

Lecture: MW 10:00 AM – 10:50 AM, 120 Architecture Building
Lab: F 10:00 AM – 10:50 AM, 328 Armory

Instructor: Professor Sean Kennedy
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Course Overview

It is futile to plan a city's appearance, or speculate on how to endow it with a pleasing appearance of order, without knowing what sort of innate, functioning order it has. To seek for the look of things as a primary purpose or the main drama is apt to make nothing but trouble. —Jane Jacobs

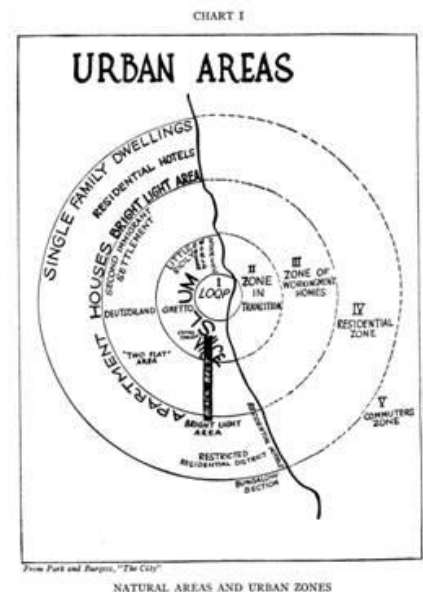
What is a city? From a bird's-eye view, you might see a collection of buildings, roads, pipes, and wires, and perhaps some green space. But drill in closer, and you start to see *people* – living, conducting business, and playing. Groups of people gathering together, but also other groups remaining distinctly separate. Planning shapes and is shaped by the social order present in cities. As future professionals working in these places, it is crucial to understand how they are formed, operate and how people living in them are affected by plans and policies.

Objectives

This course will stimulate your thinking about complex urban and regional systems and raise awareness about planning for equitable urban environments. The course is designed to:

- discuss the process, forces, and factors of urbanization
- introduce social science theories and models of urban and regional structure
- review issues and topics related to contemporary urban life
- engage students in social science research on a city or a region
- develop students' research design skills
- provide students with experience in using public data and computer software

By the end of this class, you should be able to intelligently describe urban processes and possess basic skills in Excel, ArcGIS, qualitative observation, and other research tools.



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Course at a glance

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment due
1	23-Aug	Course introduction; Introduction to cities	
	25-Aug	Understanding “place” and “space,” part 1	
	27-Aug	Lab 1: Understanding cities through music	
2	30-Aug	Understanding “place” and “space,” part 2	
	1-Sep	Studying cities: Research methods overview	
	3-Sep	Lab 2: Mental mapping exercise	Lab 1 write-up
3	6-Sep	NO CLASS: Labor Day	
	8-Sep	Studying cities: Qualitative approaches	
	10-Sep	Lab activity: Observation of urban culture session	Lab 2 write-up
4	13-Sep	Studying cities: Quantitative approaches	
	15-Sep	Studying cities: Spatial approaches	
	17-Sep	Lab 3: Data scavenger hunt	Urban observation
5	20-Sep	The origins of cities	
	22-Sep	NO CLASS: Spurlock Museum tour	
	24-Sep	Lab 4: Getting started with data	Lab 3 write-up
6	27-Sep	Urban theory	
	29-Sep	Cities in the global economy	
	1-Oct	Lab 5: Census geography exercise	Spurlock Reflection
7	4-Oct	Urban spatial structures	
	6-Oct	Metropolitan and demographic growth	
	8-Oct	Lab 6: Location theory exercise	Labs 4 & 5 write-up
8	11-Oct	Suburban development, Part 1	
	13-Oct	Suburban development, Part 2	
	15-Oct	Lab 7: Population mapping	Lab 6 write-up
9	18-Oct	Midterm exam	
	20-Oct	Urban inequality: Immigration, diversity, power	
	22-Oct	Lab 8: Mapping food deserts	Lab 7 write-up
10	25-Oct	Urban inequality: Housing policy and segregation	
	27-Oct	NO CLASS: iSEE Congress	
	29-Oct	Lab 9: Mapping income and racial segregation	Lab 8 write-up
11	1-Nov	Environmental justice: Siting	
	3-Nov	Environmental justice: Transportation equity	Conference reflection paper
	5-Nov	Lab 10: Mapping vulnerability	Lab 9 write-up
12	8-Nov	Sustainable urban development, part 1	
	10-Nov	Sustainable urban development, part 2	
	12-Nov	Lab activity: Final project work session	Hometown analysis; Lab 10
13	15-Nov	Urban politics	
	17-Nov	Urban finance and political power	
	19-Nov	Lab activity: Final project work session	
22-26 Nov Thanksgiving Break			
14	29-Nov	Contemporary planning issues	
	1-Dec	The future of the city	
	3-Dec	Lab activity: Assignment 3 work session	
15	6-Dec	Final presentations	
	8-Dec	Final presentations	Assignment 3 (Dec 10)
	15-Dec	Final exam, TBD	

