Urban Sociology

Sociology 443
University of Nevada Las Vegas
Spring 2022

Instructor: Christie D. Batson
Class Meetings: T, Th 1:00pm – 2:15pm
Classroom: FDH 215
Office Hours: Tuesday 10:30am – 12:30 and By Appointment
Office: CBC – B233
Phone: 895-0258
Email: Christie.batson@unlv.edu

Course Description:

In this course, we will examine processes, policies, and programs that have shaped and affected cities and metropolitan areas in the United over the last hundred years or so. Specifically, we will explore policies pertaining to housing policies, real estate, neighborhood developments, residential segregation, community organizing; tourism and urban cultural production; and urban sustainability and economic development. The course will focus on policies that have impacted the built environment and address relationships between cities, communities, and broader socio-political and economic processes.

Activities are designed for advanced undergraduate students or for graduate students interested in applying the course subject matter to an applied research project on an urban problem/community in Las Vegas.

Course Objectives:

- Overview of urban policies in the historical context of their development and the adaptation of policy as cities adapt to changing population dynamics.
- Illustrate the links between theory and research, and foster a critical understanding of how cities are built, designed, and shaped.
- Examine the role that neighborhoods play in social life of cities. Critically examining how the physical and social spaces of neighborhoods create and perpetuate inequality.
- Investigate and identify the positive impacts and negative consequences of the built environment on social aspects of living, such as housing, health, neighboring, access to resources, crime, and more.
- Explore how the urban history of Las Vegas shaped the city as we know it today.

Course Materials:

Readings: All course readings will be located in WebCampus or distributed in class.

Course Requirements:

1. **Reading Summaries and Class Discussion.** Attendance at all class sessions is essential and expected. Reading summaries and your participation in the class discussion are worth 20% of your final grade.

Reading Summaries: The reading summary is designed to make you synthesize and assimilate the daily readings. Each reading summary should be between 1-3 pages. I will not accept a reading summary over 3 pages. The goal of the summary is to be able to recognize and discuss the connection among the articles, provide a brief critique of the overlying themes, compare and contrast different theoretical arguments, and understand the sociological relevance of the overarching themes. Reading summaries are to be submitted to WebCampus <u>every Monday by midnight</u> - on the Monday night before class.

*The reading summaries submitted on Monday will be based on the following Tuesday and Thursday readings. Essentially, you are reading a week ahead.

Class Discussion: Each Tuesday, two students will lead a class discussion on the readings for that day. Students will sign-up for their discussion day.

A simple discussion strategy is to take 5 minutes and provide a short summary of the topics and then raise specific questions to the class. You can relate the material to previous readings and previous class discussions. Your summary should not take more than 5 minutes. Longer summaries are boring for everyone. Your job is not to lecture, but to facilitate discussion about the material. The discussion should lead to a clearer understanding of the readings, or at least a clearer understanding of the complexity of the readings. Discussion leaders must take a strong role to ensure that the discussion covers the material and that there is equity and continuity in the discussion. One of the major concerns in leading any discussion is how to create an environment that is secure enough for people to ask questions and become involved. Leaders should devise strategies that facilitate everyone's participation. Here are some ideas about how to start and sustain discussion and to involve all class members:

- Ask students to describe the primary value or the central thesis of the reading.
- Ask each student to state one concrete image or moment from the texts that stands out, i.e. passages that particularly captured his or her imagination.
- Ask if any themes emerge from these images.
- Ask students to read aloud a quotation from the reading that they like or dislike, or one that illustrates the central thesis of the reading, or one that was difficult to understand.
- Ask each student to raise one or two questions that s/he has about the readings.

Please review the evaluation criteria for discussion leadership below before you begin to plan your discussion session.

Evaluation Criteria for Discussion Leadership

Discussion Evaluation	Poor	Adequate	Good	Excellent
	1	2	3	4
How well organized is the class session?				
Appears well-prepared with a plan for facilitating discussion				
Integrates readings into discussion				
Provides internal summaries and transitions				
Summarizes & distills main points at end of discussion				
Paces class session appropriately				
How credible is the discussion leader in his/her role?				
Understands the material				
Ensures many points from the reading are discussed				
Helps clarify material, correct misunderstandings				
Is able to admit insufficient knowledge when appropriate				
Speaks audibly and clearly				
Communicates enthusiasm				
How good is the discussion leader's rapport with other class members?				
Achieves equitable participation				
Requires class members' thoughtful participation				
Responds constructively to class members				
Recognizes when others are confused				
Shows respect for others' viewpoints, criticisms				

2. **Urban Las Vegas Scavenger Hunt.** This is a neighborhood-based urban scavenger hunt designed to familiarize yourself with the wide diversity of urban landscapes, neighborhoods, populations, and housing in Las Vegas. For the duration of this course, we will be referring to locations in/around Las Vegas. A solid understanding of those places is necessary. You will produce a journal-type binder with photograph evidence and short synopsis of each location you visit. This assignment is worth 15% of your final grade.

