PLAN 474 / PLAN 674

Social Justice and Planning in the Capitalist City

Winter 2018

Instructor:
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Office hours are on Thursdays, 4:00-5:00pm (or by appointment)
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Class times: Thursdays 6:30pm-9:30pm in in RCH 209 (J.R. Coutts Engineering Lecture Hall)
Prerequisite: Level of at least 3A

Calendar Description: Cities are sites of contradiction, where spectacular developments and tremendous wealth coexist alongside poverty and economic decline. This course will explore the capitalist forces of urbanization that generate urban inequality, and how impacts play out along the lines of race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, and other dimensions of oppression. We will explore the role and history of planning in influencing urban change and urban social justice. Potential themes and topics include: urban renewal and public housing redevelopment, neoliberal urbanism, the contested city, gentrification, radical and equity planning.

Student Evaluation
Participation 15% Throughout the course
Leading Seminar(s) 5% At least once during the term
Critical Reading Responses 30% Due each week by 1pm before class*
Paper Proposal 5% March 01
Final Paper 30% April 05
Paper Presentation 5% March 29

*Graduate students must submit responses for 8 of 10 weeks, undergraduates for 5 of 10 weeks.

Course Description: The objective of this course is to introduce students to the history, theory, and practice of planning for socially just and equitable urban environments. Planning takes place in a given context, and in the contemporary moment in Western liberal democracies of the ‘Global North’, this is the capitalist city. Drawing on political economy theory, the goal of this course is to explore forces of capitalist urbanization, and how this context enables, limits, and shapes efforts to plan for social justice. As such, the course explores (from both theoretical and practical perspectives) topic areas students will encounter in their work, related to housing, racial inequality, transportation, policing and surveillance, and environmental justice.

The course will unfold in three parts. The first part of the course will explore the growth and change in capitalist cities since the mid-20th century, tracing the major shift from the post-war “Fordist-Keynesian” regime of capitalist accumulation, to the post-1970s regime of “flexible accumulation”, associated with the rise of the neoliberal city. In terms of city development, we will focus on the patterns of suburbanization and urban decline which marked the postwar period. During this time, urban inequality, and particularly racial inequality, were hallmarks of the urban landscape, and we will explore how policies (such as urban renewal) generated these inequalities. Transformations in the global economy in the mid-1970s led to dramatic
restructuring, and in cities gentrification was the leading edge of this shift. We explore the emergence of the neoliberal city, and the implications of this for planners and urban socio-spatial inequality. The first part of the course will also introduce key theoretical concepts, including the urban process under capitalism (Harvey, 1985), uneven economic development (Smith, 1984), and theories on urban politics and decision making.

David Harvey notes the the planner “seems doomed to a life of perpetual frustration,” with competing impulses to pursue progressive social goals and to pursue efficiency in a neoliberal context. The second part of the course takes this challenge as it’s starting point, beginning with readings on social justice, the just city, and the contemporary rallying call for a “right to the city” which presently animates both urban activists and progressive urban scholars. The readings also look critically at the planning profession, questioning the profession’s progressive self-image, and its varied history in promoting equitable urban outcomes. We look at equity planning theory, and case studies of practical attempts to promote social equity outcomes in planning practice.

The third part of the course looks into topics and case studies that enrich the theme of the course, exploring examples focused both on pursuing social justice and better understanding the generation of inequality. The topics include community-based planning in a declining city, environmental justice, planning law and social exclusion, creative city policies, and security and policing in the city. These issues are explored through articles that focus on Detroit, New Orleans, New York, Berkeley, Westchester County, Toronto, and elsewhere. While not all of the case studies present a sunny outlook, it is the goal of this course to train students in understanding the realities of social inequality in contemporary society, and the challenges planners face in overcoming them. It is the goal of the course to inspire planning students to pursue transformative social change in their own practice, and an understanding of its dire necessity is a critical step towards this end.

**Course Objectives:** The objective of this course is to introduce students to the history, theory, and practice of planning for equitable urban environments, in a context of capitalist urban development. Learning outcomes for this course include:

- Understand political economic theories of urbanization, and explain how political-economic forces shape patterns of urban development
- Recognize and understand the role of planners and urban planning in producing and reproducing patterns of inequality
- Evaluate plans and policies for their equity-based impacts, and their potential to contribute to negative impacts along the lines of race, class, gender, sexuality, age, and other axes of oppression
- Understand key concepts including social justice, equity, equality, oppression
- Mobilize course concepts in future planning practice to contribute to more equitable planning practices and the production of more socially just urban spaces
- Develop critical reading, analysis, and writing skills; and presentation and facilitation skills

**Learning Modes:** This course is designed primarily as a seminar. A seminar involves learning through deep and thoughtful engagement with assigned readings, and through in-class discussion and debate with classmates. As such, students are expected to arrive to class having carefully read the readings, and must be ready to discuss their thoughts and insights with classmates. In addition, students are encouraged to contribute productively to discussions, and to lead the seminar at least once over the course of the term.

