

## **Soc. 136—Urban Sociology** U.C. Berkeley, Spring 2013

Tu./Thurs. 11-12:30, 277 Cory Hall

Joanna Reed, Ph.D.

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 3:45-5:45, and by appointment, 434 Barrows

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### **Course Description:**

This course is an introduction to urban sociology. We will explore several topics related to urbanization and urbanism in this course, with a general focus on U.S. cities, and a spotlight on local neighborhoods and issues. Topics include the history of urbanization; ethnography and other methods for studying urban social phenomena; theories about how cities are socially and spatially organized and how social and spatial organization are related; how urban living affects social interaction; race and class stratification; urban disasters; urban labor markets and urban problems such as crime, violence and gangs. This is a writing intensive course, and students will be required to write two course papers and conduct their own ethnographic observations as part of their coursework.

By taking this course, you will:

Learn how economic forces and social structures such as race, class and government policies influence how cities are socially and spatially organized, and how that has changed over time.

Learn about how urban living shapes social interaction, past and present.

Learn about and participate in ethnographic field research.

Work on improving your writing skills.

### **Required Readings:**

There are two required books for the course and a course reader. Books will be available at the usual bookstores, or can be ordered online. The reader will be available for purchase from Copy Central on Bancroft. Copies of the books and the reader will be put on reserve at Moffitt Library-- typically it takes a few weeks to get these on the shelf. Most of the readings marked "online" in the syllabus will be posted on Bspace, a few you may need to look up on the internet yourself.

Books:

Anderson, Elijah. 2011. *The Cosmopolitan Canopy: Race and Civility in Everyday Life*. New York: Norton

Venkatesh, Sudhir. 2008. *Gang Leader For A Day*. New York: Penguin

**Evaluation:** Your grade will be based on an in-class midterm, reading quizzes, two paper assignments, a take-home final, and your participation and engagement in your discussion section. Details on the paper assignments are in a document called "Soc. 136 Paper Assignments" posted on Bspace in the assignments folder. Please read this now, so you understand what is required, as both papers include additional small assignments designed to help you in writing up your final draft. You will also be required to turn in a revision of your first paper, based on comments from your GSI and a peer reviewer.

**Midterm: 15%. March 12.** An in-class midterm consisting of short answer questions will be worth 15% of your grade.

**Reading quizzes: 5%.** Over the semester, six "pop" quizzes about the required readings will be given during lecture. We will count your top three scores. There will be no make up quizzes.

**Bay Area Neighborhood Profile Paper: 15%.** Due week 6 in section. Your grade on this first paper assignment will include your timely completion of the assignments due in weeks 2 and 4, in addition to the final paper.

**Bay Area Neighborhood Profile Paper Revision: 10%.** Due week 10 in section. You will revise your paper based on comments from your GSI, and from a peer reviewer. You will turn in your revision, your original "final" paper, with your GSI's comments, the sheet of comments you received from your peer reviewer, along with a short memo that summarizes the changes you made to the paper.

**Exploring the East Bay Cosmopolitan Canopy Paper: 20%.** Due on 5/2 in lecture (last day of class). Your grade on this second paper assignment will include your timely completion of the assignment due in week 12, along with posting your field notes on Bspace.

**Take-Home Final Exam: 15%.** Due on 5/16. This will be an essay exam. Questions will focus on the material since the midterm, but may ask you to incorporate material from throughout the course. The questions will be posted on Bspace on May 13<sup>th</sup> by 9 am. Turn in your exam to a cardboard box marked for this purpose in the main office of the Sociology department, 410 Barrows Hall, by 3pm on May 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Section and Participation: 15%.** Your GSI will give you more information about how you will be evaluated in section, but you can expect it to be based on participation in class discussions as well as in writing and peer review exercises.

The entire course is worth 1000 points. My typical cut off for an A in this course is 940 points, or 94%. If you have a problem with a grade, *first* discuss it with your GSI. If that does not resolve the problem, then please see me. Please know that if we agree to re-evaluate your work, it will be under closer scrutiny and your grade could possibly go down as a result. If you ask one of us to reconsider your grade, be prepared to tell us in

writing exactly why you think you think you deserve more points, based on the grading rubric that was provided for the assignment. We will use the gradebook function on Bspace to post grades, but be sure to check that the grade on the hard copy of your paper or exam matches the one online.

### **Paper Assignments:**

*Detailed prompts and information about the two paper assignments are on a document called "Soc. 136 paper assignments" that is posted on Bspace. Please read it right away so you know what is required. Both papers require small "lead-up" assignments that will help you in writing your final draft, and that students conduct independent ethnographic observations that will be incorporated into the papers. Both papers should be between 7-10 pages long, in 12 point font and double spaced.*

The first paper, the Bay Area Neighborhood Profile, will consist of a description of a bay area neighborhood (of your choice) based on Census data and your own ethnographic observations, along with an analysis of a salient sociological issue (or two) that you have identified for the neighborhood that references required class readings.

