

## **URBAN SOCIOLOGY**

### **Instructors:**

Nicholas Emerick MA Lecturer

E-mail: Use Course Blackboard email

Alternative email: Naemerick@utep.edu

Office Hours: I will not be maintaining office hours, but if arranged, I can meet students in Old Main. I will also make myself available through alternative measures which can include video chatting, my personal cellphone, or instant message chats. This will require some coordination and will need to be setup via email beforehand. Please try to email at least 24 hours in advance if you need to work out one of these alternative measures.

**This class will be conducted online and regular use of a computer will be required**

### **Course Description:**

This course provides knowledge and fosters appreciation of city life in global context. It focuses on the role of political economic processes and social inequalities in shaping urbanization processes, urban spatial structures, and social interactions in urban environments. Students will explore contemporary issues in urban studies, including the impact of globalization on communities, the meaning of place and space, and cultural diversity in urban settings. The course will consist of quizzes, online small-group discussions and essays. The assigned readings are central to the course. I expect you to spend time reading and thinking about the readings. You will be expected to make connections between readings, written assignments, and what is happening in the world around you.

### **Course Goals and Key Concepts:**

- Clarify the origins of cities, and to recognize the roles of social power and institutions in the urbanization process (i.e., politics, economy, culture).
- Identify and understand different approaches to studying cities (i.e., urban ecology, political economy, sociospatial).
- Examine urbanization in historical context, and characterize city patterns and processes during different historical periods (i.e., feudal cities versus emerging cities in the U.S.).

- Examine cities in global context, and identify the differences in patterns and processes of urbanization between places in the "First World" and the "Third World"
- Clarify relationships between urban and rural areas.
- Identify connections between global social processes and local social interactions in cities.
- Understand the central organizing principles of activities in cities (i.e., class, race, gender, age, immigrant status).
- Participate in class discussion and group work; be a constructive critic and contributor; think critically and communicate clearly both orally and in writing.

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### **Required Texts:**

(1) Gottdeiner, M., and R. Hutchison. 2015. *The New Urban Sociology, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. Paperback ISBN: 9780813343181. ( "G/H" in Course Schedule) [[Available at UTEP bookstore](#)]

(2) Davis, Mike. 2006. *Planet of Slums*. New York: Verso. Paperback ISBN-13: 9781844671601. ( "Slums" in course schedule) [[Available at UTEP bookstore](#)]

(3) Binelli, M. 2012. *Detroit City is the Place to Be*. New York, NY: Metropolitan Books. ISBN: 0805092293. ( "Detroit" in Course Schedule) [[Available at UTEP bookstore](#)]

**Important Note: Please buy the required texts as soon as it is available!!** Don't wait until you use them in the course. The bookstore returns books at mid-semester and if you do not already have the books, you will not be able to get them! Also, if English is your second language, it is recommended that you purchase a dictionary for use while reading and while in class.

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### **Grading:**

A = 90% plus

B= 80-89.9%

C = 70-79.9%

D = 60-69.9%

F= 59.9% and below

1 Syllabus Quiz— 20 points

8 reading Quizzes (8 x 20 points each) —160 points total

14 Discussion Question Responses (14 x 15 points each)—210 points total

14 Peer Evaluations (14 x 15 points each)— 210 points total

3 Essay Assignments (3 x 100 points each)—300 points total

Total—900 points

***Discussion Participation and Guidelines:***

Each student is required to participate in online discussion as part of a (5-7) student group. Each lesson will require each student to write at least 200 words in response to a set of questions. Questions will be provided by the instructor. Each student will then be required to reply to the entries of each of the other students in their group (including at least one extended comment of about 50 words). Brief communications following the replies will often be appropriate. After members of your group have posted individual responses to the discussion question(s) and have replied to each others' postings, your group will collaborate in writing one response to the discussion question(s). In your group posting, you will incorporate what you have collectively learned in your reading and discussion. For each discussion, every student will receive a grade based on two forms of evaluation:

1. Through evaluation of your contribution to discussion by your peers (your fellow group members), and
2. Through the instructor's evaluation of your group's posting (see Course Grades and Policies below). Deadlines for discussion postings are listed in the Course Schedule. Please note that there are two deadlines per week: one for individual responses to the questions ("Discussion Question Due") and one for the posting of group responses and the completion of peer evaluations ("Group Posting/Peer Evaluations Due"). Discussion items posted after the due date/time will not be graded (students will not receive credit). Please plan your work time carefully.

