

**PSC 323 Urban Politics**  
**Spring 2016**  
**MWF 12:00 – 12:50**

**Instructor:** Dr. Allison Bramwell  
**Email:** afbramwe@uncg.edu

**Office:** CURY 320  
**Class:** CURY 204

<b>Office Hours:</b> MW, 3:15 to 4:30 or by appointment
---------------------------------------------------------

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Many of the most profound 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges play out most obviously ‘on the ground’. As a result, city-regions have begun to challenge the national scale as the most relevant level of analysis for understanding the political, economic, social and environmental impacts of globalization. Local governments deal with many core issues that affect our daily lives from economic development to public housing, immigrant settlement and public transit. At the same time, non-governmental actors such as organized business interests and community-based organizations actively participate in urban politics and policymaking processes. Using an urban political economy lens to examine major policy issues facing American urban regions, this course goes beyond the formal institutions of local government to examine the patterns of conflict and collaboration among governmental and community-based actors as they attempt to formulate solutions to increasingly complex urban problems.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

This is a Writing Intensive (WI) course that takes a conceptual approach to the study of American urban politics, providing students the opportunity to consolidate their research, analytical and communication skills. By conducting an independent research project, students who complete this class will develop abilities to:

- define research questions;
- collect relevant data and research secondary sources;
- present evidence-based arguments;
- communicate clearly and effectively in writing;
- write in genres appropriate to the discipline(s) of the primary course subject matter
- refine oral communication and presentation skills

**REQUIRED TEXT:**

Dennis Judd and Todd Swanstrom. 2015. *City Politics: the Political Economy of Urban America*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed.

Additional readings to be posted on Blackboard.

**IMPORTANT DATES:**

Jan. 18	Martin Luther King Day – No Class
Jan. 29	Library session with Lynda Kellam, location TBA
Feb. 5	<b>CityLab Outline &amp; Bibliography Due</b>
Feb. 15	<b>CityLab Lit Review – 1<sup>st</sup> Draft Due</b>
Mar. 4	<b>CityLab Lit Review – Final Draft Due</b>
Mar. 7-11	Spring Break
Mar. 25	Spring Holiday – No Class
Apr. 1	<b>CityLab Research Paper – 1<sup>st</sup> Draft Due</b> Research presentations start
Apr. 15	<b>CityLab Resesarch Paper – FINAL Draft Due</b>
Apr. 22	Exam Review & Course De-Brief
Apr. 25-26	No Class
Apr. 29	<b>Final Exam, 12:00 to 3:00 p.m.</b>

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

This course will be a combination of lectures, class discussions, and individual presentations as well as the occasional film or guest speaker as time and circumstance allow. There will be one final exam. Because of the emphasis on research, writing and presenting in this class, the majority of your grade will be based on the CityLab Project.

CityLab Outline and Bibliography	10 %
CityLab Literature Review (grade of 1 <sup>st</sup> and final draft averaged)	15%
CityLab Research Essay (grade of 1 <sup>st</sup> and final draft averaged)	30%
CityLab Slides and Presentation	5%
Final Exam	25%
Participation	15%

### **CityLab Project:**

Learning to communicate clearly orally and in writing is critical to learning to think clearly. Learning to conduct secondary research and analyze, synthesize, and present your findings is an integral part of your academic training. Because of the emphasis on researching, writing and presenting skills, much of your grade in this class will be based on the CityLab Project which provides an opportunity for you to investigate in more depth an aspect of urban politics that particularly interests you. A series of 'How to Write' workshops during class throughout the semester will support the development of your writing skills.

For your project, you will select a topic and a city and examine how the challenges and opportunities relevant to your chosen topic unfold in your chosen city. Your task is to discuss the challenge in more detail in relation to your chosen city and research how that city is dealing with it. This will involve analyzing the factors and forces underlying the city's strategy, identifying the actors involved and key points of collaboration or conflict among them, assessing the results achieved, and presenting your findings to the class. Examples of policy challenges and opportunities include (but are not limited to) **poverty reduction, knowledge-based economic development, education, immigrant integration, sustainable growth, downtown or neighborhood revitalization, affordable housing, and regional transportation**. You are relying on secondary research for your analysis so be sure to choose a city – typically larger American cities - for which there is more than one source of information for your chosen topic. Please see the weekly readings schedule for suggested cities for each policy topic. Come and talk to me if you are unsure about your topic/city pairing.

