

Political Science 102E / USP 107

Class Hours: MW 2-4:50, HSS 1315

Office Hours: MW 12:50-1:50, HSS 1315

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URBAN POLITICS**COURSE OUTLINE**

“This survey course focuses upon the following six topics: the evolution of urban politics since the mid-nineteenth century; the urban fiscal crisis; federal/urban relationships; the ‘new’ ethnic politics; urban power structure and leadership; and selected contemporary policy issues such as downtown redevelopment, poverty, and race” (*UCSD Catalog, 2011-2012*). There is a significant amount of reading to be done for this course. Success in it will require you to be an active learner, reading assigned materials on time so that you can integrate the information given in both course texts and lectures. Active learning means that rather than looking at each separate piece of information as a CNN-style factoid, you will use both analysis and synthesis to find the interconnections binding this course and the larger world together. Those who derive the most benefit from this course will notice that the many bytes of information gathered from daily life will start to fit in with this course rather than seeming like random bits of landscape passing them by on the freeway.

COURSE THEMES

Although Jefferson’s yeoman farmer is the archetype envisioned in American political philosophy, the United States is very much a nation of cities. Despite the U.S.’s urbanization, Americans idealize country life. Suburban dwellers actively seek pastoral settings, endure traffic, and pay premium prices to reside in areas with primarily single-family dwellings. Southern California’s present traffic patterns are the result of an active resistance to the Frostbelt’s ‘big city’ paradigm of high urban density and congestion. This region’s urban spaces demonstrate our collective schizophrenia, as urban planners struggle to deal with the anti-urban values of our increasingly urban American society.

At the same time as the United States is a nation of cities, it is comprised of cities of nations. The urban areas of the U.S. are vast polyglots of multicultural diversity. In Los Angeles, there is probably greater diversity in linguistic, cultural, religious, racial, ethnic, national, social, and economic terms than ever compressed in one place before. L.A. is the second largest concentration of Spanish-speaking people in the world (Mexico City is the first). This hyper-diversity is driving fears of Balkanization—the concern that one country and culture cannot accommodate such heterogeneity. Fear of pluralization is part of America’s Janus-faced perspective on cities—that continues to favor residence in a metropolis, yet yearns for the simple life of Thornton Wilder’s *Our Town*.

This course will look at the U.S.’s experience with the forces of immigration and migration, urbanization and suburbanization, industrialization and post-industrialization. It will also treat the growing internationalization of economics, which runs counter to the greater localization of politics. This is indeed the paradox of our times. At the same time as the barriers to international trade have come down, and greater networks of transportation and communication have been constructed, parochial forces have gained greater salience. In terms of economics, globalization has featured the rise and expansion through mergers of multi- and transnational corporations, as

well as the creation of such institutions as the EU, including within its membership regions chronically at war for many centuries. In terms of politics, such primordial forces as religion, ethnicity and culture now carry increased salience. New conflicts continually arise from the clash of these persistent identities that social scientists once termed obsolete.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your course grade will be based on a take-home midterm, a term paper, participation and a three-part cumulative final examination. The take-home midterm will consist of two essays. I will hand out the essay question one week before these essays are due. Students will also complete an argumentative term paper for the class. The study guide for the final, with both terms and essay questions for which to prepare, will be handed out at least one week prior to the exam.

You are permitted to form groups to assist you in preparing for examinations, but neither your term paper nor your exams should be anyone's work but your own. Be sure to carefully review the UCSD's policies on integrity of scholarship; these are included in the General Catalog and posted on the internet. If a student submits work that closely resembling that of colleagues, or work that uses sources without proper citation, he or she may be faced with charges of academic dishonesty. Please ask for clarification if you do not understand.

There is a participation component to the class, for which I will determine the grade by assessing student attendance and participation in class discussion, as well as by grading written work performed in connection with videos shown in class. I will announce these opportunities for participation credit in lectures as they arise. Although I do make the class available online through podcast (podcast.ucsd.edu), listening to the lectures through podcast may not always guarantee access to these opportunities to earn participation credit when they are announced.

There is **NO** extra credit with which to compensate for poor performance; course grades are calculated as follows:

| COMPONENT | DATE | PORTION OF COURSE |
|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Take-Home Midterm | July 23, 2012 | 25% |
| Term Paper | August 1, 2012 | 30% |
| Participation | TBA | 15% |
| Final Exam | August 3, 2012 | 30% |

The dates for the take-home midterm, term paper and final exam are given in this syllabus, and are not negotiable. If you can't make these deadlines, please don't take the class. Exceptions are invidious and make the course unfair for other students. Late work will be penalized accordingly if the student is unable to provide documentation acceptable to the instructor and UCSD.