Discussion postings must be in English to ensure mutual communication among participants. Keep your messages concise and clearly written. Most ideas can be stated in a couple of paragraphs, although sometimes a longer message may be needed to develop your thoughts adequately. Keep in mind that people are more apt to read and digest shorter, clearer, messages than longer ones written in a stream-of-consciousness manner.

Here are some guidelines to facilitate your discussion activities:

1. Be respectful of other's ideas, opinions, and beliefs. It's fine to disagree with someone, but please respect their right to think differently.
2. Avoid posting simple two or three word statements such as "I agree" or "Good point". If you think someone has made an especially strong point and you want to say so, then explain why by adding a few sentences describing your response or adding to the original point.
3. A discussion posting that demonstrates substance contributes to the understanding and application of ideas by doing one or more of the following:
  - a. Reflection about meaning: Describe thoughtfully what something means or new insights it provides, or raise a question as a seed for clarification or further discussion.
  - b. Analysis: Discusses relevant themes, concepts, main ideas, components, or relationships among ideas. Or, identifies hidden assumptions or fallacies in reasoning.
  - c. Elaboration: Builds on ideas of others or ideas found in the readings by adding details, examples, a different viewpoint, or other relevant information.
  - d. Application: Provides examples of how principles or concepts can be applied to actual classroom situations, or discuss the implications of theory for practice.
  - e. Synthesis: Integrates multiple views to provide a summary, a new perspective, or a creative refashioning of ideas.
  - f. **Evaluation:** Assesses the accuracy, reasonableness, or quality of ideas.

#### Criteria for Grading Discussions:

Each discussion activity is worth 30 points. For each discussion, students will receive a grade based on two forms of evaluation:

1. Evaluation of your contribution to discussion by your peers (15 points), and
  2. The instructor's evaluation of your group discussion posting (15 points).
1. For each group discussion activity, you will fill out the Peer Review Rubric. Within the Peer Review Rubric you will evaluate the contribution of each member of your group (including yourself) to the discussion activity completed that week. Peer evaluations will be based on the following criteria:
    - Does the student clearly and effectively communicate content?
    - Does the student actively propose ideas and initiate actions?
    - Does the student willingly take on responsibilities?
    - Does the student show respect for differences of opinions and willingness to make compromises?
    - Does the student acknowledge the work of others by providing positive feedback?
    - Does the student communicate in a friendly tone?
    - Does the student contribute high quality work?
    - Does the student complete work on time?

Note: 5 points will automatically be deducted from a student's discussion grade if they do not complete the Peer Review Rubric and provide it to the instructor.

Remember: The instructor will have access to all group postings. It is incumbent on each student to provide fair and consistent evaluations of their peers' discussion activities. If it

becomes clear (or is brought to my attention) that students are completing biased evaluations of their peers, then appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken by the instructor.

1. Group discussion postings will focus on your ideas about the readings and other activities. Discussion postings will be evaluated according to the following criteria:
  - Does the commentary show evidence of having closely read the material?
  - Does the commentary show evidence of thinking about the reading beyond just summarizing it? (This may include extension to new circumstances/other readings, contradictory evidence, internal (in)consistency, and analyses of assumptions.)
  - Does the commentary include relevant evidence to support the points made?

Each group discussion posting is worth 15 points as follows: 13-15 points are given for extensive, knowledgeable, and thoughtful discussion; 12 points for capable knowledge with less evidence of critical or deep thinking; 11 points for mostly correct, but incomplete, knowledge, partial mistakes, or incompletely thought-out discussion; 9-10 points for minimally correct and involved discussion; and zero points for completely unprepared discussion or no discussion. Important: If you do not complete your own individual discussion postings (both the initial response and replies to other group members' postings), you will receive no credit for your group's discussion posting from the instructor.

### ***Electronic Communication Guidelines:***

It is important to share a word of caution, so we can become wiser about interpersonal distance learning communications. When communicating electronically, many of the feelings or impressions that are transmitted via body language in face-to-face communications are lost. Consequently, interpreting emotions and innuendos is much more difficult. Only what is written, or drawn, carries the message. Often, excitement can be misinterpreted as anger or insult. It is important that we all keep this in mind as we communicate. Words in print may seem harmless, but they could emotionally injure us when working at a distance. Hence, it is vitally important that we are conscious of how we communicate while working at a distance.

- For example, avoid the use of caps in your electronic messages, as wording in caps comes across as shouting.