In this course assignments can be submitted via the course’s LEARN site. There is no text book, **readings** will be available or linked to via LEARN. Users can login to LEARN via: [http://learn.uwaterloo.ca/](http://learn.uwaterloo.ca/) use your WatIAM/Quest username and password.
SEQUENCE OF COURSE TOPICS

PART 1: CAPITALIST URBANIZATION

Week 1 (Jan 4th) Introduction

Week 2 (Jan. 14th) The Urban Process and the Postwar City


Strongly Recommended:
- Chapter 1: An introduction to actually existing capitalism, pp. 1-16
- Chapter 2: Capitalist political economy: Smith to Marx to Keynes and beyond, pp 17-46

Week 3 (Jan. 18th) Inequality in the Postwar City: Urban Renewal, Segregation


Optional Readings:

Week 4 (Jan. 25th) The Neoliberal City


Optional Readings:

Week 5 (Feb. 1st) Gentrification


Recommended:
PART 2: SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE CITY

Week 6 (Feb. 8th) Visions for Planning a Just City


Optional Readings:

Week 7 (Feb. 15th) Planning for Social Justice?


Feb. 22nd – No Class – Reading Week

Week 8 (Mar. 1st) – Equity Planning in Practice, *PROPOSALS DUE*

(The first two are short, please read both and consider it one reading).


Optional Readings:

PART 3: TOPICS ON PLANNING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Week 9 (Mar. 8th) Equity Planning in Detroit; Environmental Justice *Guest Lecture: Dr. Brian Doucet*


Optional Readings:


Week 10 (Mar. 15th) Planning, Law, and Exclusion


Week 11 (Mar. 22nd) Creative Cities and Securing the Neoliberal City


Optional:


Week 12 (Mar. 29th) Final Paper Presentations

All students will give presentations (5-7 minutes), schedule to be set by March 15th.
**STUDENT EVALUATION**

**Participation (15%)**
This course will be structured as a seminar and students are expected to participate at a high level. Satisfactory participation skills entail a respectful, critical, and constructive approach to the views expressed by your peers. Come to each class ready to participate – be prepared to discuss aspects of the readings that strengthened or confused your understanding of course themes. While students will take turns facilitating the discussion (see below), the facilitators are not responsible for the discussion alone – all students are responsible for making class a success. The instructor will share tips and advice to prepare you for seminar discussions.

**Leading (or co-leading) a seminar (5%)**
Each student will be required to participate in leading (or co-leading) the seminar discussion at least once during the course of the term. Depending on class size this may be done in groups, graduate students may be asked to participate in leading (or co-leading) 2 seminars. Seminar leaders will provide context about the readings and authors, briefly summarize key points, raise initial discussion questions, and facilitate the conversation. Additional resources, materials, and instruction will be provided to train students in facilitation.

**Critical Reading Responses (30%)**
One of the best ways to understand a reading is by writing about it. Students will be required to submit reading responses over the course of the seminar. These should be 1-2 pages and discuss all of the assigned readings for the week. The responses should include a brief summary and synthesis of key themes, but focus primarily on analysis and your reactions and commentary. Detailed instructions on how to prepare a reading response will be shared in class. Readings responses are due each week, **before class at 1:00pm**. Please submit via LEARN by 1pm on the day of class, giving the instructor time to read them and provide feedback, and hand them back in class. **Reading responses will not be accepted after class has begun.**

- *Graduate* students must submit 8 responses, covering all three assigned readings
- **Undergraduate** students must submit 5 responses, covering at least two assigned readings

**Proposal (5%) – Due March 1st**
Students are asked to submit a proposal outlining the topic of their paper, key literatures, and research questions, by March 1st, 2018. The purpose of this assignment is to give you a head start on the paper-writing process, and to provide students with feedback that will strengthen their paper. Students are encouraged to discuss their paper topic with me in advance. Detailed instructions for a proposal will be circulated in class.

**Final Paper (25%) - Due April 5th**
The major assignment in this course is a final paper. This can take any number of forms, and students are encouraged to use this as an opportunity to explore a topic of their interest and the ways that it relates to themes explored in the course. A detailed handout with paper structure, requirements, and ideas will be circulated in class. The length of the paper will be 7-10 pages for undergraduate students and 15-20 pages for Master’s students.

**Final Paper Presentation (5%) – In class on March 29th**
On the final day of the course, students will give brief presentations about their final papers (5-7 minutes) to the class in a mini-conference, where coffee and snacks will be provided. The purpose of this is share information with your classmates, and to build presentation skills (highlighting key information, conveying information orally in a clear and engaging fashion, responding to and engaging with audiences). Tips and training on presentation skills will be provided in class, in advance of the presentation date. **If you cannot make it to this class you must arrange to present your paper earlier, or you will receive a grade of zero for this component of the course.**

**Other Class Information and Policies**

**Lateness penalty**: A 5% per day late penalty will be applied to most assignments that are handed in late. Reading responses, however, will not be accepted after the beginning of class – there is no option to submit
a late reading response. Students should speak with the instructor if they anticipate issues with any deadlines in order to discuss alternatives.

