After characterizing the major paradigms for studying the city (ecological, Marxist, neo-Weberian, microinteractionist, identity based, Bourdieusian), we consider salient features of urban inequality and marginality: the rise of social dislocations in the inner city; how state and neighborhood affect life chances; the difference between ghetto, ethnic cluster, and slum; the variety and dynamism of the informal economy; the impact of street-corner institutions; why poor youngsters go into gendered bodily crafts; how honor and interest intermingle in street drug dealing; the survival strategies of the homeless in San Francisco; and how the jail contains and entrenches disruptive poverty. Throughout, we pay close attention not only to the empirical phenomenon at hand, getting close to ground level, but also to issues of conceptualization, political censorship, and implications for social justice.

This course samples theoretical approaches to the city and deploys them to explore salient features of inequality and marginality in the American metropolis at century’s turn. We first map out the space of theories of the city as urbs (place) and civitas (associational form) and then focus on the tangled nexus of poverty, ethnoracial division, and violence in the “inner city.” We probe forms and mechanisms of sociospatial seclusion and explicate the logics of polarization from below. We dissect several classic works on precarious wage labor, neighborhood institutions, the jail and the streets, with a view towards identifying recurrent tropes as well as weighing the strengths and weaknesses of contending views of “the city” as social constellation, concentrate, prism, and laboratory. As we proceed, we try out the conceptual tools 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.

This course will give you a taste of both urban sociology and graduate school learning. Its format mixes lectures, individual presentations, group discussion and written exercises. You are expected to read and ruminate over the assigned materials each week prior to class meeting. The readings for this course are copious and you should budget your time well to ingest and digest them as we proceed; otherwise you will not benefit from the lectures and you will not be in a position to contribute to the discussion. Each session a pair of students will present that week’s readings and lead discussion; one student will outline and defend the writings assigned while the other offers a methodical critique of it. Both students will prepare a one-page synopsis of the major points to be debated.

Final grade will be based equally on three elements: 1- your participation in discussion throughout the semester, including your class presentations and synopses; 2- a critical review of two books covered by the course or closely related to it (3 single-spaced pages, including references) due on week 6; 3- a well-written and tightly argued term paper (10 pages max.)
engaging a research topic or several of the works sampled in the course, **due on week 14** (after instructor approval on week 6). Deadlines are *imperative* and shall *not* be extended.

The required texts are available from the usual bookstore(s) and on reserve at Moffitt. The remaining articles and dispersed pieces are available on line through bspace (at SOC190-Fall2013 URB). Note that we skip the week of Thanksgiving and will have two extended sessions (4-7pm on 8 October and 3 December). Please plan your schedules accordingly.

**Required books**


1. **A MAP OF URBAN SOCIOLOGY I: OF THE CITY OR IN THE CITY?**
(3 September)


**Supplementary**


2. MAPPING URBAN SOCIOLOGY II: CHICAGO RAMPARTS  
(10 September)


Hannerz, Exploring the City, chapter 2.

Supplementary


3. MAPPING URBAN SOCIOLOGY III: MARXIST AND WEBERIAN BARBARIANS  
(17 September)


Hannerz, Exploring the City, chapter 3.

Recommended


(24 October)

Wilson, The Truly Disadvantaged, chapters 1, 2, 5, 7.

Supplementary

5. SOCIOSPATIAL SECLUSION: GHETTO, ETHNIC CLUSTER, AND SLUM
(1st October)


Recommended

*6. GHETTO, HYPERGHETTO, ANTI-GHETTO
(8 October, 4-7pm)

>> Book review due. Brief presentations by seminar participants.
Wacquant, Urban Outcasts, chapters TBA.

Recommended

7. STREET-CORNER INSTITUTIONS
(15 October)

Sánchez-Jankowski, Cracks in the Pavement, chapters 4 and 5, pp. 113-177 (Mom-and-Pop Stores as Neighborhood Institution”).

Supplementary

8. WORKING AT THE MARGINS
(22 October)

Venkatesh, Off the Books, chapters TBA.

Supplementary

9. BODILY TRADES
(29 October)

Wacquant, Body & Soul, part 1, pp. 1-99.

Supplementary
10. CITY OF DREAD: UNRULY BODIES, DRUGS, AND VIOLENCE  
(5 November)

Bourgois, In Search of Respect, chapters 1, 3-6.

Supplementary

11. LUMPEN CITY: ADRIFT ON THE STREET  
(12 November)

Gowan, Hobos, Hustlers, and Backsliders, chapters TBA.

Supplementary

12. THE JAIL AS URBAN DUSTBIN  
(19 November)

Irwin, The Jail, entire, with focus on chapters 2-6, pp. 18-100.

Supplementary

SKIP WEEK (26 November): enjoy the turkey!

13. TOPIC TO BE DECIDED  
(3 December)
Some candidates

Supplementary

>>Reminder: your term paper is due with your class folder TODAY