SOCI 222 Urban Sociology
Fall 2016
Monday and Wednesday, 12:35-13:25, Leacock Building room 232
Rooms and times for Friday conference sessions TBD

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Course Description

A growing majority of humans around the world lives in cities. Most of today’s societal shifts in fashion, politics, lifestyle, and labour—to name just a few—materialize first and foremost in cities. In many ways, society itself has become an urban phenomenon. To understand society, therefore, we have to comprehend cities and urban life. Urban sociology is the study of the city’s cultural, social, and material form and content. In this course, we will review and apply sociological approaches that help to understand various kinds of urban phenomena, including neighborhoods, ethnic segregation, gentrification, urban lifestyles, and more.

Learning Goals

After completing this course, you should be able to:

• understand the role of cities in contemporary societies.
• analyze the shape and texture of city space as a function of social, cultural, and political forces.
• interpret how new communities—such as ethnic, gay, or lifestyle communities—and new forms of behavior emerge in cities and how they are connected to urban space.
• examine place-based identities, how those identities emerge, and how they shape the local culture and economy.

Readings

I expect you to read all of the assigned material. Many required readings are included in a course pack, which is available at the McGill Bookstore. Additional required readings will be made available through MyCourses. Occasionally, we will work with the readings in class. In these cases, I will ask you to bring the course pack or other course material.

Assignments and Grading

Your grade will be based on your attendance of conference sessions and three assignments: a midterm exam, a final exam, and a short paper.
A) Midterm exam: 25%

The midterm exam provides you with an opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of course content, including the material covered in the readings, lectures, and in-class exercises. The midterm exam will consist of multiple choice questions and a list of course concepts that you will define or explain in a few sentences. The midterm exam will be held in class on Friday, October 14 (week 6).

B) Short paper: 25%

I will ask you to write a short paper (3 double-spaced pages) that examines the place-based identity of a town or city of your choosing. This assignment builds particularly on the readings, exercises, and lectures from weeks 6 and 7. The paper will be due in class on Monday, October 31 (week 9). Late papers will receive a penalty of one letter grade for each 24-hour period (whether completed or not) that follows the due date.

C) Final exam: 40%

The final exam allows you to demonstrate your mastery of course content. You will write a short essay, applying your knowledge to a particular issue. The exam may also include multiple choice and concept definition questions. Please note that the final exam is cumulative and thus covers the entire course. The exam will be proctored by the university during finals period. Its exact date and place will be communicated during the semester.

D) Participation in conference sessions: 10%. You receive 1 point for each of the ten conference sessions you attend.

Policies

- **Electronic devices**: To create a non-disruptive classroom environment, the use of laptops, tablets, cell phones, and similar electronic devices is not permitted in class, unless explicitly permitted by the instructor or teaching assistant. Please bring pen and paper to take notes in class.
- **Inclusive learning environment**: As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. If you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the Office for Students with Disabilities, 514-398-6009.
- **Academic integrity**: McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information). If you are caught engaging in fraudulent activity, you may fail the assignment in question or the entire course, and I may report you to the Dean of Students.
- **Language**: In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. Conformément à la Charte des droits de l’étudiant de l’Université McGill, chaque
étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté.

- **Attendance:** Aside from Friday conference session, I will not take attendance. It is up to you to decide whether you want to come to class or not. However, please note that course assignments will test not only whether you have done the readings, but will also include material covered only in course lectures and in-course exercises. Neither the teaching assistant nor me will make this material available to you through alternative channels. If you attend class, please ensure that you arrive in time and that you do not have to leave early in order to avoid disrupting class.

- **Make-up policy:** The midterm exam is scheduled for 12:35pm on Friday, October 14. If you know you will miss that day, do not take this course. Exceptions can be made only if you provide a valid medical notice or evidence of a family emergency that reasonably demonstrates your inability to complete the exam. If you have to miss the final exam, you must contact the university (see [http://www.mcgill.ca/students/exams/dates/supdefer](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/exams/dates/supdefer)).

**Course Communication**

- You have to regularly check your email and read course-related email communication.
- Before emailing me or the teaching assistant, please consult the syllabus for relevant information. If the answer to your question is in the syllabus, we reserve the right to ignore your email.
- All of your emails’ subject lines must contain: SOCI222.

**Conferences**

On most Fridays, the teaching assistant will hold conference sessions that include exercises and provide opportunities for discussing and reviewing course content. You will have the opportunity to sign up for one of two conference sessions on a first-come, first-serve basis. Conferences will be held as noted in the schedule.

**Schedule**

Week 0. Introduction. **Friday session only** (September 2nd).

Week 1. Introduction. **Wednesday session only** (September 7th).

Week 2. The Chicago School (1): Urban Ecology. **Conference sessions begin this Friday.**


Week 5. Ethnic Enclaves and Segregation. Conference sessions on Friday.

Week 6. Place (1): Place identity. **No class on Monday** (Thanksgiving). The **midterm exam** will be held during the **Friday** conference session.


Week 7. Place (2): Place stratification. Conference sessions on Friday.


Week 8. Order, disorder, and regulation. Conference sessions on Friday.


Week 9. Individuals, groups, communities (1). **No conference sessions** this week.


Week 10. Individuals, groups, communities (2). Conference sessions on Friday.

Week 11. Individuals, groups, communities (3). Conference sessions on Friday.


Week 12: Gender in the city. Conference sessions on Friday.


Week 13: Urban politics. Conference sessions on Friday.


Week 14: Monday session only.

- No new readings.
- The final exam will be scheduled and proctored by the university during exam period (December 7-December 20).