The **four** components that constitute your CityLab Project include the following:

#### **1. Outline and bibliography (10%) DUE Feb. 5**

A clear and well-structured outline that clarifies your research question and lays out a strategy for conducting your research is critical to the quality of your paper. For this component of the project, you will identify an urban policy challenge, chose a city for which you will examine the policy responses in detail, outline how you plan to organize your paper, and identify **at least three** key sources drawn from books, scholarly journals, or high quality web-based documents (taken for example, from think tanks and local government websites) that will provide the foundation for your research (2 single spaced pages). You will be graded on the clarity and depth of your research proposal and the **relevance** and **proper citation** of your sources. **REMEMBER: This is an Urban Politics course** – choose your sources accordingly. If your proposal is unclear or of insufficient depth or focus, I will not grade it until you have met with me in person to discuss your

work. You will have ONE WEEK from the date of your appointment with me to turn in your revised outline. It is your responsibility to make arrangements to come and speak with me or your research proposal will not be graded. Course penalties for late work will still apply. **Please note:** this is intended as a learning exercise to ensure that you learn this valuable skill, not as punishment for weak work.

A number of excellent sources available through the UNCG library system include:

*Urban Affairs Review*

*Journal of Urban Affairs*

*International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*

*Urban Studies*

*State and Local Government*

*Cities*

*Journal of Urban Research*

As well as several other useful sources such as:

*The Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program*

*OECD Local Economic and Employment Development Program*

*The Atlantic Cities*

*The Next City...daily newsfeed that includes cool job listings! sign up at [www.nextcity.org](http://www.nextcity.org)*

**ALWAYS REMEMBER, if you get stuck, ASK Lynda Kellam, the departmental librarian...she knows a lot and is there to help!**

## **2. CityLab Literature Review (15%) DUE Feb. 15 & Mar. 4**

All good research is informed by theory. The purpose of the literature review (5-6 pages) is to provide an in depth discussion of your topic and the core theoretical ideas that you are working with in your research paper. It should take up an analytical theme or broad debate that we have discussed in the course or that arises from your independent research. Either way, it is critical to demonstrate a clear understanding of the theoretical explanations you are using in your research before you can discuss your empirical evidence. Rather than a simple re-statement or description of these ideas however, this literature review draws out core themes, debates, similarities and differences. Your review should make use of a combination of **at least six** books, book chapters, or scholarly articles on your topic as well as supporting data and documents from other sources. You may use **one** article from the reading list as your starting point, but you must access all other sources on your own.

**Please note:** you will be required to complete **two drafts** of this literature review, the final grade for which will be an average of your first and final drafts. **You must submit BOTH drafts on the due date specified to obtain a grade for this element of the CityLab project.** If you receive a grade of **B- or less** on your first draft, you are **strongly encouraged to meet with me in person** to discuss revisions.

### ***3. Slides and Presentation (5%) starting Apr. 1***

Presenting ideas and information is increasingly required in most professions. The CityLab project gives you the opportunity to further develop this critical skill. Presentations will take place in class beginning April 1. With only **5 minutes strictly allotted** (yes, I will time you!) for each presentation, you will focus on your main findings and how they relate to course themes. **All slides are due to me via email at least an hour before class on the day you present.**

For the slides, you will be graded on clarity, organization and visual appeal. For your presentation, you will be graded on your polish and preparation, **NOT your poise or comfort level** (though I have found that this improves with preparation...public speaking is a learned skill that we must all practice to improve). We will de-brief on our collective CityLab findings during the last week of classes.

### ***4. Research Paper (30%) DUE Apr. 1 & Apr. 15***

The purpose of your research is to develop a case study for your chosen city that draws on a combination of the literature about your topic and empirical evidence. Like the literature review, you will complete two drafts of this paper, the final grade for which will be an average of your first and final drafts.

**Please note:** You will complete **two drafts** of this paper, the final grade for which will be an average of your first and final drafts. As such, your first draft should be the best effort you can produce. You must submit both drafts on the due date specified to obtain a grade for this element of the CityLab project. If you receive a grade of **B- or less** on your first draft, you are **required to meet with me in person** to discuss revisions. It is your responsibility to make arrangements to come and speak with me or your final research paper will not be graded. Course penalties for late work will still apply.

