This course scans theoretical approaches to the city (as urbs and civitas) and deploys them to explore salient features of social structure, experience, and transformation in the metropolis at century’s turn in an effort to determine whether there exist or should exist an “urban sociology” and what this designation covers — in the twofold sense of comprise and hide.

We first reopen the question of the origins of urban inquiry and map out the space of approaches to the form, functioning and culture of cities and then examine in serialism the impact of economic globalization and informational technologies on the material basis of urban life; the sifting and sorting of new waves of immigration and ethnic competition; the specificity of the ghetto as mechanism of sociospatial seclusion and the comparative politics of urban polarization from below; the myth and reality of suburbia and their conjoint dissolution under the press of exurbanization and gentrification; the tangled nexus of poverty, crime and violence in the “inner city”; the rise and ramifying implications of “gated communities”; the role of the metropolis as locus of wealth and power as well as cultural site and symbolic engine.

Each theme is anchored by a major book and assorted shorter pieces which are dissected with a view towards identifying the strengths and weaknesses of contending theories of “the city” (historical, ecological and sub-cultural, political-economic and neo-Marxist, feminist and so-called postmodernist, and Bourdieusian) as social constellation, concentrate, prism, and laboratory. As we proceed, we probe the parameters, weigh the concepts, and scope the concerns of contemporary urban sociology, asking what is distinctive about it as a form of inquiry and consciousness, and what it contributes to our understanding of the social condition and present historical predicament.

The course format mixes lectures, individual presentations, group discussion and written exercises. The readings are copious and dense; they must imperatively be covered and digested prior to the weekly meeting so that participants can fully contribute to, as well as benefit, from it. Each week a pair of students will present that week’s readings and lead discussion; one student will outline and defend the particular position or research agenda assigned while the other offers a critique of it. Both students will prepare a one-page synopsis of the major points to be debated.

The course requirements are fourfold: (1) a class presentation and synopsis geared to leading discussion; (2) weekly reading notes addressing the core issues and concepts of that week, due on the previous Monday at 8pm (covering 8 sessions of your choice); (3) a well-written and tightly argued term paper (20 pages max.) engaging a research topic or several of the works sampled in the course, due in week 15 (reading week). Deadlines are imperative and shall not be extended. You are encouraged to pursue your own research work and training needs as part of the requirements for this course.

The required texts are available from the usual bookstore(s). The remaining articles and dispersed pieces are available online through bcourses (at SOC280J). Note that we have two
“skip weeks” to breathe and catch up and four extended session (4-7pm) to cover more weighty materials. Please plan your schedules accordingly.

**Required books**


**Recommended**


1. **ORIGIN MYTHS AND MAPPING URBSOC I: OF THE CITY OR IN THE CITY?**

(28 August)

Wacquant, Urban Outcasts, Prologue, pp. 1-11.


Wacquant, Urban Outcasts, Prologue, pp. 1-11.

Supplementary

Hannerz, Exploring the City, chapters 2, 3, 7.


*2. MAPPING URBAN SOCIOLOGY II: CHICAGO RAMPARTS (4 Sept)


Sampson, *Great American City*, chapters 1-3, pp. 1-70.

**Supplementary**


*3. MAPPING URBAN SOCIOLOGY III: THREE BARBARIAN HORDES* (11 Sept)


Logan and Molotch, *Urban Fortunes*, entire, with emphasis on chapters 1-5.


**Recommended**


### 4. ETHNI/CITY: ETHNIC LADDERS, INVASION, AND SUCCESSION REVISITED (18 Sept)

Portes and Stepick, *City on the Edge*, entire, with focus on chapters 2-3, 5-8.

**Supplementary**


### 5. SKIP WEEK (25 Sept) READ!

### 6. “RACE” IN THE METROPOLIS 1: GHETTO AND ETHNIC CLUSTER (2 Oct)

Drake and Cayton, *Black Metropolis*, part I and II.

**Recommended**


7. “RACE” IN THE METROPOLIS 2: THE PARALLEL CITY (9 Oct)

>>Conceptual memo due. Brief presentations by seminar participants.

Drake and Cayton, *Black Metropolis*, part III.


**Recommended**


*8. HYPERGHETTO, ANTIGHETTO, PRECARIAT* (16 Oct)


Wacquant, *Urban Outcasts*, entire.


*Horwitz, Ghettostadt: Lodz and the Making of a Nazi City*, chapters TBA.

**Supplementary**

Horwitz, Ghettostadt: Lodz and the Making of a Nazi City, chapters TBA.
   Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Ladányi, János Szélényi, Iván. 2006. Patterns of Exclusion: Constructing Gypsy Ethnicity and
   the Making of an Underclass in Transitional Societies of Europe. Stanford: Stanford
   University Press.
Zhang, Li. 2001. Strangers in the City: Reconfigurations of Space, Power, and Social Networks
Roy, Ananya. 2003. City Requiem, Calcutta: Gender and the Politics of Poverty. MN:
   University of Minnesota Press.
   New York: Oxford University Press.


Pick and read one of these two books:
Bourgois, In Search of Respect, entire, with emphasis on chapters 1, 3-6.
Anderson, Code of the Street, entire, with emphasis on 1-3, 5-7.
Wacquant, Loïc. 2002. “Scrutinizing the Street: Poverty, Morality, and the Pitfalls of Urban
   Ethnography.” American Journal of Sociology 107-6 (May): 1468-1532.

Supplementary
Sánchez-Jankowski, Martín. 2008. Cracks in the pavement: Social change and resilience in poor
Black, Timothy. 2009. When a Heart Turns Rock Solid: The Lives of Three Puerto Rican
   Brothers on and off the Streets. New York: Vintage.
Goldstein, Donna M. 2003. Laughter Out of Place: Race, Class, Violence, and Sexuality in a Rio
Marquez, Patricia. 2002. The Street Is My Home: Youth and Violence in Caracas. Stanford:
   Stanford University Press.
Roshan Samara, Tony. 2011. Cape Town after Apartheid: Crime and Governance in the Divided
   City. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

10. SKIP WEEK: WORK ON YOUR PAPER (30 October)

11. SUBURBIA AS HISTORICAL MYTH AND MYTHICAL REALITY (6 November)

Fischman, Bourgeois Utopias, entire.
   chapters 1, 4, 6, pp. 3-13, 72-100, 127-135.

Supplementary
   York: Oxford University Press.

12. THE CITY OF WEALTH AND PRIVILEGE: GENTRIFICATION AND GATED COMMUNITIES (13 November)

Smith, *New Urban Frontier,* chapters TBA.

Supplementary

13. COLONIAL CITY (20 November)
CITIES OF GLOBAL SOUTH?
Wright, *The Politics of Design in French Urban Colonialism,* selections TBA.

*14. CODA AND EXCURSUS: METROPOLIS UNBOUND OR EXPLODED?*  
(27 November) READING TO BE SELECTED HERE ARE SOME CANDIDATES

-PENALIZATION OF URBAN POVERTY AND THE ROLE OF THE JAIL  
Irwin, *The Jail,* entire, with focus on chapters 2-6, pp. 18-100.

-CITIZENSHIP AND CITIES:  

-sPECIAL ISSUE OF IJURR ON “BRINGING BOURDIEU TO TOWN.”

-classic issues in African context:  

**TO BE SET WEEK 14/15? COURSE DOSSIER DUE IN MY MAIL BOX at 4pm**

**Supplementary**