Course Requirements

Course structure

This class is organized in a lecture/discussion and lab format. Mondays and Wednesdays will involve lectures on the topic of the week, group discussions, and class presentations. We will dedicate Fridays to computer lab exercises and project work time. Occasional short pop quizzes on the reading will be given at the beginning of class that will count toward class participation.

Evaluation

Grades will be weighted as follows:

<i>Assignments</i>	45%	
Conference reflection paper		5%
Urban observation		10%
Hometown analysis		15%
Final project		15%
<i>Exams</i>	20%	
Midterm		10%
Final		10%
Current events presentation	5%	
Lab exercises (10)	20%	
Participation/attendance	10%	

Percentages will be transformed to letter grades using the following scale:

A: 94.0 or higher	C+: 77.0-79.9	D+: 67.0-69.9
A-: 90.0-93.9	C: 74.0-76.9	D: 64.0-66.9
B+: 87.0-89.9	C-: 70.0-73.9	D-: 60.0-63.9
B: 84.0-86.9		F: Less than 60.0
B-: 80.0-83.9		

The general grading rubric is as follows:

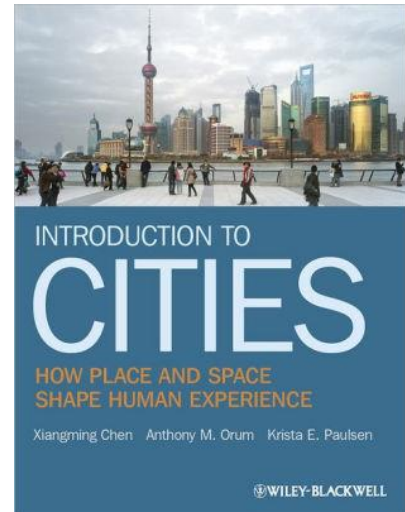
- An “A” assignment demonstrates original thought and synthesis of ideas and sophisticated, cogent analysis. It is clearly written and presented. Exemplary work.
- A “B” assignment includes above-average analysis with appropriate evidence to support ideas. It is clearly written and presented. Above average, competent work.
- A “C” assignment shows a basic level of understanding, with analysis limited to obvious arguments. Writing is competent. Developing but adequate work.
- A “D” assignment misunderstands or misrepresents the material or is so poorly written that it obscures the analysis. Beginning and inadequate work.

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Due dates and times will be provided with each assignment. Anything turned in late will lose 10 points (i.e., one full letter grade) per day. Note that you can't make up a quiz or the current events presentation—whether you're absent or just running late.

Textbook and Readings

One textbook is required: *Introduction to Cities: How Place and Space Shape Human Experience*, by Xiangming Chen, Anthony M. Orum, and Krista E. Paulsen (2013, Wiley-Blackwell). You can buy it from the Illini Union Bookstore or online retailers. It is also on reserve at the Funk ACES Library. Be aware that there is a second edition of the book. You may choose to purchase it, but chapter numbers in the syllabus refer to the first edition. We will post other required readings on the course Canvas page, and we may add additional readings from time to time. Note that we expect you will have completed the entire week's readings for Monday's class session.



Participation and attendance

Class participation, and therefore attendance, is mandatory at all sessions. However, we understand that life happens, and you'll occasionally need to miss a class because of an emergency, illness, religious observances, or another need. There is no need to notify us in advance, but **more than three absences will lower your participation grades**. But do notify the instructors in advance if you will have a prolonged absence for a legitimate reason. Whatever the reason for your absence, you are responsible for acquiring class materials when you do not attend, and assignments are still due on the date posted.

Aside from sharing thoughts and answering questions in class, or actively participating in group discussions, attending office hours is one way to improve your participation grade. Office hours are a place to come if you need help with the coursework or discuss a problem and a chance for us to get to know each other and learn about our mutual academic and professional interests.

