

# Geography 262-01: Metropolitan Analysis

Fall 2021

*Meets:* M, W, F 2:20 – 3:20 p.m.  
Car 107

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## I. COURSE CONTENT AND GOALS

This course focuses on the foundations of American urban development, from economic development to land use to housing patterns, and examines how and why urban housing markets operate as they do within American metropolitan regions. The course is particularly relevant for students interested in the fields of urban planning and policy.

There are **three major learning goals** for the course. By the end of the course, students should:

- Understand how economic and social processes relate to metropolitan land use
- Be able to apply quantitative methods to analyze metropolitan organization and change, and recognize methodological limitations (this is a Q2 course)
- Be familiar with important data sources used in urban research

In addition, we will engage specifically with our Twin Cities metropolitan area throughout the course, via application of themes and a field study assignment.

The course is organized by seven themes:

1. The Metropolitan Economy: How do we model metropolitan economies? How can we tell when an urban economy is healthy?
2. Land Use and Population Patterns within the Metropolis: How do we identify, describe, and explain geographical patterns of land use and populations within cities? How do we measure racial residential segregation?

3. Geography of Urban Housing Supply: How did the American housing inventory evolve under the influence of economic, social, and transportation constraints? What is the geography of the Twin Cities' housing supply, and why?
4. Urban Housing Demand: What social, demographic, and economic forces support housing demand? Why do Americans like to buy more housing than they need? How do housing submarkets operate in the Twin Cities?
5. Geography of Urban Housing Markets: How did American federal housing policy create racial segregation in cities? How did homeownership become an “engine of American inequality”? How do government policies promote and subsidize suburban development?
6. Suburbanization and Land Use: What are the causes and consequences of suburban growth? Are people really moving back to the urban core now?
7. Policy Debates: What are some current policy responses to metropolitan development? What land use controls are available, and how are they being used?



## II. READING MATERIALS

There is one required text for the course:

Jacobs, Jane. 1984. *Cities and the Wealth of Nations*. Reprint ed. New York: Random House Vintage Books.

A renowned urbanist and author, Jacobs ponders big ideas about metropolitan economies in her writings. Various paperback editions of this classic book exist; any are fine.

All other required readings will be posted on our Moodle site.



## III. STRUCTURE AND EXPECTATIONS

### Class format

This remains a challenging time for teaching and learning and we will all need to demonstrate grace and flexibility in order to be successful. I am committed to being flexible and open to changing our course approach and expectations as we go, and I hope that you will be willing to do the same for me.

Class meetings will consist of lectures, in-class discussions, student presentations, and activities. You are expected to have completed all required reading before coming to class, and be prepared to discuss it. A productive discussion is one in which participants listen and learn from one another, that focuses on understanding an issue and making connections (to other readings, to real life events, etc.), and that advances our collective knowledge of a topic.

Your presence in class matters; attendance is important not only for your learning, but also for building connections with each other. However, I recognize that there will be times when it is not possible for you to attend class, especially given our current public health concerns. If you do not feel well or are exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19, please do not come to class! Resources will be provided to help you make up any absences.

### **Technology guidelines**

We will rely heavily on our Moodle page to manage the course. This is where you will find our daily schedule, readings, assignments, videos, and other information/announcements. You will submit assignments via Moodle dropboxes; this will allow me to provide feedback directly on the digital documents. I will also use the Moodle gradebook feature to post your scores. Please pay attention to any "News Forum" posts, and plan to log into the site regularly.

Email is the most efficient way to contact me. I will strive to answer all email messages as soon as possible (and at most within 24 hours during the week).

Within the classroom, you are welcome to use laptops for academic purposes. Please do not use technology in a way that is disruptive to an academic space.

### **Assessment**

Assessment within the course is based upon your ability to demonstrate knowledge of how economic and social processes relate to metropolitan land use in the U.S., and to apply analytical methods to a selected metropolitan area and interpret the results.

Your grade will be based on the following:

City analysis project #1: Economic health (100 pts)	= 22%
City analysis project #2: Racial segregation (135 pts)	= 30%
Take-home Exam #1: The metro economy (50 pts)	= 11%
Take-home Exam #2: Urban housing markets (65 pts)	= 14%
Field study assignment (in-person or virtual) (40 pts)	= 9%
Group presentation: Urban land use policy (55 pts)	= 12%
Class participation (5 pts)	= 1%

Detailed instructions for each assignment will be provided. For the city analysis projects, you will select a U.S. metropolitan area for which you will obtain data and apply a standard quantitative technique to analyze the economic health (project #1) or racial residential segregation patterns (project #2) of that city. The field study assignment may be completed either in person or virtually (utilizing Google Street View) and may be done with a partner if desired. Class participation includes preparation for and participation in discussions, and contributions to activities like Moodle forums.

Assignments must be turned in by the time indicated on the Moodle dropbox unless prior accommodations have been made; late assignments will be penalized 10% per day.

Grade cut-off percentages are as follows: A = 93-100%; A- = 90-92.9%; B+ = 87-89.9%; B = 83-86.9%; B- = 80-82.9%; C+ = 77-79.9%; C = 73-76.9%; C- = 70-72.9%; D+ = 67-69.9%; D = 63-66.9%; D- = 60-62.9%; NC = <60%.

**Academic resources**

The Macalester Academic Excellence (MAX) Center (<http://www.macalester.edu/max/>), located on the first floor of Kagin Commons, provides numerous academic resources from time management and study strategy workshops to quantitative material and writing assistance.