The standard practice ("Netiquette") for participation in networked discussion requires that all participation be focused on the topic at hand, not become personalized, and be substantive in nature. (Translation: you may certainly disagree with others, but you must do so respectfully; you may express strong beliefs or emotions, but you may not get so carried away that you lose all perspective on the course itself.)

- More information on Netiquette, the etiquette of Internet communication, can be found at [www.albion.com/netiquette](http://www.albion.com/netiquette) .

### ***Reading Quizzes:***

There are 8 quizzes that will be administered on the assigned readings from The New Urban Sociology during the semester. To perform well on the Reading Quizzes, students must complete assigned readings before class on the day they are listed on the Course Schedule.

### ***Essays:***

There will be no exams in this course. Instead, students will write three 4-page essays (4 pages of text plus a bibliography page) answering questions assigned at least 2 weeks before the due date (listed in Course Schedule). Essay questions will relate to material covered in class and in the assigned readings. They will require you to synthesize what you have learned and make connections between ideas. Extra sources should not be used. Rely **\*\*only\*\*** on the materials from class. You must cite your sources in text, have a bibliography, and number your pages. Essays must be typed in 12-point font and double-spaced. Essays must be turned in by the day they are due . Turn in essays early rather than late, if you know you will be unavailable the day it is due. Plagiarism will not be tolerated; any indication that you are submitting someone else's work or that you are adopting statements or ideas of another person without appropriate acknowledgement will have serious repercussions (see statement on Academic Honesty below). You should cite your sources in APA style. See the "APA Citation Guide" posted on Blackboard for information on how to cite correctly. We will also address appropriate citing of sources in class. Late essays will be docked 10 points per day that they are late.

3 Essays \* 100 points each = **300 points**

Student Responsibilities / Course Policies:

***Blackboard Course Internet Site:***

This class has a Blackboard shell that you can access through your my.utep.edu portal. All emails to the professor and other students in the class should be sent through the Blackboard. This email is different than your UTEP email. As a requirement of this course, you must regularly check your Blackboard email (specifically, for this class). That is where I will send all class announcements and personal messages to students. This is also where Discussion Question assignments, Essays assignments, and Short Reaction Essay assignments will be posted. **\*\*Important\*\*** I ask that you email me only through Blackboard for course-related concerns.

*Late and Missing Work:*

I **\*\*do not\*\*** accept late work except for the three Essays and two Short Reaction Essays, which will receive grade deductions if they are turned in late. I will only allow Discussion Question Responses to be made up and turned in late in the event of a documented medical or family emergency. If you do encounter an emergency, inform me as soon as possible. Documentation can include a note from a physician, a hospital admittance slip, or correspondence from an academic advisor, or the Dean of Students. As this is an online class with a set schedule, if there is a foreseeable reason you will be unavailable the day something is due, it is your responsibility to complete and submit the material prior to the

## Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another person as one's own. And collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. It is expected that UTEP students will understand and subscribe to the ideal of academic integrity and that they will be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work. Materials (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill academic requirements must represent a student's own efforts. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions.

\*\*\*WARNING: This course has automatic plagiarism detection software.\*\*\*

### ***Students with Disabilities:***

I will make any reasonable accommodations for students with limitations due to disabilities, including learning disabilities. Please touch base with me personally before or after class, during office hours, or over email in the first two weeks to discuss any special needs you might have. If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at [www.sa.utep.edu/cass](http://www.sa.utep.edu/cass).

### Attendance and Policies on Late Assignments:

Attendance in an online course consists of prompt fulfillment of all class activities. Students are responsible for reading all assignments in the time frame indicated and completing all activities (discussions, papers) within the announced time span. Exceptions will be made only for documented medical emergencies.

While the course will be largely conducted in an asynchronous mode (students can participate and submit work from anywhere at any hour of the day), it is not a self-paced course. The Course Calendar will be strictly adhered to, both in the activities for each unit and in the submission of work. Students are responsible for reading all instructions and assignments carefully, and for paying special attention to due dates.

All deadlines are on the Course Calendar. The Syllabus Quiz, Discussion Questions, and Peer evaluations cannot be completed after the due dates. As for other activities, late assignments will be penalized 10% of the total possible points for each day late.

***Help with Writing:***

The University Writing Center (UWC) (Library Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> [ground] floor, Room 227 [adjacent to the Collaborative Learning Center], Tel. 747-5112) provides walk-in assistance with writing to all UTEP students at no cost. If you struggle with writing, the tutors at the UWC can help you! Check the website - <http://academics.utep.edu/writingcenter> - for a Spring 2011 tutoring schedule.