The second paper, The East Bay Cosmopolitan Canopy Paper, will explore Anderson's concept of the "cosmopolitan canopy"—contemporary urban places where people from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds interact. Students will analyze their own and other students' ethnographic field notes in order to study cosmopolitan canopies and contemporary race relations in the Bay Area. This paper will be written in research paper format.

### **Course Policies:**

**Students are responsible for all material covered in lecture, including announcements.** You will be expected to integrate materials from lecture and readings on exams and papers. Please do not enroll in this class if you will not be able to attend the lectures regularly.

I will gladly make **accommodations** for students with disabilities and for the observance of religious holidays. Please email or speak with me to discuss appropriate arrangements as soon as possible.

**Exams and assignments must be taken and turned in on time in order to receive full credit.** If you have a personal emergency you need to contact me at the earliest opportunity to discuss alternative arrangements. Late assignments will be penalized one third of a grade for each day they are late (including weekends).

**Academic honesty is expected of all students.** While I encourage students to discuss the readings and study together, everyone must do their own work. Suspected violations relating to this course will be reported to the appropriate administrative department and

dealt with according to university policies. Be aware of plagiarism. Word for word use of even a single sentence from another author, publication or website without citation is plagiarism and is considered unethical. Plagiarism will result in a zero on the paper with no opportunity to rewrite. If you have questions about how to properly cite materials, or how to paraphrase appropriately, I am happy to address this during office hours.

**Email:** I tend to check email at least once a day, during normal working hours, and may not be able to respond right away. I will tend to not answer emails that ask administrative questions answered on the syllabus or that were announced, or about to be announced in class.

**Office Hours:** My office hours this semester will be on Tuesdays from 3:45- 5:45, except during the second week of classes (when they will be on Wed., 1/30, from 9:30-11:30). Sign up for office hours on the sign up sheet outside my door at 434 Barrows. I encourage students to talk with me sometime during the semester, just to say “hi” and especially if you are having trouble with the course. I want you to do well. Either come to my office hours, or schedule a meeting. I can’t help you if you don’t communicate with me!

**Classroom courtesy:** Please put away electronic distractions during class, and recognize that class is not the time for catching up with your friend. This is distracting to me, and to other students who are trying to pay attention. You may not realize it, but even in a large lecture I can see what you are doing—you are not invisible in the audience.

## **Course Schedule\*:**

**Week 1, Jan. 22, 24: Introduction. What is *urban* Sociology anyway? How do we study it? Links to classic theories, the founding of Sociology and methods.**

Readings: Venkatesh, S. *Gang Leader for a Day: A Rogue Sociologist Takes to the Streets*. Ch.1

Anderson, E. 2010. *Cosmopolitan Canopy: Race and Civility in Everyday Life*. Ch. 1: “A Center City Walking Tour”

**Week 2, Jan. 29, 31: Methods and History: Ethnography and writing field notes; Bay Area Urbanization**

**Due (section): Paragraph discussing the neighborhood you will feature in your first paper, and why you chose it.**

Readings: Emerson, R., Fretz, R. & Shaw, L. 1995. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pp. 26-32, 46-52 and Ch. 6

Rhomberg, C. 2004. *No There There: Race, Class and Political Community in Oakland*. UC Press. Ch. 2 "Corporate Power and Ethnic Patronage"

Wollenberg, C. 2008. *Berkeley: A City in History*. UC Press. Ch. 1 "First Settlers" pp. 1-14, 2 "A Tale of Two Towns" pp. 15-32 and 7 "World War II Watershed" pp. 105-119

**Week 3, Feb. 5, 7: How do cities and neighborhoods take shape? Technology, Migrations and Plans**

Readings: Zorbaugh, H. 1929. *The Gold Coast and the Slum: A Sociological Study of Chicago's Near North Side*. Ch. 7, "The Slum" pp. 127-158

Portes, A. & Rumbaut, R. (1996) *Immigrant America*. Berkeley: UC Press. Ch. 2 "Moving" pp. 29-56

Laslett, J. 1996. "Historical Perspectives: Immigration and the Rise of a Distinctive Urban Region, 1900-1970". In Waldinger, R. & Bozorgmehr, M., Eds. *Ethnic Los Angeles*. Russell Sage Foundation

**Week 4, Feb. 12, 14: How do cities and neighborhoods take shape? Political and Economic Forces**

**Due (section): Draft description of your neighborhood based on Census data, and paper outline**

Readings: Jacobs, J. 1961. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. Ch. 1, Introduction. Pp. 1-25

Jackson, K. 1985. *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*. Oxford University Press. Ch. 11, "Federal Subsidies and the Suburban Dream", and Ch. 12, "The Cost of Good Intentions: The Ghettoization of Public Housing in the U.S."