Scavenger Hunt materials will be distributed in class.

3. **Las Vegas Neighborhood Profile Paper.** Four types of neighborhoods will be examined in the class – you will pick one of the neighborhood types below for your profile paper. After selecting your type, you will develop a profile paper of the characteristics of that type of community generally, and then locate a neighborhood in Las Vegas that closely fits the profile.

- Immigrant/ethnic enclave neighborhood
- Master Planned community neighborhood (suburban sprawl)
- Historic neighborhood
- Gentrifying neighborhood

This is worth 15% of your final grade.

4. **Las Vegas Urban Research Project and Film**. As a class, we will work together in teams to explore the lived, embodied, and represented experiences of urban Las Vegas. Students will write field notes, reflexive interpretations, examine data—some by themselves, some with others—about (XX TOPIC). Students will present their work in the form of a short documentary film at the end of the semester. This is worth 20% of your final grade.

5. **Midterm and Final Exam.** The midterm and final exam will consist of answering 4 essay questions from a choice of 10. The questions will draw on class lectures, course reading materials, and homework assignments. The exam will expect you to assimilate materials learned throughout the course and apply your knowledge to larger urban sociology questions. Each exam is worth 15% of your final grade.

Grading Scheme:

Reading Summaries	20%
Scavenger Hunt	15%
Neighborhood Profile Paper	15%
Research Project/Film	20%
Midterm and Final Exam	30%
Total	100%

Course Policies:

All course assignments will be completed and handed in on the assigned date. There will be no make-up exams and no exceptions to this policy. All course assignments are due on the assigned due date. The following deductions will be taken if your assignment is late:

1 day late (including the same day but after class)	10 point deduction
2 days late	20 point deduction
3 days late	30 point deduction
4th day and beyond	WILL NOT ACCEPT RECEIVE "0" points

Final Grades:

Final grades will be based on the total points that you earn on all the course assignments and exams. The following table shows the course grading system and final letter grade.

	Percent		Percent
A	93-100	D+	67-69
A-	90-92	D	63-66
B+	87-89	D-	60-62
B	83-86	F	<60
B-	80-82		
C+	77-79		
C	73-76		
C-	70-72		

My Grading Philosophy:

I do not grade on a "curve." This is helpful for those who may be anxious about a particular course (especially a course required for one's major). This way, you will always be able to keep track of how your current performance translates into a certain grade (and what it will take to achieve a certain grade). Thus, your grade is not determined by how well others do in the course. Your performance in this class determines your final grade.

Additional Information:

University Policies

Public Health Directives

Face coverings are currently mandatory for all faculty and students in the classroom. Students must follow all active UNLV public health directives while enrolled in this class. UNLV public health directives are found at Health Requirements for Returning to Campus, https://www.unlv.edu/coronavirus/health-requirements. Students who do not comply with these directives may be asked to leave the classroom. Refusal to follow the guidelines may result in further disciplinary action according to the UNLV Student Conduct Code, https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page_files/27/StudentConduct-Code.pdf, including being administratively withdrawn from the course.

Academic Misconduct

Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the University community. We all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility, and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, and are encouraged to always take the ethical path whenever faced with choices. Students enrolling at UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's educational mission. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another person, from the Internet or any other source without proper citation of the source(s). See the Student Conduct Code, https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct.

Auditing a Course

Auditing a course allows a student to continue attending the lectures and/or laboratories and discussion sessions associated with the course, but the student will not earn a grade for any component of the course. Students who audit a course receive the same educational experience as students taking the course for a grade, but will be excused from exams, assessments, and other evaluative measures that serve the primary purpose of assigning a grade.

