

Urban Politics

POLITICAL SCIENCE 401A
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Fall 2007

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Office Hours: M 3:30-5:00 pm and W 1 to 2:30 pm, or by appointment.
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Course Website: <http://faculty.unlv.edu/kfernandez/urban.htm>
Class Meets: MW 11:30 p.m. – 12:45 p.m., WRI C235.

Course Description:

In this class we will discuss the structure and workings of urban and local society and politics. In an age where public attention tends to be focused on national and international levels of politics, our task is to highlight the importance of local and urban institutions and processes on our life and relationships. A variety of issues that are a consequence of local political processes are examined, including the distribution of power and influence, the representation of citizen and group preferences, the conflict between the public interest and private rights, and the distribution of public and private resources. We will also cover topics such as the evolution of local government institutions, local economic development and growth, cultural and ethnic conflict, and regional/metropolitan governance. In addition, we will explore how we as citizens perceive urban life and politics as well as how the media (the news, film, television) and academic thinkers depict how urban life is and/or how it should be.

Objective 1: At the end of the course the student should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the conflicting academic and historical images of the political, economic, and cultural life of the city.

Objective 2: Similarly, students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the evolution of local political institutions and local political and economic power.

Objective 3: Students should also be able to demonstrate an understanding of the differences between the political institutions (executive, legislature, courts, bureaucracy) at the local level and the state/federal level.

Required Readings:

1. Judd, Dennis and Paul Kantor, eds. 2008. *American Urban Politics in a Global Age: A Reader*, 5th edition. New York: Longman.
2. Ross, Bernard H., and Myron A. Levine. 2006. *Urban Politics: Power in Metropolitan America*, 7th edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
3. In addition, nine (9) articles are available on **WebCT**: <https://webcampus.nevada.edu/>¹

A copy of each book has been placed on 2 hour reserve at the Lied Library

¹ For information on logging on to WebCampus see <http://www.unlv.edu/faculty/kfernandez/logon.htm>

Quizzes: Six (6) pop quizzes will be given during the course which will count for 20% of your overall course grade (your two lowest quiz score will be dropped – only 4 will be used to calculate your grade). Warning: There are no make-ups for missed pop quizzes.

Examinations: There will be a midterm and a final exam. They will be based on the assigned readings and lectures. Late exams are not accepted except for emergency situations and the reason must be documented (police report for an accident, doctor’s letter for a serious illness on official letterhead). Concerning the observance of a religious holiday, UNLV policy states that students must notify the instructor about anticipated absences by the last day of late registration to be assured the opportunity to make up missed work. Late exams will be marked down a full grade for every day (24 hour period) late. A typed hard copy as well as an electronic copy (via email) of the exam will be required.

Disability Policy: The UNLV Disability Resource Center (DRC) houses the resources for students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability that may require accommodations, you will need to contact the DRC for the coordination of services. The DRC is located in the Student Services Complex (SSC), Room 137. Their numbers are: (702-895-0866/Voice; 702-895-0652/TDD. For additional information please visit <http://www.unlv.edu/studentlife/drc>.

Participation: Attendance and participation is especially important in a class that meets only 14 times. Each time you miss a class you are missing a semester week of instruction. 10% of your grade will be based on your participation. If you are habitually late, the participation portion of your course grade will be marked down substantially.

Grades:

COMPONENT	DATE	COURSE VALUE
Midterm (take home)	October 8	20%
Participation	N/A	10%
6 Pop Quizzes (drop lowest 2 score)	N/A	20%
Film Analysis (of 2 movies)	Hard copy and electronic copy due November 26	15%
Annotated Bibliography	Hard copy and electronic copy due December 12, 10:10am	15%
Final Exam	December 12, 10:10am	20%

The assignment of letter grades is as follows:

92 <= A	80-81 = B-	67-69 = D+
90-91 = A-	77-79 = C+	62-66 = D
87-89 = B+	72-76 = C	60-61 = D-
82-86 = B	70-71 = C-	> 59 = F

* Rounding at .5

SCHEDULE: Reading assignments are to be completed by the assigned date. See Reading List below for a full description of reading assignment

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS (Author's name)
WEEK 1		
August 27 - M	All Politics is Local: The Urban Community	
August 29 - W	Images of the City: <i>Metropolis vs. Bladerunner</i>	Mumford*; Bickford*; Judd
WEEK 2		
September 3 - M	LABOR DAY – NO CLASS	
September 5 - W	Political Science Research and the City/Research Project (NO CLASS MEETING - LECTURE WILL BE ONLINE ON THE COURSE WEBSITE)	Danielson & Lewis; Kantor and Judd
WEEK3		
September 10 - M	Theory & Urban Politics	Davis; Kohn; Yanarella*; Ross and Levine ch. 1
September 12 - W	The Evolution of Cities and Suburbs	Wade; Ross & Levine ch. 2
WEEK4		
September 17 - M	The Political Machine	Ross & Levine ch. 6
September 19 - W	<i>Miller's Crossing</i>	
WEEK5		
September 24 - M	The Modern Political Machine: <i>City of Hope</i>	Erie
September 26 - W	The Reform Movement and Beyond	Ross & Levine ch. 7; Hays
WEEK6		
October 1 - M	Who Governs?: Elite theory vs. Pluralism	Ross & Levine ch. 4 & 5
October 3 - W	Democracy in the City	Ross & Levine ch. 8; Stone
WEEK7		
October 8 - M	MIDTERM	
October 10 - W	Delivering City Services: Revenue and Expenditures	Ross & Levine ch. 9 & 15
WEEK8		
October 15 - M	Culture Wars: <i>Do the Right Thing</i>	Avila; Rogers; Baxandall & Ewen; Titus & Wright
October 17 - W	Gender, Class and Race	Sugrue; Ross & Levine ch. 10
WEEK9		
October 22 - M	Economic Development	Peterson; Savitch & Kantor; Florida
October 24 - W	Downtown	Strom; Isenberg; Siegfried & Zimbalist
WEEK10		
October 29 - M	<i>Roger and Me</i>	Kantor & Savitch
October 31 - W	The Tourist City	Foglesong; Newman; Lowes