**Academic accommodations**

I recognize that course design may pose barriers to a student's ability to access or demonstrate mastery of course content. I honor academic accommodations as outlined via Disability Services, and in discussion regarding what is reasonable for this course. Students with long- or short-term disabilities should schedule an appointment through the Disability Services website at <https://www.macalester.edu/disabilityservices/> or by emailing [disabilityservices@macalester.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@macalester.edu).

**Academic honesty**

Academic honesty and integrity are expected at all times. You are responsible for knowing what constitutes plagiarism. If you have questions about Macalester's academic integrity policy, please refer to the *Student Handbook* (<http://www.macalester.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/>).

All sources used in preparing your work must be cited; this includes data sources. APA is the preferred citation style of the Geography Department; see the library's citation guides and resources under the Research Guides menu at <https://libguides.macalester.edu/citation>.

**Health and well-being**

Here at Macalester, you are encouraged to make your well-being a priority throughout this semester and your career here. Staying well is even more complicated now with COVID-19, as well as ongoing systemic racism and other forms of oppression – this complex context requires flexibility, creativity, persistence, and support. Investing time into taking care of yourself will help you engage more fully in your academic experience. Remember that beyond being a student, you are a human being carrying your own experiences, thoughts, emotions, and identities with you. It is important to acknowledge any stressors you may be facing, which can be mental, emotional, physical, financial, etc., and how they can have an academic impact. If you are having difficulties maintaining your well-being, please reach out to one of the resources listed at <http://bit.ly/2zcyuqU>.

In our classroom, we will adhere to the [Mac Stays Safer 2.0 Community Commitment](#).



#### IV. READING LIST

##### Required:

- Banerjee, Neela. 2001. "The Economy's Apples and Oranges." *The New York Times*. May 6.
- Buchta, Jim. 2001. "As Prices Rise, Buyers Lower Sights." *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. July 29.
- Clark, William A. V. 2003. "Monocentric to Policentric: New Urban Forms and Old Paradigms." In Bridge and Watson, eds., *A Companion to the City*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Davis, Mike. 1998. "Beyond *Blade Runner*." In Steven H. Corey and Lisa Krissoff Boehm, eds., *The American Urban Reader: History and Theory*. 2011. New York: Routledge.
- Deane, Daniela. 2002. "For Many Americans, Houses are Crucial to a Sense of Identity." *The Washington Post*. March 20.
- Dear, Michael J. and Steven Flusty. 2002. "The Resistible Rise of the L.A. School." In Dear, ed., *From Chicago to L.A.: Making Sense of Urban Theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Desmond, Matthew. 2017. "How Homeownership Became the Engine of American Inequality." *The New York Times Magazine*. May 9.
- Florida, Richard. 2017. *The New Urban Crisis: How Our Cities are Increasing Inequality, Deepening Segregation, and Failing the Middle Class – and What We Can Do About It*. New York: Basic Books.
- Florida, Richard. 2005. *Cities and the Creative Class*. New York: Routledge.
- Galler, Christopher. 2010. "Counterpoint: Don't End the Mortgage Deduction." *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. November 20.
- Glaeser, Edward. 2011. *Triumph of the City*. New York: The Penguin Press.
- Greenhouse, Linda. 2005. "Justices Uphold Taking Property for Development." *The New York Times*. June 24.
- Hansen, Laura J. 1998. "Housing Market Dynamics in the Greater Twin Cities Area, 1970-1995." In *The Role of Housing Markets, Regulatory Frameworks, and Local Government Finance*. Report CTS-98-01. Minnesota Department of Transportation, Center for Transportation Studies, University of Minnesota, and the Metropolitan Council. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, Center for Transportation Studies.
- Jackson, Kenneth T. 1985. *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press.  
 Ch. 3: "Home, Sweet Home: The House and the Yard"  
 Ch. 11: "Federal Subsidy and the Suburban Dream: How Washington Changed the American Housing Market"  
 Ch. 16: "Retrospect and Prospect"

- Jacobs, Jane. 1984. *Cities and the Wealth of Nations*. Reprint ed. New York: Random House Vintage Books.
- Jacobs, Jane. 1961. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Random House, Inc.  
Ch. 9: "The Need for Small Blocks"
- MacGillis, Alec. 2010. "The Ruse of the Creative Class." *The American Prospect*. January 4.
- Massey, Douglas S. and Nancy A. Denton. 1993. "The Persistence of the Ghetto." In *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Muller, Peter O. 2017. "Transportation and Urban Form: Stages in the Spatial Evolution of the American Metropolis." In Giuliano and Hanson, eds., *The Geography of Urban Transportation*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Guilford Press.
- Platt, Rutherford H. 1999. "Hurricanes, Politics, and Those Ocean Views." *The New York Times*. September 17.
- Rothstein, Richard. 2017. *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*. New York, NY: Liveright Publishing Corporation.
- Rozhon, Tracie. 2000. "Be It Ever Less Humble: American Homes Get Bigger." *The New York Times*. October 22.
- Salkin, Patricia E. 2003. "Smart Growth and the Law." In Lindstrom, Matthew J. and Hugh Bartling, eds. *Suburban Sprawl: Culture, Theory, and Politics*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Southworth, Michael and Eran Ben-Joseph. 2004. "Reconsidering the Cul-de-sac." *Access 24*: 28-33.
- Wieffering, Eric. 2010. "It's Time to Rethink Mortgage Tax Breaks." *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. November 20.
- Yardley, William. 2005. "Eminent Domain Project at Standstill Despite Ruling." *The New York Times*. November 21.
- Zimmerman, Jeffrey. 2008. "From Brew Town to Cool Town: Neoliberalism and the Creative City Development Strategy in Milwaukee." *Cities* 25(4): 230-242.