Li, W. (2009) *Ethnoburb: The New Ethnic Community in Urban America*. University of Hawaii Press. (UCB electronic resource, find on Oski-Cat)

**Week 5, Feb. 19, 21: How do cities and neighborhoods take shape? Political and Economic Forces**

Readings: Logan, J. & Molotch, H. 1990. *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*. Berkeley: UC Press. Ch. 1, "The Social Construction of Cities" pp. 1-15 and Ch. 3, "The City as a Growth Machine" pp. 50-98

Zukin, S. 1995. *The Cultures of Cities*. Blackwell. Ch. 1, "Whose Culture, Whose City?" pp. 1-47

Zukin, S. 2010. *Naked City: The Life and Death of Authentic Urban Places*. Ch. 1, "Introduction: The City that Lost Its Soul" pp. 1-31

**Week 6, Feb. 26, 28: How do cities shape social interaction? Interaction in Public Spaces**

**Due(section): Bay Area Neighborhood Profile Paper**

Readings: Simmel, G. 1903, "The Metropolis and Mental Life" (1903) in Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson, eds. *The Blackwell City Reader*. Oxford and Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2002

Wirth, L. 1938. "Urbanism as a Way of Life". *American Journal of Sociology* 44:1-24

Lofland, L. 1973. *A World of Strangers: Order and Action in Public Space*. Ch. 5, "Urban Learning", and Ch. 6, "Privatizing Public Space"

**Week 7, Mar. 5, 7: How do cities shape social interaction? Subcultures and Gendered Spaces**

Readings: Fischer, C. 1995. "The Subcultural Theory of Urbanism: A Twentieth-Year Assessment." *American Journal of Sociology* 101-3: 543-577

Chauncey, G. 1994. *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940*. Basic Books. "Introduction" pp. 1-29

Gottdiener, M. & Budd, L. 2005. *Key Concepts in Urban Studies*. Sage. "Masculine Space", pp. 81-83, "Feminine Space", pp. 27-29

**Week 8, Mar. 12, 14: How do cities shape social interaction? MIDTERM in class Mar. 12**

Readings: Anderson, E. 2010. *The Cosmopolitan Canopy*. Ch. 2-5

**Week 9, Mar. 19, 21: Stratification and Inequality in the City**

Readings: Anderson, E. 2010. *The Cosmopolitan Canopy*. Ch. 6-9

**SPRING BREAK (Mar. 26,28)**

**Week 10, Apr. 2, 4: Stratification and Inequality in the City**

**Due (section): Revision of Neighborhood Profile Paper, April 4 is the last day to post field notes for credit on Bspace**

Readings: Jargowsky, P. 1997. *Poverty and Place*. Russell Sage Foundation. Ch. 4, "Characteristics of High Poverty Neighborhoods", Ch. 5 "Theory and

Evidence on Inner-City Poverty”, and Ch. 6 “An Analysis of Neighborhood Poverty”

**Week 11, Apr. 9,11: Stratification and Inequality in the City: Disasters**

Readings: Klinenberg, E. *Heat Wave: A Social Autopsy of Disaster in Chicago*. University of Chicago Press. “Prologue: The Urban Inferno”, pp. 1-13 and Ch. 2 “Race, Place and Vulnerability: Urban Neighborhoods and the Ecology of Support” pp. 79-128

Rugh, J. & Massey, D. 2010. “Racial Segregation and the American Foreclosure Crisis”. *American Sociological Review*, 75(5) 629-651 (Bspace)

**Week 12, Apr. 16, 18: Urban Labor Markets**

**Due (section): Thesis and outline for Cosmopolitan Canopy paper**

Readings: Sassen, S. 2012. *Cities in a World Economy*. Sage. Ch. 6 “The New Inequalities Within Cities” pp. 241-272

Florida, R. 2002. *The Rise of the Creative Class*. New York: Basic Books. Ch. 6 “The Horizontal Labor Market” pp. 103-115

Kilborn, P. 2005. “The Five Bedroom, Six-Figure Rootless Life”. *The New York Times*, June 1, 2005 (Online, NYT Class Matters Series)

Newman, K. 2000. *No Shame In My Game: The Working Poor in the Inner City*. New York: Vintage—Russell Sage Foundation. Ch. 4 “No Shame in (This) Game”, pp. 87-121

**Week 13, Apr. 23, 25: Urban “problems”**

Readings: Venkatesh, S. *Gang Leader for a Day*. Ch. 2-5

**Week 14, Apr. 30, May 2: Urban “problems”**

**East Bay Cosmopolitan Canopies Paper due May 2 in class**

Readings: Venkatesh, S. *Gang Leader for a Day*. Ch. 6-8

Week 15: RRR week—extra office hours TBA

**Take home final exam: Posted on 5/13 on Bspace by 9 am, due to marked cardboard box in 410 Barrows Hall by 3pm on Thursday May 16.**

\* Course Schedule remains subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.