Classroom Conduct

Students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in class and in the libraries in ways that do not interfere with the rights of other students to learn, or of instructors to teach. Use of devices such as cellular phones and pagers, or other potentially disruptive activities are only permitted with the prior explicit consent of the instructor. Students are specifically prohibited to record classes without instructor authorization, including online/remote classes (either audio only, or video and audio). The instructor may rescind permission at any time during the class. If a student does not comply with established requirements or obstructs the functioning of the class, the instructor may initiate an administrative withdrawal of the student from the course.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic forced some instruction to be delivered remotely starting in Spring 2020, numerous students have asked instructors to record their synchronous classes, so that they can access them at their convenience. Instructors who agree to record their classes (audio only, or video and audio) should inform students in advance. Recorded lectures may not be broadly released to anyone, but made available exclusively to those students enrolled in the class during the particular academic term. Recorded lectures must be stored securely, and are subject to the Nevada System of Higher Education's Records Retention Policy, meaning that the recordings can only be deleted 120 days after the end of class (i.e., after grades are posted). Once this requirement is met, the recordings should be deleted. Class recordings are protected from disclosure, as they are deemed part of an educational record under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Copyright

The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves with, and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend you, nor assume any responsibility for student or employee violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional copyright policy information is available at https://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The UNLV Disability Resource Center (Student Services Complex, SSC-A, Room 143, https://www.unlv.edu/drc, telephone 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. Students who believe that they may need academic accommodations due to a permanent disability, temporary or permanent medical need, or academic support due to pregnancy are encouraged to contact the DRC as early as possible in the academic term. A Disabilities Specialist will discuss what options may be available to you. Students who are already registered with the DRC should request their accommodations online each semester, and make an appointment to discuss their accommodations with their instructors.

Final Examinations

The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur on the date and at the time specified in the Final Exam schedule. The Final Exam schedule is typically available at the start of the semester, and the classroom locations are available approximately one month before the end of the semester. See the Final Exam Schedule, https://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars.

Identity Verification in Online Courses

All UNLV students must use their Campus-issued ACE ID and password to log in to WebCampus-Canvas.

UNLV students enrolled in online or hybrid courses are expected to read and adhere to the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/misconduct/policy, which states that "acting or attempting to act as a substitute for another, or using or attempting to use a substitute, in any academic evaluation or assignment" is a form of academic misconduct. Intentionally sharing ACE login credentials with another person may be considered an attempt to use a substitute, and could result in investigation and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Academic Misconduct Policy.

UNLV students enrolled in online courses are also expected to read and adhere to the Acceptable Use of Computing and Information Technology Resources Policy, https://www.it.unlv.edu/policies/acceptable-use-computing-and-information-technology-resources-policy, which prohibits sharing university accounts with other persons without authorization.

To the greatest extent possible, all graded assignments and assessments in UNLV online courses should be hosted in WebCampus-Canvas or another UNLV-managed platform that requires ACE login credentials for access.

Incomplete Grades

The grade of "I" (Incomplete) may be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session, but cannot complete the last part of the course for reason(s) beyond the student's control and acceptable to the instructor, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. For undergraduate courses, the incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester. Graduate students receiving "I" grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the period indicated, a grade of "F" will be recorded, and the student's GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete grade do not register for the course, but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the "I" grade.

Library Resources

Librarians are available to consult with students on research needs, including developing research topics, finding information, and evaluating sources. To make an appointment with a subject expert for this class, please visit the Libraries' Research Consultation website, https://guides.library.unlv.edu/appointments/librarian. You can also ask the library staff questions via chat and text message at https://ask.library.unlv.edu/.

Missed Classwork

Any student missing class, quizzes, examinations, or any other class or laboratory work because of observance of religious holidays will be given an opportunity during that semester to make up the missed work. The make-up opportunity will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for Fall and Spring courses (except for modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for Summer and modular courses, of their intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit the Missed Classwork policy, under Registration Policies, on the Academic Policies webpage, https://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=32&navoid=8271&hl=.
In accordance with the policy approved by the Faculty Senate regarding missed class time and assignments, students who represent UNLV in any official extracurricular activity will also have the opportunity to make up assignments, provided that the student submits official written notification to the instructor no less than one week prior to the missed class(es).
The spirit and intent of the policy for missed classwork is to offer fair and equitable assessment opportunities to all students, including those representing the University in extracurricular activities. Instructors should consider, for example, that in courses which offer a "Drop one" option for the lowest assignment, quiz, or exam, assigning the student a grade of zero for an excused absence for extracurricular activity is both contrary to the intent of the Faculty Senate's policy, and an infringement on the student's right to complete all work for the course.

This policy will not apply in the event that completing the assignment or administering the examination at an alternate time would impose an undue hardship on the instructor or the University that could be reasonably avoided. There should be a good faith effort by both the instructor and the student to agree to a reasonable resolution. When disagreements regarding this policy arise, decisions can be appealed to the Department Chair/School Director, College/School Dean, and/or the Faculty Senate Academic Standards Committee.