Extra credit opportunity

Students may submit short reflection essays for extra credit. Essays should be about 250 words long and offer a critical perspective on the current week's readings. Successful essays will not be summaries; they will engage with the text by asking reflective questions, connecting them with other readings, or drawing on your personal experience. Each essay will add up to one percentage point on top of your final grade. You may submit up to five essays for credit over the semester (but only one per week).

Course policies

COVID-19 expectations and safety behavior: Following University policy, all students are required to engage in appropriate behavior to protect the health and safety of the community. Students are also required to follow the campus COVID-19 protocols.

Students who feel ill must not come to class. Students who test positive for COVID-19 or have had an exposure that requires testing and/or quarantine must not attend class. The University will provide information to the instructor, in a manner that complies with privacy laws, about students in these latter categories. These students are judged to have excused absences for the class period and should contact the instructor via email about making up the work.

Students who fail to abide by these rules will first be asked to comply; if they refuse, they will be required to leave the classroom immediately. If a student is asked to leave the classroom, the non-compliant student will be judged to have an unexcused absence and reported to the Office for Student Conflict Resolution for disciplinary action. Accumulation of non-compliance complaints against a student may result in dismissal from the University.

Face coverings

All students, faculty, staff, and visitors are required to wear face coverings in classrooms and university spaces. This is in accordance with CDC guidance and University policy and expected in this class. Please refer to the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's COVID-19 website for [further information on face coverings](#).

Building access

In order to implement COVID-19-related guidelines and policies affecting university operations, instructional faculty members may ask students in the classroom to show their Building Access Status in the Safer Illinois app or the Boarding Pass. Staff members may ask students in university offices to show their Building Access Status in the Safer Illinois app or the Boarding Pass. If the Building Access Status says "Granted," that means the individual is compliant with the university's COVID-19 policies—either with a university-approved COVID-19 vaccine or with the on-campus COVID-19 testing program for unvaccinated students.

Students are required to show only the Building Access Screen, which shows compliance without specifying whether it was through COVID-19 vaccination or regular on-campus testing. To protect personal health information, this screen does not say if a person is vaccinated or not. Students are not required to show anyone the screen that displays their vaccination status. No university official, including faculty members, may ask students why they are not vaccinated or any other questions seeking personal health information.

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Respect, civility, and inclusivity

We bring our own life experiences to the university, which means that we may have quite different perspectives about the issues we will discuss in this class. Any thoughtful viewpoints as they relate to the course material are welcome. I ask that you be mindful of our differences as you respectfully engage with your classmates. Skills in empathetic dialogue will serve you well as a professional planner, as well as a human being more generally.

By enrolling in a class offered by the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, students agree to be responsible for maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect in all DURP activities, including lectures, discussions, labs, projects, and extracurricular programs. See [Student Code, Article 1-Student Rights and Responsibilities, Part 1. Student Rights, §1-102.](#)

Academic accommodations

To obtain disability-related adjustments and auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact Professor Barajas and the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible. To contact DRES, you may visit 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, call 217-333-4603, email disability@illinois.edu, or go to the [DRES website](#).

Please also schedule a private meeting with the instructor or TA to discuss your needs and requirements. We will try to meet all accommodations once you self-identify. Please note accommodations are not retroactive to the beginning of the semester but begin the day you contact your professor with a current letter of accommodation from DRES.

Academic integrity

Don't cheat, and don't plagiarize. Any work you turn in with your name is presumed to be your own. If it is not, and you do not attribute the work to its source, it is grounds for sanctions that range from a written warning to course failure to dismissal or suspension. Refer to the [University of Illinois Student Code, Part 4](#), for specific guidelines.

Laptops, tablets, and cell phones

There is documented scientific evidence that (1) people are incapable of effectively multitasking, (2) they get distracted easily, and (3) writing notes longhand is better for memory retention than typing. That means that all else being equal, you are likely to perform better in this class if you stow away your laptop and pull out your paper notebook and pen to take notes. But I recognize that some people have organized their lives digitally and prefer to use a laptop, while others may require one because of a disability. So, feel free to use your laptop or tablet for notetaking purposes or when otherwise instructed. As a matter of respect for the instructors and your classmates, disable your WIFI, install website blocking software, or provide yourself consistent positive reinforcement to avoid using the internet during class. We will ask you to put away your digital devices if we find your technology use distracting. Also, please turn off your phone ringers and keep your phones put away.