The final result of your research will be a 15 page (double spaced) research paper, referenced according to the APSR style of references and a complete bibliography (format available at <http://uncg.libguides.com/citation>). Your final paper must include the following elements:

- A **clear introduction** that includes a clear statement of your research question, your main argument based on your research findings, and a brief overview of the paper.
- Literature review (5 – 6 pages) providing a detailed discussion of the policy challenge you are examining in more depth, focusing on the factors that facilitate and constrain urban policy development, implementation, and outcomes.
- Discussion of your chosen city’s response to the challenge, focusing on actors, strategies and programs as well as an assessment of these efforts. In other words, what were the main points of collaboration and conflict? Who was involved and how? How innovative were the urban policy responses you studied? Did your city fall back into old patterns or experiment with new ideas? Of particular importance, what was the relevance of federal or state policy to urban outcomes?
- A conclusion sums up your main argument and key findings.

### Grading Criteria:

Essays will be graded according to three main criteria. First, the clarity, structure and coherence of the argument and findings you present are critical; essays assigned high grades present clear, convincing and readable arguments. Second, the depth and quality of your research largely shapes the quality of your paper; sources must be directly relevant, current, academically respectable, sufficiently diverse and scrupulously cited. Finally, your essay will be graded according to the overall clarity of your writing, including diction, grammar, sentence structure and proper references and citations. If you require assistance, please consult the UNCG Writing Center before submitting your final paper.

Cheating or plagiarism of any kind is an academic offence and will not be tolerated. Students who are in doubt about what constitutes plagiarism should consult the University of North Carolina at Greensboro’s statement on plagiarism at: <http://sa.uncg.edu/dean/academic-integrity/violation/plagiarism/>

### Grading Scheme:

A+	97-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69
A	93-96	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	60-66
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	F	below 60

**COURSE POLICIES (please read carefully!):**

**Attendance:** You are expected to sign an attendance roster for each class. Reasons for missing class are your own but students who miss more than 4 classes will automatically receive **0 for their participation grade** regardless of the quality of their contributions in class. Exceptions to this policy include a lengthy illness supported by appropriate documentation or a maximum of two excused absences for religious observance (as outlined in state law).

**Late Penalties:** Assignments are due in **hard copy in class** on the due date. For every day that an assignment is past due it will lose a letter grade and I will not accept them after one week. Assignments submitted after class will be counted as one day late. Electronic submissions will not be accepted except in extenuating circumstances and with my permission. Excuses for missing exams or assignments will only be accepted from students who have experienced documented medical emergencies.

**Etiquette: (I am a professor, not a cop...please observe these basic norms of respect. You will embarrass both of us if I have to comment on your behavior)**

- Email is fine for quick messages but if you have an issue to discuss, please come and see me during office hours. Use proper etiquette and address me appropriately
- Do not use cell phones in class
- Use laptops only for note-taking. Those using laptops must sit in the first two rows.
- Don't be late, don't leave early (unless I know in advance) and don't wander in and out of class.

**Make-up Exams:** Make-up exams are given only in case of a genuine emergency (sudden hospitalization or the unexpected death of a family member). Should such an unlikely event occur, notify me as soon as possible by email and make arrangements with me as soon as possible after the emergency.

**Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism or any other form of cheating is a serious academic offense and will be dealt with according to institutional policies available at <http://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/academic-integrity-policy/>

**Americans with Disabilities:** If you require disabilities accommodations, please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (<http://ods.uncg.edu/about-us/>) in Suite 215 in the EUC (334-5440). I am willing to provide any accommodation you may need but please discuss your requirements with me during the first week of class.



## THEME II - SPACE AND RACE: THE POLITICS OF DIFFERENCE

### Week 5      **Sprawl & Spatial Divides: How National Policies Shape Cities and Suburbs**

- Feb. 8                      J&S, Chapters 6 & 7  
 Feb. 10                    **Discussion:** Glaeser, E. "Why Has Sprawl Spread?" [BB]  
 Feb. 12                    **Workshop:** How to Write a Research Paper

<i>CityLab:</i> <i>Atlanta, Houston, Los Angeles</i>
------------------------------------------------------

