

Cities of the 21st Century Seminar
The Political Economy of Urban Sustainability
Geography 478-01 | Environmental Studies 478-01
Macalester College

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T/R: 3 – 4:30 pm
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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 1-3 pm, Thursdays 9:30 – 11 am, and by appointment

Course description

The purpose of this course is to understand practices and concepts that constitute the movement for sustainable cities and investigate the ways in which urban sustainability initiatives are generated and how they vary geographically. The course adopts a political economy perspective to trace the complex interactions of institutions, politics, and economic systems that shape initiatives for more sustainable cities. Students will work in the first part of the course to enhance their understanding of core concepts and best practices that constitute the professional field of sustainable urban development and assemble a framework for analyzing the ways in which sustainability initiatives come to fruition and approach the idea of sustainability in a particular way. Students will conduct a semester-long senior capstone research project that investigates a particular urban sustainability initiative in the world by tracing the political economy of its creation and considering its impact on society, economy, and environment.

Learning goals

Satisfactory work in this seminar will help you develop abilities in areas that will help you work towards excellence in your life after college, whatever vocation you choose.

- Critical thinking – routine activities in this class, including discussion, application of theory, and writing will help you to enhance your analytical reasoning skills.
- Theoretical perspectives on sustainable urban development – theoretical readings in this class provide analytical frameworks to understand how sustainability interests shape and are shaped by urban development agendas. These perspectives will provide you with multiple vantage points from which to examine the evolving field of urban sustainability.
- Project management – successful research demands careful planning and organization as well as thoughtful implementation and reflection. Your capstone project will help you hone your organization skills as you manage the complex task of writing a major research paper.
- Writing and oral presentation – You will hone your skills in written communication as part of preparing your research paper. Furthermore, you will develop your oral presentation abilities through sharing your research in a public presentation.

Seminar format and capstone expectations

Cities of the 21st Century will follow the format of a research seminar. As such, learning from each other is a high priority, which you will do through discussions, workshops, and sharing your independent research. Furthermore, I expect that you will take charge of your own learning outside of our class meetings through independent research for your capstone paper. This is not meant to be an isolating experience, however. Talk to your fellow classmates about successes and complications, they will have helpful insights and suggestions. And, of course, I invite—and expect—you to meet with me and discuss your research.

This class is also designed to provide a capstone experience for Geography majors. The assignments in this course are intended to create a culminating experience in which you draw on what you have learned over the past semesters. I expect your work in this class to represent your best research, best writing, and best ability to communicate your ideas. As part of the capstone experience, you are required to make a public presentation.

This is also a reading-intensive class. I have chosen readings to reflect divergent viewpoints on particular subjects. It is thus important that you read all of the assigned readings for a given day in order to ascertain the full breadth of a topic. Furthermore, it is imperative that you complete all of the assigned readings so that you can most effectively participate in class discussions.

Readings

Required readings include websites, articles, and book chapters are available through the course Moodle site.

A note about our schedule

We will take a field trip to meet with a variety of practitioners who are working towards urban sustainability in the Twin Cities. This trip will take place from 11:45 am – 4:30 pm on Thursday **October 4th**. Lunch will be provided. Note this date in your calendar and make arrangements to attend.

Policies

Cell phones: Cell phone use is not allowed in the classroom. Please silence your phones at the start of class. Should you need to answer a phone call, quietly step out of the classroom. Texting is not allowed either as this is both disruptive and disrespectful to other students and the instructor.

Academic honesty. I expect the work you do in this course will be your own. Furthermore, take care to properly cite any and all of the work on which you draw. Instances of plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Plagiarism and cheating will result in a failing grade for the class. Furthermore, I will report such instances to the Dean, which may result in suspension or even dismissal from the college.

Being there. The success of the seminar depends upon how much we can learn from each other. The interactive nature of our meetings therefore requires that you come to class prepared. Plan your schedule so that you can arrive and depart on time.

Changes. As the semester unfolds, there may be reason to make changes to the course. In the event of a change to readings, topics, or the schedule, I will announce the changes in class and over email. It is your responsibility to keep up with any changes.

Communication. Do not hesitate to let me know if your peers or I can do anything to help improve the learning environment in our class. I encourage you to talk to me about any changes you would like to see in the course. You are welcome to meet with me before and after class, visit me in my office, or contact me by email.

Completion. All assignments must be completed. Failure to complete the assignments will result in a NC grade.

Course information. A fair amount of course information will be disseminated via email. Check your Macalester email account regularly.

Deadlines. Deadlines for assignments are firm. Penalties for missed deadlines are noted in the assignment descriptions below. Note: in a couple of cases, assignments will not be accepted past their deadlines. If you have obligations that conflict with this class' scheduled assignments, you must see me no later than Friday, September 14th so that we can discuss appropriate accommodations.