Required Texts

1. Dennis Judd and Todd Swanstrom, *City Politics: The Political Economy of Urban America*, 8th ed., Pearson, ISBN 9780205032464 (hereinafter referred to as "J&S").
2. Steven P. Erie, Vladimir Kogan and Scott MacKenzie, *Paradise Plundered: Fiscal Crisis and Governance Failures in San Diego*, Stanford, ISBN 9780804756037.
3. All readings posted on the class's TED site, including the Riordon text, pdfs, etc. Please monitor TED for new readings each week.

SCHEDULE--LECTURES, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

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| July 2 | Broad Overview of Course and Concepts. The City's Place in Human History. The Theory of Regimes: Power in the American City. No readings prior to first day's lecture; please do all readings assigned before the lecture of the day they are listed. |
| July 9 | The Mercantile City in Antebellum United States. J&S, Chapter 1; TED readings. The Limitless City and its Growth Imperative. Erie, Part I; TED readings. |
| July 11 | <i>The Last Hurrah</i> and Bossism: The Death and Life of Machine Politics and Political Machines. J&S, Chapter 2-3; TED readings (Riordon). |
| July 16 | The Political Economy of Reform: Democracy and Development. Urban Governance in California: Other Cities' Experiences. J&S, Chapters 4-5; Erie, part II. |
| July 18 | The Growth Machine: <i>Jaws</i> City Charters and Developmental Reform. Federal Urban Policy from FDR to Obama Erie, part III. |
| July 23 | Cities in a Federal System: the Intergovernmental Perspective. J&S, Chapters 6-7 and 15. "Show Me the Money": The Urban Fiscal Crisis. J&S, Chapters 12-13; TED readings. Take-Home Midterm Due! |
| July 25 | The Politics and Policy of the Emerging Metropolis. J&S, Chapters 8 and 10; TED readings. Secession and 'NIMBYism'—the other side of "community." J&S, Chapter 11; K&J; TED readings. |
| July 30 | Race and Ethnic Politics in U.S. Cities. <i>J&S, Chapters 9 and 14</i> ; TED readings. The American Dilemma: From Protest to Electoral Politics. TED readings. |
| August 1 | Rustbelt Race Relations: Philly, the Big Apple and the Windy City. TED readings. Paths to Political Incorporation in the Golden State: <i>The Fire This Time</i> . TED readings. Term Paper Due! |
| August 3 | FINAL EXAMINATION, Friday, 3:00 – 5:59 PM. There will be a study guide posted on the Ted site prior to the final exam. The final will consist of an objective exam, IDs and an essay. |

United States Popular Culture: the Anti-Urban Ethos—Participation Assignment

Please read the following lyrics, drawn from songs within the soft jazz and country-western genres, respectively:

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| <p><i>Island Life</i> Written by Michael Franks & Rob Mounsey</p> <p>“Keep believing you soon will earn your turn to flash in the pan It’s deceiving ‘cause nothing kills like this metropolis can Everywhere there’s blind ambition Dog eat dog and screw you You do unto others and they do unto you</p> <p>Everyday you fight taxicabs and traffic, permanent frowns Lay awake at night wondering if you hear burglary sounds Think it’s time to make my exit Kiss all this goodbye and Catch the next flight south connecting to my island life</p> <p>Look at me I’m a refugee from the island life I belong where the shade is palm and the mango’s ripe I’ll do all my swinging in some hammock by a turquoise sea For free</p> <p>Guess it must be clear I do not belong in this cityscape I am not from here and I do intend to make my escape Take me back to waterfalls in volcanic canyons Where coconuts and orchids are my sole companions</p> <p>Look at me I’m a refugee from the island life I belong where the shade is palm and the mango’s ripe How inviting it would make always killing time if you Came too</p> <p>Can’t you see we’re just refugees from the island life We belong where the shade is palm and the mango’s ripe We’ll do all our swinging in some hammock by a turquoise sea For free.”</p> | <p><i>Where the Green Grass Grows</i> Written by Jess Leary & Craig Wiseman</p> <p>“Six Lanes, tail lights Red ants marching into the night They disappear to the left and right again</p> <p>Another supper, from the sack A ninety-nine cent heart attack I’ve got a pounding head and an achin’ back My Camels buried in a big straw stack</p> <p>Chorus: I’m gonna live where the green grass grows Watch my corn pop up in rows Every night be tucked in close to you Raise our kids where the good Lord’s blessed Point our rocking chairs towards the west And plan our dreams where the peaceful river flows Where the green grass grows</p> <p>Well I’m from, a map dot A stop sign, on a black top I caught the first bus I could hop from there But all of this glitter is getting dark There’s concrete growing in the city park I don’t know who my neighbors are And there’s bars on the corner And bars on my heart (Repeat chorus twice)”</p> |
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What I would like you to do for this assignment is to come up with popular cultural examples dealing with urban life in the U.S. Please give me an example of a song, a movie, a TV show, a book, a comic book or other piece of popular culture that you understand as a reflection of American urban life. Your brief essay should analyze the piece of culture and explain why you think it fits this assignment’s requirements. The essay should not exceed 2 pages at maximum and should be submitted in class at the midterm examination.