### Week 6      **Poverty, Race and the Multi-Ethnic Metropolis: How National Policies Shape Individual Life Chances**

- Feb. 15                    J&S, Chapter 8  
                               **CityLab Lit Review – 1<sup>st</sup> Draft Due**  
 Feb. 17                    **Film:** The Pruitt-Igoe Myth  
 Feb. 19                    **Discussion:** Dreier, "Katrina and Power in America"

<i>CityLab:</i> <i>Oakland, Los Angeles, Baltimore, St. Louis</i>
-------------------------------------------------------------------

### Week 7      **City Limits: Challenges and Opportunities in the Fragmented Metropolis**

- Feb. 22 - 24              J&S, Chapter 10, 11  
 Feb. 26                    **Discussion:** Oliver, "Suburban Politics"; Florida "Suburbs are the New Swing States"

## THEME III - CITIES AND GLOBALIZATION: THE POLITICS OF ECONOMIC CHANGE

### Week 8      **Cities that Lost: De-industrialization and Shrinking Cities**

- Feb. 29 – Mar. 2        R. Florida, "The Death and Life of Great American Cities", *The Great Reset*  
                               R. Beauregard, "Growth and Depopulation in the United States",  
                               *Rebuilding America's Legacy Cities*  
 Mar. 4                    **Discussion:** Eisinger, "Is Detroit Dead?"  
                               **CityLab Lit Review – Final Due**

<i>CityLab:</i> <i>Buffalo, Youngstown, Flint, Rochester, Camden</i>
----------------------------------------------------------------------

**SPRING BREAK****Week 9      Cities that Won: Growing Cities and the Knowledge-Based Economy**

Mar. 14 - 16      J&S, Chapter 9

**Discussion:** H.V. Savitch and P. Kantor, "Strategies for the International Marketplace", in *Cities in the International Marketplace*  
Henton, "Lessons from Silicon Valley"

Mar. 18      **Workshop:** How to Write an Introduction

<i>CityLab:</i>	<i>San Francisco/Silicon Valley, Austin, Raleigh/Durham, Denver, Seattle</i>
-----------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Week 10      Resurgent Cities: Adaptability, Resilience and the Politics of Gentrification**

Mar. 21 - 23      J&S, Chapter 13

**Discussion:** R. Florida, "The Creative Class", *The City Reader*  
Levine, M. "'A Third-World City in the First World'

Mar. 25      **No Class (Spring Holiday)**

<i>CityLab:</i>	<i>Washington, DC, Philadelphia, Chicago, Grand Rapids</i>
-----------------	------------------------------------------------------------

**THEME IV - MANAGING COMPLEXITY: URBAN GOVERNANCE IN THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY****Week 11      Leadership and Local Government**

Mar. 28      Christensen, T. and Hogen-Esch, T. "Legislators and Executives: The Balance of Power", *Local Politics*

Mar. 30      **Discussion:** Judd, "Strong Leadership"; Reitman, J. "The Mayor of Hell", *Rolling Stone*, May 14, 2009. [BB]

Apr. 1      **CityLab Research Paper – 1<sup>st</sup> Draft Due**  
**Research Presentations Start**

<i>CityLab:</i>	<i>Newark, New York, Charlotte, Los Angeles</i>
-----------------	-------------------------------------------------

**Week 12      Who Governs? Urban Regimes & Civic Leadership**

Apr. 4 - 6                      K. Mossberger, "Urban Regime Analysis", *Theories of Urban Politics*  
 Strom, "Rethinking the Politics of Downtown Development?"  
 Bramwell & Pierre, "New Community Spaces"

Apr. 8                            **Research Presentations**

<i>CityLab:</i>	<i>Pittsburgh, Boston, Cleveland, San Antonio</i>
-----------------	---------------------------------------------------

**Week 13      Governing the Divided City**

Apr. 11                         J&S, Chapters 14 & 15; Bennett and Giloth, "Social Equity and Twenty-  
 First Century Cities"

**Apr. 13                         Research Presentations**

**Apr. 15                         CityLab Research Essay – Final Due**

**Research Presentations**

**Week 14      Urban Futures...**

Apr. 18                         **Research Presentations**

Apr. 20                         **Research Presentations, CityLab De-brief**

Apr. 22                         Exam Review & Course De-brief

**Week 15      April 25 & 26 No Class**

**Final Exam      Friday April 29, 12:00 to 3:00 p.m.**