For purposes of definition, extracurricular activities may include, but are not limited to academic recruitment activities, competitive intercollegiate athletics, fine arts activities, liberal arts competitions, science and engineering competitions, and any other event or activity sanctioned by a College/School Dean, and/or by the Executive Vice President and Provost.

Rebelmail

Rebelmail is UNLV's official email system for students and by University policy, instructors and staff should only send emails to students' Rebelmail accounts. Rebelmail is one of the primary ways in which students receive official University communications, information about deadlines, major Campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the University. Sending emails within WebCampus-Canvas is also acceptable.

Tutoring and Coaching

The Academic Success Center (ASC), at the Claude I. Howard Building, provides tutoring, academic success coaching, and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, please visit the ASC website, https://www.unlv.edu/asc, or call 702-895-3177. The ASC is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of SSC A, Room 254. Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library, and on the second floor of the College of Engineering building (TBE A 207).

UNLV Writing Center

One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, https://writingcenter.unlv.edu/, located in the Central Desert Complex, Building 3, Room 301 (CDC 3–301). Walk-in consultations are sometimes available, but students with appointments receive priority assistance. Students may make appointments in person or by calling the Center, telephone 702-895-3908. Students are requested to bring to their appointments their Rebel ID Card, a copy of the instructions for their assignment, and two copies of any writing they have completed on their assignment.

Diversity Statement

As an institution of higher learning, UNLV represents a rich diversity of human beings among its faculty, staff, and students, and is committed to aspiring to maintain a Campus environment that values that diversity. Accordingly, the University supports understanding and appreciation of all members of its community, regardless of race, sex, age, color, national origin, ethnicity, creed, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy, genetic information, veteran status, or political affiliation. Please see [University Statements and Compliance](https://www.unlv.edu/about/statements-compliance), https://www.unlv.edu/about/statements-compliance.

A successful learning experience requires mutual respect and trust between the students and the instructor. Accordingly, the instructor asks that students be willing to listen to one another's points of view, acknowledging that there may be disagreements, keep discussion and comments on topic, and use first person, positive language when expressing their perspectives.

UNLV Land Acknowledgement

UNLV is situated on the traditional homelands of Indigenous groups, including the Nuwu or Nuwuvi, Southern Paiute People, descendants of the Tudinu, or Desert People. We honor and offer gratitude for those who have stewarded the land; for the land itself; and for the opportunity to cultivate a thriving, diverse, inclusive, and just scholarly community here today that works for a better tomorrow for all.

COURSE OUTLINE			
DATE	TOPIC	Discussion Leaders	IN-CLASS
1/18	Introduction – Summary Sign-Up		
1/20	What is Urban Sociology?	Module 1	**Scavenger Hunt**
1/25	The emergence of cities: theories of urban sociology	Module 1	
1/27	Observing "urban" through data and fieldwork	Module 2	
2/1	The Chicago School (classical)	Module 3	**Scavenger Hunt Due**
2/3	The LA School (contemporary)	Module 3	**Neighborhood Profile Selection due**
2/8	Urban Las Vegas: Part 1	Module 4	
2/10	Urban Las Vegas: Part 2	Module 4	**Part 1 of Neighborhood Profile Paper Due**
2/15	How do cities and neighborhoods take shape? Migration & Planning	Module 5	
2/17	How do cities and neighborhoods take shape? Residential Segregation	Module 5	
2/22	Urban Enclaves, Ghettos, and Concentrated Poverty	Module 6	**Neighborhood Profile Paper Due**
2/24	Public Housing in the United States	Module 6	
3/1	Midterm Exam in class		**Midterm**
3/3	Gentrification	Module 7	**Research Project Team and Topic Selection**
3/8	Gentrification	Module 7	
3/10	Suburban sprawl and Master Planned Communities	Module 8	

3/15	**SPRING BREAK**		
3/17	**SPRING BREAK**		
3/22	Experiencing cities: Interaction in public spaces	Module 9	
3/24	Experiencing cities: The Downtown	Module 9	
3/29	Experiencing cities: Stadiums and Sports	Module 10	
3/31	Experiencing cities: Tourism	Module 10	
4/5	Crime and Quality of Life	Module 11	
4/7	Neighboring and Homelessness	Module 11	
4/12	Neighborhood Effects	Module 12	
4/14	Neighborhood Effects	Module 12	
4/19	The Historic Westside	Module 13	
4/21	The Historic Westside	Module 13	
4/26	Research Day		*No Class*
4/28	Research Project Film Festival in class		**Research Film Due**
5/3	Research Project Film Festival in class		**Research Film Due**
5/5	No class – study!		*No Class*
5/9	Final Exam in class		**Final Exam**