problems or situational crises are encouraged to contact Counseling Services at (805) 756-2511 for assistance, support, and advocacy. The service is free and confidential.

#### *Academic Integrity*

I, and Cal Poly, will not tolerate academic cheating or plagiarism in any form. Plagiarism involves using the exact words and/or the ideas as well as paraphrased passages of other writers (published or not, from texts or the internet) and claiming them as your own without citation. Such an act is not plagiarism if it is ascertained that the ideas were arrived at through independent reasoning or logic or where the thought or idea is common knowledge. Acknowledgement of an original author or source must be made through appropriate references, i.e. quotation marks, footnotes, or commentary.

Academic cheating involves using the work of another student and claiming it as your own, or having someone else produce work that is then presented as your own. The History Department also considers submission of a work completed for another class either in a previous or concurrent term as academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty is addressed both as an academic issue and as a disciplinary incident under the CSU Standards for Student Conduct. Cases of class cheating or plagiarism will be handled under established procedures that include written notice to the student of the incident and the consequent grade.

### *Classroom Climate*

I am firmly committed to diversity, equality, and inclusivity in all areas of campus life, and that begins in my classroom.

All students in this class are encouraged to speak up and participate actively and regularly in class discussions, and so we are all mutually responsible for creating an environment in which everyone feels safe and welcome. This class represents a diversity of complex and intersecting identities, individual beliefs, backgrounds, and experiences, and every student here must show respect for every other member of this class. My goal is to promote a learning environment that is socially just, equitable, respectful, and inclusive, and an environment that enables every student to have an enriching and fulfilling experience. Each of you should feel that your opinions, perspectives, experiences, and individual differences are respected and valued.

This course is meant to challenge you to think critically, to learn to develop your ideas as arguments, and to support your arguments logically rather than emotionally. Students must be open to and respect the opinions and ideas of their peers. While the material we read or the course of classroom discussion may sometimes challenge your beliefs or perspectives, realize that the purpose is not to change them. You do not have to agree with everything you hear, but you must be prepared to explore new ideas and to engage in discussions and debates about all subjects in an open and constructive environment. This classroom is a sacred space in which any topic related to the course may be discussed freely and intelligently. We have a responsibility not to be offensive to each other, or to participate in or condone harassment or discrimination of any kind.

### *Technology*

Cell phones must be switched off and out of sight for the duration of class. Students who use their phones to make calls, text message, or surf the web during class will be asked to leave.

Laptops, tablets, and similar devices are permitted for note-taking purposes only. All wireless, sound, and audio components must be turned off. Students who use laptops to e-mail, instant message, or surf the web will be asked to leave.

The audio recording of lectures through any means (including digital recorders of any type) without my prior written consent is prohibited.

### **Weekly Topics and Reading Schedule (read texts in the order listed below):**

#### ***Week 1:***

##### **Tuesday, April 2: Why Urban History?**

##### **Thursday, April 4: What is a City?**

- Mumford, “What is a City?,” in *The City Reader*
- Wirth, “Urbanism as a Way of Life,” in *The City Reader*
- Amin and Thrift, *Cities: Reimagining the Urban*
- King, “Boundaries, Networks, and Cities: Playing and Replaying Diasporas and Histories,” in *Urban Imaginaries*

#### ***Week 2:***

##### **Tuesday, April 9: Modernity and Modernist City Planning**

- Richard Dennis, *Cities in Modernity*
- James Scott, *Seeing Like a State*

##### **Thursday, April 11: Colonial Urbanism**

- Anthony King, *Urbanism, Colonialism, and the World Economy*
- Gwendolyn Wright, *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism*

Short essay 1: Examining their diagrams and drawings for the ideal “city of tomorrow,” compare and contrast what you interpret to be the planning perspectives and principles of Ebenezer Howard (and his Garden City) and Le Corbusier (and his Radiant City).

#### ***Week 3:***

##### **Tuesday, April 16: Cities and the Environment**

- TBD

##### **Thursday, April 18: Capital and Class**

- Harvey Molotch, “The City as a Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place”



- Mike Davis, “Fortress LA,” in *The City Reader* (This is a shortened version of Davis’s chapter, the full text of which is in his book *City of Quartz*. If you would like to read the full chapter, *City of Quartz* is available as an e-book at the Kennedy Library.)