Disabilities. If you have a documented disability or any other problem that you think may affect your ability to perform well in this course please see me as soon as possible so that we can discuss appropriate accommodations.

Input. I will be happy to work with you to tailor the class to your interests provided that it will work with the subject of the seminar. I invite your input on readings, assignments and access to news sources that will enrich our discussions.

No extra credit. The number of assignments on which grades in this course are based is non-negotiable.

Respect for learning. Respect for your peers and professor are absolutely essential to create and sustain a supportive learning environment free of disruptions. As we engage in critical discussion and debate, keep your critiques focused on ideas (and not the person voicing the idea). Our goal is to create a positive classroom environment in which you and your classmates feel comfortable having bold conversations and taking risks in the learning process. Examples of behaviors that can be disruptive include chatting and whispering during class, the use of phones, interrupting others, preparing to leave before class is over, and consistently arriving late to class. Please keep these disruptions to a minimum. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom may result in a request to leave the class and/or a referral to the Office of Student Affairs.

Do not hesitate to talk with me if you have any questions or concerns regarding this class. Open communication is key to successful learning. The sooner you voice your concerns, the more opportunity I will have to respond.

Assignments (1000 points total)

Capstone paper (400 points total) A 25-30 page research paper. Students will examine the politics and process of implementing a sustainability initiative (or failing to do so). Research will focus on an initiative that has found expression in either a policy or bricks-and-mortar development project that endeavors to create a more sustainable city. The initiative may be located in any metropolitan region in the world.

- The first draft is due November 11th @ 10pm (100 points)
- The second draft, for peer review, is due Nov 27th @ 3 pm
- The final paper is due Dec 17 by 3:30 pm (300 points)
 - Deadlines are firm. Late assignments will be penalized 20 % per calendar day.

Research Proposal (50 points) A 3-4 page essay in which you describe an issue and how you want to approach the research on it for your capstone paper. Your proposal will also include a bibliography of an academic literature you will consult in order to place your approach in a larger research context.

- The proposal is due September 24th @ 10 pm
 - Late proposals will be penalized 20% per calendar day.

Revised Proposal (100 points) an extended (8 - 10 page) essay that elaborates on the directions that the research will head and identifies the relevant concepts, frameworks, theories, debates, and/or literatures with which you will converse in your research. The essay also describes the methodological approach you will use. This assignment thus represents a crucial step in advancing your capstone research. As such, it also contributes directly to your capstone paper.

- The revised proposal is due Oct 19th by 10 pm.
 - Late essays will be penalized 20% per calendar day.

Annotated Bibliography (50 points) Annotations for 10 scholarly sources concerning the literature you will use to frame and examine your research. This assignment thus extends from your research proposal and helps you prepare for subsequent assignments, namely the paper and the discussion leadership.

- The annotated bibliography is due November 1st @ 10 pm
 - Late bibliographies will be penalized 20% per calendar day.

Discussion Leadership (100 points) Students will co-lead a class discussion on a particular topic linked to their capstone research. As discussion leader you are responsible for laying out the main themes and/or debates relevant to the chosen topic, selecting a reading for the class, and organizing discussion around the themes you and the reading present.

- Discussion leadership will take place Nov 6th – 15th. Dates for discussion leadership assigned on Oct 23rd.
 - Unexcused absences from discussion leadership will receive no credit.

Meetings with Professor (50 points total, 25 points each) You are required to schedule two meetings with me. These meetings will serve as tutorials for your research. We will meet for 15 - 20 minutes to review progress and discuss strategies for further work on your research. Schedule the meeting after you have completed the relevant assignments (see below). Furthermore, it is your responsibility to schedule these meetings by the following deadlines:

- First meeting by Oct 5th to discuss research proposal and topic for seminar discussion
- Second meeting by Nov 1st to discuss revised proposal and finalize details for seminar discussion
 - I will award full credit for meetings that reflect an intentional approach to making progress on your capstone project.

Presentation of Research (100 points) You will share your research findings in a 12-minute public presentation at Macalester College, which will be scheduled 3-4:30 pm, on either Dec 4th, 6th, or 11th.

Reflection essays (100 points total, 25 points each) You are required to write four ~500 word essays that offer a synthesis of and reflection on assigned readings for a particular discussion day (see schedule for specific dates). Focus your reflection on claims, arguments, and/or insights presented in one or more of the readings. Your essay should exhibit a line of reflective thought in which you articulate your position on ideas presented in the readings. Your essays must also include at least one question, relevant to the readings, which you would like to ask of your classmates. Thus, these essays should help you prepare for participation in the discussion and shape its direction.

Reading reflection essays are to be submitted online via Moodle by 9 am on the day of the discussion date. This will allow me sufficient lead-time to review the reflections in advance and plan the discussion. Proofread your essays.