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University resources

Support resources and supporting fellow students in distress:

As members of the Illinois community, we each have a responsibility to express care and concern for one another. Students sometimes face challenges that can impact academic performance (examples include mental health concerns, food insecurity, homelessness, personal emergencies). Should you find that you or a fellow student are managing such a challenge and that it is interfering with your coursework, you are encouraged to contact the professor or the [Student Assistance Center \(SAC\)](#) in the Office of the Dean of Students for support and referrals to campus and/or community resources. The SAC has a Dean on Duty available to see students who walk in, call, or email the office during business hours. For mental health emergencies, you can call 911 or walk into the Counseling Center. No appointment is needed.

The University [Mental Health Resources](#) website can help you decide what kind of assistance you might need and how to get connected to services for **mental health, wellness, access, and accommodation**. The resources on this website reflect many different approaches, ranging from personal counseling to forming groups to address issues in your school or work environment.

Emergency information

Visit <http://police.illinois.edu/safe> for guidance on how to cope with emergencies on campus. Take some time to note where the nearest classroom exits are and sign up for emergency notifications at <http://emergency.illinois.edu>.

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Course reading list and schedule

Note: This reading list and schedule is subject to revision

Week 1, Aug 23–27: Introduction to cities and understanding “place” and “space.”

Readings:

1. Chapter 1, *Introduction to Cities (ITC)*
2. Beck, Julie. 2011. “The Psychology of Home: Why Where You Live Means So Much.” *The Atlantic* (Dec 30). <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2011/12/the-psychology-of-home-why-where-you-live-means-so-much/249800/>

Assignments:

1. None
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Week 2, Aug 30–Sep 3: Understanding “place” and “space” / Research methods overview

Readings:

1. Cresswell, Tim. 2004. “Defining Place.” In *Place: A Short Introduction*. Wiley-Blackwell.
2. Cresswell, “The Genealogy of Place,” in *Place*.

Assignments:

1. Lab 1 due Sep 3
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Week 3, Sep 8–10: Studying cities I: Qualitative approaches (No class Sep 6)

Readings:

1. Chapter 4, *ITC*
2. Fleming, Ronald Lee. 1990. “Questions to Ask a Space.” *Places* 6 (4): 12-13.

Assignments:

1. Urban Observation assignment handed out Sep 8
 2. Lab 2 due Sep 10
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Week 4, Sep 13–17: Studying cities II: Quantitative and spatial approaches

Readings/listenings/visualizations:

1. Klass, Gary. 2012. “Measuring Political, Social, and Economic Conditions.” In *Just Plain Data Analysis: Finding, Presenting, and Interpreting Social Science Data*. 2nd ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
2. NPR. 2017. “The US Census and Our Sense of Us.” *Code Switch*, podcast (August 2). <https://www.npr.org/templates/transcript/transcript.php?storyId=540671012>

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3. Ferrick, Tom. 2017. "Mapping Progress in 55 Philadelphia Neighborhoods." *Next City* (Aug 21). <https://nextcity.org/features/view/philadelphia-neighborhoods-gentrification-mapping-growth>

Optional reading/resources:

1. US Census Bureau. 2008. *A Compass for Understanding and Using American Community Survey Data: What General Data Users Need to Know*. Washington, DC: US Department of Commerce. [This is a necessary resource for understanding census data.]
2. Professor Geoff Boeing's website: <https://geoffboeing.com/>. Browse the top few posts for examples of spatial analysis visualization.

Assignments:

1. Hometown analysis handed out Sep 15
 2. Urban observation assignment due Sep 17
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Week 5, Sep 20–24: The origins of cities

Reading:

1. Phillips, E. Barbara. 2010. "From Urban Specks to Global Cities." In *City Lights: Urban-Suburban Life in the Global Society*. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

Assignments:

1. Visit Spurlock Museum
 2. Lab 3 due Sep 24
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Week 6, Sep 27–Oct 1: Introduction to urban theory / Cities in the global economy

Readings:

1. Chapter 2, *ITC*
2. Chapter 3, *ITC*
3. Chapter 10, *ITC* (Ch. 11 2nd ed.)
4. Macionis, John J. and Vincent N. Parrillo. 2013. "Cities in the Developing World." In *Cities and Urban Life*, 6th ed., 351–85. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Optional reading:

1. Lane, Kris. 2019. "The First Global City." *Aeon*. <https://aeon.co/essays/potosi-the-mountain-of-silver-that-was-the-first-global-city>

Assignments:

1. Spurlock reflection due Oct. 1
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Week 7, Oct 4–8: Urban spatial structures and growth

Readings:

1. Chapter 5, *ITC*
2. Muller, Peter O. 2017. "Transportation and Urban Form: Stages in the Spatial Evolution of the American Metropolis." In *The Geography of Urban Transportation*, 4th ed., edited by Genevieve Giuliano and Susan Hanson. New York: Guilford Press.