#### **Week 4:**

##### **Tuesday, April 23: Cities and Citizenship**

- James Holston and Arjun Appadurai, “Introduction,” in *Cities and Citizenship*
- Saskia Sassen, “Whose City is It? Globalization and the Formation of New Claims,” in *Cities and Citizenship*
- Marcello Balbo, “Contemporary Urban Space and the Intercultural City,” in *The Intercultural City*
- Barbara Kelly, *Expanding the American Dream: Building and Rebuilding Levittown*

##### **Thursday, April 25: Socio-spatial Exclusion**

- Ali Madanipour, “Social Exclusion and Space,” in *The City Reader*
- Teresa Caldeira, “Fortified Enclaves: The New Urban Segregation,” in *Cities and Citizenship*
- Farah Al-Nakib, “Revisiting *Hadar* and *Badu* in Kuwait: Citizenship, Housing, and the Construction of a Dichotomy”

Short essay 2: Analyze the film *Crisis in Levittown* as a primary source in relation to the readings on citizenship, belonging, and notions of the American Dream.

#### **Week 5:**

##### **Tuesday, April 30: Race and “Color Lines”**

- Carl Nightingale, “Before Race Mattered: Geographies of the Color Line in Early Colonial Madras and New York”
- St. Clare Drake and Horace Cayton, *Black Metropolis*
- [The Pruitt-Igoe Myth](#) film (2011)

##### **Thursday, May 2: The Immigrant City**

- Louis Wirth, “The Ghetto” (written in 1927)
- David Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness*

Choice between:

- Andrew Gardner, *City of Strangers*
- Jessica Wilczak, “‘Clean, Safe and Orderly’: Migrants, Race, and City Image in Global Guangzhou”
- Neil MacMaster, *Colonial Migrants and Racism: Algerians in France, 1900-62*

#### **Week 6:**

##### **Tuesday, May 7: The Gendered City**

- Carolyn Strange, *Toronto’s Girl Problem: The Perils and Pleasures of the City, 1880-1930*

- Amy Mills, “Gender and *Mahalle* (Neighborhood) Space in Istanbul”
- Michael Sibalís, “Urban Space and Homosexuality”

#### **Thursday, May 9: Sex in the City**

- Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York*
- Lillian Robinson, “Sex in the City: Prostitution in the Age of Global Migrations”
- George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World 1890-1940*

Short essay 3: Reflect on your own personal experiences or observations in urban space in relation to your own or other people’s race/ethnicity, gender, or sexuality, with analysis from the previous weeks’ readings.

#### **Week 7:**

#### **Tuesday, May 14: Violence and Crime**

- Khalil Gibran Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*
- Diane Davis, “Zero-Tolerance Policing, Stealth Real Estate Development, and the Transformation of Public Space: Evidence from Mexico City”

#### **Thursday, May 16: Urban Subversions**

- Oli Mould, *Urban Subversion and the Creative City*
- Pascal Menoret, *Joyriding in Riyadh*

#### **Week 8:**

#### **Tuesday, May 21: Rights to the City**

- Andy Merrifield, *The Politics of the Encounter*

Choice between:

- J. Samuel Walker, *Most of 14<sup>th</sup> Street Is Gone: The Washington, DC Riots of 1968*
- Marcelo Lopes De Souza and Barbara Lipietz, “The ‘Arab Spring’ and the City”; Derek Gregory, “Tahrir: Politics, Publics and Performances of Space”; Nezar Alsayyad, “The Virtual Square: Urban Space, Media, and the Egyptian Uprising”

#### **Thursday, May 23: The Politics of Gentrification**

- Michael Sorkin, “Introduction: Variations on a Theme Park,” in *Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space*
- Derek Hyra, *Race, Class, and Politics in the Cappuccino City*
- Jake Cummings, “Confronting Favela Chic: The Gentrification of Informal Settlements in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil,” in *Global Gentrifications*

Short essay 4: Analyze photos of Washington, DC’s 14<sup>th</sup> Street in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, after the 1968 riots, and today, and reflect on the question of the right to the city in relation to the week’s readings.

**Week 9:**

**Tuesday, May 28: NO CLASS**

**Thursday, May 30: How Cities Remember (and Forget)**

- Christine Boyer, *The City of Collective Memory*
- Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*

**Week 10:**

**Tuesday, June 4: Monuments, Memorials, and Museums**

- Robert Aldrich, “Commemorating Colonialism in a Post-Colonial World”

Choice between:

- Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America*
- James E. Young, *At Memory's Edge: After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture*
- Marita Sturken, “The Objects that Lived: The 9/11 Museum and Material Transformation”

**Thursday, June 6: Diversity and Inclusivity in the Modern City**

- Derek Hyra, *Race, Class, and Politics in the Cappuccino City*
- Bart van Leeuwen, “Dealing with Urban Diversity: Promises and Challenges of City life for Intercultural Citizenship”