- You are required to complete four essays. I will grade the essays in a credit/no credit fashion
 - Late reflection essays will receive no credit.

Review of peer papers (50 points) Review and provide written and oral feedback on the papers of two classmates. You will also receive feedback on your paper from two classmates.

- Written and oral feedback shared in class on Nov 29th.
 - Late reviews will receive no credit.

Your final grade will be based on performance in all parts of the course. Letter grades will be assigned according to the following distribution:

<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory</u>	<u>Failing</u>
A (1000-930)	B+ (899-880)	C+ (799-780)	D+ (699-680)	NC (< 600)
A- (929-900)	B (879-830)	C (779-730)	D (679-630)	
	B- (829-800)	C- (729-700)	D- (629-600)	

List of Assigned Readings

Agyeman, J. (2013). *Introducing Just Sustainabilities: policy, planning, practice*. Zed Books: London.

Barber, B. (2013). TED Talk: Why mayors should rule the world.

https://www.ted.com/talks/benjamin_barber_why_mayors_should_rule_the_world

- Beatley, T. (2014). "Planning for sustainability in European cities: a review of practice in leading cities," in, S. Wheeler and T. Beatley, editors, *The Sustainable Urban Development Reader*, Third Edition. New York: Routledge, pp. 422-431.
- Benson, M., and Craig, R. (2014). The end of sustainability. *Society & Natural Resources* 27(7): 777-782.
- Butters, C. (2012). "A holistic tool for evaluating sustainability," in, Haas, T., editor, *Sustainable Urbanism and Beyond*. Rizzoli: New York, pp. 111-116.
- Butzer, K. (2012). Collapse, environment, and society. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 109(10): 3632-3639.
- de la Cadena. M. (2015). Uncommoning nature. *e-flux* 22 August. <http://supercommunity.e-flux.com/authors/marisol-de-la-cadena/>
- Curran, W. and Hamilton, T. (2017). "A just enough green? Industrial gentrification and competing socio-natures in Greenpoint, Brooklyn," in W. Curran and T. Hamilton, editors, *Just Green Enough: Urban Development and Environmental Gentrification*. Routledge: New York, pp. 32-46.
- Gibson-Graham, J. K. (2013). *Take Back the Economy: An Ethical Guide for Transforming our Communities*. University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis.
- Goldberg, J. (2013). The modern king in the Arab Spring. *The Atlantic* (April) <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/04/monarch-in-the-middle/309270/>
- Iracheta, A. (2014). "Sustainable city: crisis and opportunity in Mexico," in, S. Wheeler and T. Beatley, editors, *The Sustainable Urban Development Reader*, Third Edition. New York: Routledge, pp. 457 – 461.
- Jabareen, Y. (2006). Sustainable urban forms. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 26(1): 38-52.
- Jonas, A., Gibbs, D., and A. White (2011). The New Urban Politics as a Politics of Carbon Control. *Urban Studies* 48(12): 2537 – 2554.
- Kruegar, R., and J. Aygeman, J. (2005). Sustainability schizophrenia or 'actually existing sustainabilities?' *Geoforum* 36: 410 – 417.
- Logan, J. and H. Molotch (1987). *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Mackinnon, D., and Derickson, K. (2012). From resilience to resourcefulness: a critique of resilience policy and activism. *Progress in Human Geography* 37(2): 253-270.
- Maniates, M. (2001). Individualization: plant a tree, buy a bike, save the world? *Global Environmental Politics* 1(3): 31 – 52.

- Marshall, S. (2012). "Sustainable urbanism in evolution," in, Haas, T., editor, *Sustainable Urbanism and Beyond*. Rizzoli: New York, pp. 58-61.
- Mossberger, K. (2009). "Urban regime analysis," in *Theories of Urban Politics, Second Edition*. SAGE Publications Inc., pp. 40-54.
- Moore, S. (2007). *Alternative routes to the sustainable city: Austin, Curitiba, and Frankfurt*. Lexington Book: Lanham, MD.
- Newman, P., Beatley, T., and Boyer, H. (2012). "Resilient cities" in, Haas, T., editor, *Sustainable Urbanism and Beyond*. Rizzoli: New York, pp. 18-21.
- Orwell, G. (1946). *Politics and the English language*. The Complete Works of George Orwell, http://www.george-orwell.org/Politics_and_the_English_Language/0.html, Accessed 24 August 2012.
- Rees, W. (1997). Is 'sustainable city' an oxymoron? *Local Environment* 2(5): 303 – 310.
- Sze, J. and Yeampierre, E. (2017). "Just transition and just green enough: climate justice, economic development, and community resilience," in W. Curran and T. Hamilton, editors, *Just Green Enough: Urban Development and Environmental Gentrification*. Routledge: New York, pp. 61-73.
- Tufte, E. (2003). *The cognitive style of PowerPoint*. Graphics Press: Cheshire, CT.
- United Nations (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development*. New York: United Nations.
http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E
- Yin, R. (2009). *Case Study Research*, Fourth Edition. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Vallance, S., Perkins, H., and Dixon, J. (2011). What is social sustainability? A clarification of concepts. *Geoforum* 42: 342–348.
- Popular Press Sources (for September 27)
- "US Cities, States and Businesses Pledge to Measure Emissions"
<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/11/climate/cities-states-businesses-emissions-climate-pact.html>
- "The most effective individual steps to tackle climate change aren't being discussed"
<https://phys.org/news/2017-07-effective-individual-tackle-climate-discussed.html>
- "How to reduce your carbon footprint"
<https://www.nytimes.com/guides/year-of-living-better/how-to-reduce-your-carbon-footprint>