Assignments:

1. Labs 4 & 5 due Oct 8
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Week 8, Oct 11–15: Suburban development

Readings:

1. Chapter 6, *ITC*
2. Chapter 7, *ITC*
3. Jackson, Kenneth T. 1985. "Affordable Homes for the Common Man." In *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Assignments:

1. Lab 6 due Oct 15
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Week 9, Oct 18–22: Urban inequality I: Immigration, diversity, and power

Readings:

1. Chapter 9, *ITC*

Assignments:

1. **Midterm Exam: Oct 18 (in class)**
 2. Lab 7 due Oct 22
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Week 10, Oct 25–29: Urban inequality II: Housing policy and segregation

Readings:

1. Kruse, Kevin M. 2019. "What Does a Traffic Jam in Atlanta Have to Do with Segregation? Quite a Lot." *The New York Times Magazine* (Aug 14).
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/traffic-atlanta-segregation.html>
2. Rothstein, Richard. 2014. *The Making of Ferguson: Public Policies at the Root of its Troubles*. Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute.

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Optional reading:

1. Chapter 8, *ITC*

Assignments:

1. Lab 8 due Oct 29
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Week 11, Nov 1–5: Environmental justice

Readings:

1. Agyeman, Julian. 2005. "Environmental Justice." In *Sustainable Communities and the Challenge of Environmental Justice*. New York: NYU Press.
2. Enking, Molly. 2019. "Not Just Flint: Newark Contends with Lead in Its Water." *CityLab* (Aug 20). <https://www.citylab.com/environment/2019/08/safe-drinking-water-lead-contamination-flint-newark-pittsburgh/596458/>

Optional reading:

1. Golub, Aaron, Richard A. Marcantonio, and Thomas W. Sanchez. 2013. "Race, Space, and Struggles for Mobility: Transportation Impacts on African Americans in Oakland and the East Bay." *Urban Geography* 34 (5): 699-728.
2. "Principles of Environmental Justice." 1996. <https://www.ejnet.org/ej/principles.html>

Assignments:

1. Conference reflection due Nov 3
 2. Lab 9 due Nov 5
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Week 12, Nov 8–12: Sustainable urban development

Readings:

1. Chapter 12, *ITC* (Ch. 13, 2nd ed.)
2. Campbell, Scott. 1996. "Green Cities, Growing Cities, Just Cities?: Urban Planning and the Contradictions of Sustainable Development." *Journal of the American Planning Association* 62 (3): 296-312.
3. Bliss, Laura. 2019. "The NIMBY Principle." *CityLab* (Jul 26). <https://www.citylab.com/equity/2019/07/nimby-vs-yimby-single-family-zoning-laws-california-housing/594373/>

Assignments:

1. Assignment 3 handed out Nov 10
 2. Hometown analysis due Nov 12
 3. Lab 10 due Nov 12
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Week 13, Nov 18–23: Urban governance and finance

Readings:

1. Phillips, “The Skeleton of Power,” in *City Lights*
2. Phillips, “Getting Things Done,” in *City Lights*

Assignments:

1. None

Week of Nov 22: Thanksgiving Break (no class)

Week 14, Nov 29-Dec 3: The now and future of cities

Readings:

1. Chapter 13, *ITC*
 2. Kinniburgh, Colin. 2017. “How to Stop Gentrification.” *New Republic* (August 9). <https://newrepublic.com/article/144260/stop-gentrification>
 3. “The Revolution Will Be Driverless: Autonomous Cars Usher In Big Changes,” *Fresh Air* interview with Samuel I. Schwartz. <https://www.npr.org/2018/12/10/675254096/the-revolution-will-be-driverless-autonomous-cars-usher-in-big-changes>. (Read excerpted transcript)
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Week 15, Dec 6–8: Final assignment

Student presentations. Papers due Dec 10.

Final exam: December 15