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS (Author's name)
WEEK 11		
November 5 - M	Las Vegas	Parker; Gazel*
November 7 - W	Suburbia v. the City	Ross & Levine ch. 11; Ross*
WEEK 12		
November 12 - M	Veteran's Day - NO CLASS	
November 14 - W	<i>American Beauty</i>	
WEEK 13		
November 19 - M	Suburban Sprawl	Hayden; Seigel; Calthorpe and Fulton
November 21 - W	Metropolitan Government	Ross & Levine ch. 12; Orfield; Rusk
WEEK 14		
November 26 - M	Phoenix: A case study	FILM ANALYSES DUE
November 28 - W	Regional Government	Ross & Levine ch. 13
WEEK 15		
December 3 - M	Intergovernmental Relationships	Ross & Levine ch. 14; Nivola
December 5 - W	The Future of Urban Politics	Ross & Levine ch. 16; Eisinger; Marcuse
Final Exam		
December 12 - W 10:10am	Final exam Annotated Bibliographies Due	

Reading List

Avila – *Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles* by Eric Avila in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #16**

Baxandall and Ewen - *Suburban Change and the "Underwater Economy"* by Rosalyn Baxandall and Elizabeth Ewen in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #15**

Bickford – “Constructing Inequality: City Spaces and the Architecture of Citizenship” by Susan Bickford. *Political Theory*, 28, 2000: 355-76. [WebCT](#)

Calthorpe & Fulton – *The Region is the Neighborhood: Sprawl and the New Urbanism* by Peter Calthorpe and William Fulton in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #25**

Davis - *Fortress Los Angeles: The Militarization of Urban Space* by Mike Davis in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #18**

Erie - *Big-City Rainbow Politics: Machines Revivendus?* By Steven P. Erie [WebCT](#)

Eisenger – *City Politics in an Era of Federal Devolution* by Peter Eisinger in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #26**

Foglesong - *When Disney Comes to Town* by Richard Foglesong in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #6**

Gazel – "The Economic Impacts of Casino Gambling at the State and Local Levels," by Ricardo Gazel in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 556, Gambling: Socioeconomic Impacts and Public Policy (Mar., 1998), pp. 66-84. [WebCT](#)

Hayden - *Planned Sprawl and the Rise of the* by Dolores Hayden in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #17**

Hays - *The Politics of Reform* by Samuel P. Hays in [WebCT](#)

Isenberg – *Downtown Culture* by Alison Isenberg in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #10**

Judd – *Urban Scholars as End-Time Prophets* by Dennis R. Judd in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #21**

Kantor & Judd– *Governing the Metropolis in the Global Era* by Dennis Judd & Paul Kantor in **American Urban Politics: The Reader – Introductory Essay p.1-11**

Kantor & Savitch - *Can Politicians Bargain with Business?* by Paul Kantor and H.V. Savitch in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #7**

Kohn – *The Mauling of Public Space* by Margaret Kohn in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #19**

Lowes– *Indy Dreams and Urban Nightmares* by Mark Douglas Lowes in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #4**

Marcuse – *Life in Cities after September 11, 2001* by Peter Marcuse in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #20**

Mumford - "Utopia: The City and the Machine" by Lewis Mumford (Daedalus, 94 [1965]: 271-292). [WebCT](#)

Newman - *Race and the Tourist Bubble* by Harvey K. Newman in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #13**

Nivola - *Federal Prescriptions and City Problems* by Pietro S. Nivola in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #27**

Orfield – *Conflict or Consensus: Forty Years of Minnesota Metropolitan Politics* by Myron Orfield in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #22**

Parker - "Las Vegas: Casino Gambling and Local Culture" by Robert E. Parker from the *Tourist City*, edited by Dennis Judd and Susan Fainstein. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1999. [WebCT](#)

Peterson - *The Interests of the Limited City* by Paul E. Peterson in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #1**

Rogers - *Minority Groups and Coalitional Politics* by Reuel Rogers in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #12**

Ross - *Kinder, Gentler Government?* By Andrew Ross in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #14**

Ross & Levine - *Urban Politics: Power in Metropolitan America* by Bernard H. Ross and Myron A. Levine **[Book]**

Savitch and Kantor – *Cities in the International Market Place* by H. V. Savitch and Paul Kantor in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #5**

Siegel – *Is Urban Sprawl a Problem* by Fred Siegal in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #24**

Siegfried & Zimbalist – "The Economics of Sports Facilities and their Communities." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, vol. 14,no. 3, 2000: 95-114. [WebCT](#)

Stone - *Urban Regimes: A Research Perspective* by Clarence N. Stone in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #2**

Strom – *Culture, Art, and Downtown Development* by Elizabeth Strom in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #9**

Sugrue - *Racial Confrontation in Post-War Detroit* by Thomas Sugrue in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #11**

Titus & Wright. "The Ethnic Diversification of Las Vegas" by Dina Titus and Thomas C. Wright, in Peoples of Las Vegas, edited by Jerry L. Simich, Thomas C. Wright. [WebCT](#)

Wade - *Urban Frontier* by Richard C. Wade in **American Urban Politics: The Reader #3**

Yanarella – "Chapter 5: The Telos of the City in Social Science and American History," in The Cross, the Plow and the Skyline: Contemporary Science Fiction and the Ecological Imagination by Ernest J. Yanarella. Parkland, FL: Brown Walker Press, 2001. [WebCT](#)