SCHEDULE of READINGS and ASSIGNMENTS

Topic	Day	Readings	Assignment/Deadlines
<u>Week 1: Cities of the 21st Century</u>			
Introductions	Sept 4	Rees Maniates Barber UN Urban Agenda	
Researching urban sustainability	Sept 6	Butters Newman et al Marshall Sze & Yeampierre	Students meet in small groups to discuss potential research interests and ask questions in order to prepare for writing a proposal
<u>Week 2: Defining sustainability</u>			
Story and sustainability	Sept 11	Moore Ch 1 & 7 Agyeman	Reflection essay 1
Urban Form and Sustainability Social sustainability	Sept 13	Jabareen Vallance et al	Explore three and appraise one of the resources listed on p. 3 of the proposal assignment
<u>Week 3: Urban Sustainability Case Studies</u>			
Austin	Sept 18	Yin Moore Ch 2	Reflection essay 2
Beyond North America	Sept 20	Iracheta Beatley Select case studies	Report on urban sustainability initiative

Topic	Day	Readings	Assignment/Deadlines
<u>Week 4: Beyond Sustainability</u>			
Library visit – Room 206	Sept 25		Proposal due Sept 24 by 10 pm
Thinking sustainability: opportunity, strategy, and mindset	Sept 27	Krueger and Agyeman MacKinnon and Derickson De la Cadena Popular press readings	Reflection essay 3
<u>Week 5: Political Economy of Urban Development</u>			
City as a growth machine	Oct 2	Logan and Molotch Curran and Hamilton	Reflection essay 4
Sustainability Field Trip	Oct 4	Online readings	Deadline for meeting #1
<u>Week 6: Political Economy of Urban Development</u>			
Urban Regimes and New Urban Politics	Oct 9	Mossberger Jonas et al.	
Feminist critiques	Oct 11	Gibson-Graham	
<u>Week 7: Analyzing sustainability in practice</u>			
Urban sustainability in Amman	Oct 16	Goldberg Butzer et al.	
No class	Oct 18		Revised Proposal due Oct 19
<u>Week 8: Framing Sustainability</u>			
Reflection on Frameworks Seminar discussion leadership	Oct 23		
No Class	Oct 25	<i>Fall Break</i>	

Topic	Day	Readings	Assignment/Deadlines
<u>Week 9: Framing Sustainability</u>			
Valuing Sustainability	Oct 30	Benson & Craig	
Essentials of an academic paper	Nov 1	Orwell	Annotated Bibliography due
Writing style and voice			Bring an example of “good writing” to class to discuss Deadline for meeting #2
<u>Week 10: Contemporary Urban Issues</u>			
Student-led seminar discussion I	Nov 6	TBD	Work on your paper
Student-led seminar discussion II	Nov 8	TBD	Work on your paper First Draft due Nov 11 by 10 pm
<u>Week 11: Contemporary Urban Issues</u>			
Student-led seminar discussion III	Nov 13	TBD	Work on your paper
Student-led seminar discussion IV	Nov 15	TBD	Work on your paper
<u>Week 12: Contemporary Urban Issues</u>			
Checking in, updates, troubleshooting & Short tutorial on presentations	Nov 20	Christiansen Tufte	
No Class	Nov 22	<i>Thanksgiving Day Break</i>	
<u>Week 13: Looking ahead</u>			
What to do after Macalester	Nov 27	Meet in Library Harmon Room	Second draft of paper due to reviewers
Peer Review	Nov 29	Read Peer Drafts	Exchange Peer Reviews
<u>Week 14: Writing Workshop</u>			
Presentations – Harmon Room	Dec 4		
Presentations – CC 214	Dec 6		

Topic	Day	Readings	Assignment/Deadlines
Week 15: <u>Presentations</u>			
Presentations – Harmon Room	Dec 11		
Week 16: <u>Finals</u>			
Final paper	Dec 17		Final paper due by 3:30 pm