

GEOG 597.41 H () AREA II

RAPID URBANIZATION: THE CASE OF MEXICO CITY

**JANUARY 2004, BLOCK COURSE
JAN 5-11, 2004 IN MEXICO CITY**

Timetable	Lec #	Days	Time	Location	BLOCK	Catalogue #
				COURSE	IN	MEXICO
				CITY		
	Lab #					

Instructors: Prof. Carlos de Leo, Director
Graduate Program in Urban Planning
Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City
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Course Content**Introduction:**

Rapid urbanization is one of the most troubling and urgent challenges faced by developing nations. Three of the largest and fastest growing megacities in the world are in Latin America (Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paolo, and Mexico City). This block course is designed to bring University of Calgary senior undergraduates with an interest in rapid urbanization and megacities into direct contact with the challenges faced, by providing them with a guided experience through the realities of environmental problems, transportation issues, the informal economy, irregular housing problems, infrastructural challenges, planning issues, and so on. This course is designed to stimulate research interest—guiding the students in testing their knowledge of concepts of urban planning in a “real life” situation, and in identifying research questions which emerge from the challenging of theoretical notions with empirical observations.

This course will be offered in collaboration with the Masters’ Program in Urban Planning at the Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City. The group will be housed at the Casa de los Amigos, a youth hostel in downtown Mexico City run by Quakers (very quiet and safe). The Casa de los Amigos has a seminar room which will be used for meetings.

Presession reading will be required for this course. However, the most important feature of this course is the experiential learning about the phenomenon of the megacity, which includes individual and group reflections and participation in discussions on observations made, on a daily basis. Each student will be required to keep a journal for daily observations. The course will end with a planning exercise. *This is an intensive course.*

Some themes to be explored include:

History of the city, class and settlement, transportation, distance, organization of commercial activities, housing issues, environmental challenges, economic/employment issues, urban agriculture, crime and crime control, design of public/private spaces, service provision—supply and demand (policing, banks, markets, supermarkets), city growth and planning.

TENTATIVE ITINERARY (times are approximations, flexible)

Sunday, January 4- Travel Calgary-Mexico City, installation in the Casa de los Amigos (CA)

Monday, January 5- Theme 1: History of Urban growth and Mexico City

. reconnaissance of Mexico City beginning at the zocalo

8:30 Quiz on pre-session readings

9:30 Discussion of the theme of the day

11:00 leave on reconnaissance

5:00 return to CA, update journals

7:00-9:00 discussion period on observations of the day

eg: What is the layout of the city? What are the major landscape features—natural, human-made? What have been the historical trends in the growth of the city?

Tuesday, January 6- Theme 2: How does *Urban Planning* work in Mexico City?

. Visit to the Mexico City Urban Development Office (*SEDUVI*)

Theme 3: What is the impact of the “informal economy” on the city.

. visit to Mercado sobre Ruedas

8:30-10:00 Discussion of themes of the day

10:00-1:00 Visit to SEDUVI

2:00-4:00 Visit to “Mercado sobre ruedas”

4:00 return to CA, update journals

7:00-9:00 discussion period on observations of the day

Wednesday, January 7, Theme 4: What are some major housing issues.

. Guided visit to the Municipality of Gustavo A Madero

8:30--10 AM review of issues, introduction. Discussion of theme of the day

10 AM leave on visit to Gustavo A Madero Municipality

4 PM Visit the Basilica of the Virgen of Guadalupe, one of the most important ritual spaces in Mexico

5:00 return to CA, update journals

7:00-9 PM discussion period on observations of the day

eg: What is irregular housing? Who is it for? How is it organized? How does the city respond? What are the major planning issues for a Delegacion? How are the delegaciones organized? What have you observed about transportation? About public/private spaces?

Thursday, January 8- Theme 5: What are some major challenges to *governance* in Mexico City.

Theme 6: How did a “satellite city” emerge? The “modernist” model of the city.

. Visit to Naucalpan (*Calgary’s sister city*)

8:30-10 AM review of issues, recent planning challenges and responses

10 AM leave for Naucalpan

4 PM return to CA, update journals

7:00-9:00 discussion period on observations of the day

Friday, January 9- Theme 7: The Brown Agenda (and environmental issues)

. Visit to the “Relleno Sanitario” and CEMICA (UAM Ixtapalapa)

8:30-10 AM review of issues, introduction (stats)

10 AM- leave on visit to solid waste management facilities

Meet with Mr. Gustavo Solorzano, specialist in solid waste management in Mexico City.

1 PM- visit CEMICA,

5 PM visit to Universidad Iberoamericana

8:00-10:00 discussion period on observations of the day

eg: What are the key environmental challenges of a megacity. Taking solid waste management as an example, what are the issues involved? What are the main air pollution issues? How is the city responding?