**Attendance:** Participation is critically important in a seminar, and attendance is necessary. Students may miss one class without penalty, subsequent absences will lead to a reduction in their participation grade. Late arrivals and early departures will negatively affect your participation grade. Students who miss three classes should speak to the instructor about their progress and chances for success in the course. **Students who miss five classes are not eligible to pass the course.** Students must attend in the week when they sign up to facilitate (or co-facilitate) the discussion, and must attend the final class (March 29th), when final papers will be presented. Students who do not present their work in the final class will receive a grade of zero for the presentation (worth 5%).

**Readings:** There is no required textbook for this course. Course readings (from newspapers, text books, books, and journals) will be provided on-line via LEARN or will otherwise be available from the University of Waterloo Library. Students are required to complete all assigned readings prior to class. Additional readings may be assigned in-class (such as newspaper articles) and will be provided.

**Email:** Students seeking to contact the instructor by email should use their uwaterloo account only, and should adhere to professional communication standards. Students can expect responses within 48 hours, weekends and holidays excepted.

**Laptops and smartphones:** Smart phone use in class (other than during the break) is prohibited because it is distracting and impolite. Please put your phone away during class. Laptops are not necessary during a seminar class, as typing and web surfing (and other distractions) reduce your attention and distract students around you. Successful seminar discussions require that all participants are listening and paying attention.

**Additional Information**

**Unclaimed assignments:** Unclaimed assignments will be retained until one month after term grades become official in quest. After that time, they will be destroyed in compliance with UW’s confidential shredding procedures.

**Academic Integrity:**
In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. The University’s guiding principles on academic integrity can be found at: [http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/)

ENV students are strongly encouraged to review the material provided by the university’s Academic Integrity office specifically for students: [http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/Students/index.html](http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/Students/index.html)

Students are also expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for their actions. Student who are unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who need help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g. plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. Students may also visit this webpage: [https://uwaterloo.ca/library/get-assignment-and-research-help/academic-integrity/academic-integrity-tutorial](https://uwaterloo.ca/library/get-assignment-and-research-help/academic-integrity/academic-integrity-tutorial)

When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under **Policy 71 – Student Discipline.** For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to: [https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71)

Students who believe that they have been wrongfully or unjustly penalized have the right to grieve; refer to Policy #70, Student Grievance, on-line at: [https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70)

**Note for students with disabilities:** AccessAbility Services, located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with **AccessAbility Services** at the beginning of each academic term.

**Mental Health:** The University of Waterloo, the Faculty of Environment and our Departments consider students’ well-being to be extremely important. We recognize that throughout the term students may face health challenges - physical and / or emotional. **Please note that help is available.** Mental health is a serious issue for everyone and can affect your ability to do your best work. Counselling Services ([http://www.uwaterloo.ca/counselling-services](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/counselling-services)) is an inclusive, non-
judgmental, and confidential space for anyone to seek support. They offer confidential counselling for a variety of areas including anxiety, stress management, depression, grief, substance use, sexuality, relationship issues, and much more.

**Religious Observances:** Student needs to inform the instructor at the beginning of term if special accommodation needs to be made for religious observances that are not otherwise accounted for in the scheduling of classes and assignments.

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm). When in doubt please contact your Undergraduate Advisor for details.

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 – (Student Discipline) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 (Student Appeals) [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm)

**Intellectual Property.** This course contains the intellectual property of the instructor. Intellectual property includes items such as:

- The Course Outline (Syllabus)
- Lecture content, spoken and written (and any audio/video recording thereof);
- Lecture handouts, presentations, and other materials prepared for the course (e.g., PowerPoint slides);
- Questions or solution sets from various types of assessments (e.g., assignments, quizzes, tests, final exams); and
- Work protected by copyright (e.g., any work authored by the instructor or TA or used by the instructor or TA with permission of the copyright owner).

Course materials and the intellectual property contained therein, are used to enhance a student’s educational experience. However, sharing this intellectual property without the intellectual property owner’s permission is a violation of intellectual property rights. For this reason, it is necessary to ask the instructor for permission before uploading and sharing the intellectual property of others online (e.g., to an online repository). Permission from the instructor is also necessary before sharing the intellectual property of others from completed courses with students taking the same/similar courses in subsequent terms/years. In many cases, instructors might be happy to allow distribution of certain materials. However, doing so without expressed permission is considered a violation of intellectual property rights. Please alert the instructor if you become aware of intellectual property belonging to others (past or present) circulating, either through the student body or online. The intellectual property rights owner deserves to know (and may have already given their consent). For more, consult Policy 73 – Intellectual Property Rights.

**Writing and Communication Centre**

The Writing and Communication Centre (WCC) works with students as they develop their ideas, draft, and revise. Writing and communication specialists offer one-on-one support in planning assignments, synthesizing and citing research, organizing papers and reports, designing presentations and e-portfolios, and revising for clarity and coherence.

You can make multiple appointments throughout the term, or you can drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit [www.uwaterloo.ca/wcc](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/wcc). Group appointments for team-based projects, presentations, and papers are also available.

**Please note** that communication specialists guide you to see your work as readers would. They can teach you revising skills and strategies, but will not change or correct your work for you.