Saturday, January 10— Theme 8: Public spaces and urban agriculture

8:30-10 AM review of issues, introduction

10 AM leave for Xochimilco

2 PM leave Xochimilco for Coyoacan

5 PM return to CA, update journals

7-9 PM discussion

Sunday, January 11- Final Project- Charette “Repentina” in the Universidad Iberoamericana, Faculty of Architecture.

Monday, January 12—return to Calgary

READINGS

Pezzoli, Keith 1998 *Human Settlements and Planning for Ecological Sustainability: The Case of Mexico City*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass

Chapter 2 “Mexico City’s Current Status: a global and comparative perspective” – **comparative overview and contextualization**

Chapter 4 “Mexico City’s Urban-Ecological Coevolution”- **Environmental problems/ Brown Agenda**

Chapter 7 “The expansion of irregular settlements into the Greenbelt Zone of Ajusco” – **housing and human settlement issues**

Chapter 8 “Key actors in the overall balance of forces” – **governance challenges**

Cross, John C. 1998 *Informal Politics: Street Vendors and the State in Mexico City*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, Ca.

Chapter 1 “Organizing the Poor: Informal economic actors and the State” – **the informal economy**

Chapter 4 “The commercial role of street vending: problems and practices”

Chapter 5 (excerpt) “Street vendors and the state” – **governance challenges**

Hughes, Claire 1997 *Urban Agriculture and sustainable Urban Development*, Asian Urban Research Network, No. 18

Section 1 “Introduction and Background to Urban Agriculture” – **urban agriculture**

Low, Setha 2000 *On the Plaza: The politics of public space and culture*, University of Texas Press, Austin

Chapter 2 Public Space and Culture: the case of the Latin American Plaza- **public spaces**

Ezcurra, Exequiel and Marisa Mazari-Hiriart

“Are Megacities Viable?” *Environment* Vo. 38(1):7-35 1996 (Includes discussion comments by David Major, Peter Brimblecombe, and Michael Cohen)

www.mexicocity.com.mx

- “Mexico-Tenochtitlan: Ancient City”
- “The Epic City (1519-1620)”
- “The Zocalo”
- “Alameda Park”
- “Chapultepec Park”
- “Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe”

Williams, Jack F. and Stanley Brunn (eds) *Cities of the World*, 2nd Edition, Harper Collins College Publishers, New York, 1993

“An overview of urban problems” in Chapter 1: World Urban Development

“Traditional Internal Structure of Latin American Cities” in Chapter 6 Cities of Latin America.

Blackboard If Blackboard is being used as a course tool: <http://blackboard.ucalgary.ca/>

Required Texts (*please see Marilyn to order*) Reading Package available in Geography Office

Readings/Manual: (price stated if purchase necessary from the department); *please see Debbie*

Grading (Weighting)

Quiz on pre-session reading, 5 January.....	20%
Discussions each evening on themes of the day portion.....	20%
Journals registering all observations in situ.....	30%
Final project (Charrette) 11 January	30%

NO FINAL EXAM

Components must total 100% (In calculating the final grade, the term work should count for not less than 50%. Any tests carried out during the last two weeks (14 days before end of lectures) may not account for more than 10% of the final grade, except in the case of take home examinations or projects).

State whether: There is no final examination for this course **OR whether** the final examination will be **OR** will not be scheduled by the Registrar’s Office and **whether or not** it is essential to pass all elements/components to pass the course as a whole.

Prerequisite: PERMISSION OF INSTRUCTOR
STUDENTS MUST REGISTER THROUGH CREDIT TRAVEL, INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CENTRE, MACEWAN STUDENT CENTRE

Supplementary Fees: (*field trips etc*). *If these were not included in the registration fee, please see Laurie. \$205.00*

Grading System

EITHER this type of grading system [numbers may be changed but you must include **all** the letter grades]

96-100	A+	77-80	B	59-61	C-
90-95	A	71-76	B-	55-58	D+
86-89	A-	65-70	C+	50-54	D
81-85	B+	62-64	C	0-49	F

Re: Posting of Grades and Picking-up of Assignments

- Assignments will be handed back only in class or by the Professor at pre-arranged time(s).
- To receive your assignment back via mail, please include an appropriately sized self-addressed, stamped envelope with your assignment when handing in to the professor.
- Posting of grades will be at the discretion of each Professor and, if posted, they will be scrambled. Grades will **not** be available at Geography's main office.

Contact Information for Student and Faculty Representation

- SU VP Academic Phone: 220-3911 and e-mail: suypaca@ucalgary.ca
- SU Faculty Rep. Phone: 220-3913 and e-mail: socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca

Campus Safewalk

Campus Security, in partnership with the Students' Union, provides the Safewalk service, 24 hours a day, to any location on Campus including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones and University residences. Contact Campus Security at 220-5333 or use a help phone, and Safewalkers or a Campus Security officer will accompany you to your Campus destination.