

## URBAN SOCIOLOGY 353 SYLLABUS

Sociology 353  
July 2-22, 2009  
11:00 – 13:50 PM MTWR

Lecturer: Dr. J. John Palen  
jpalen@vcu.edu

### Required Text

Coming up with the best text involves trade offs. The Canadian urban text I used in the past was published in 1995, and now is much out-of-date. For two years I used an edited book of readings on Canadian cities. However, this book was the only thing about the class that students did not like and rate highly. Several students recommended that I use my own *The Urban World* text. I was very reluctant to do so for while *The Urban World* is the most widely used urban book, it mostly has an American focus. Also, I prefer to use a text that provides a different viewpoint from mine. I tried it last year and the advantages well outweighed the disadvantages. so this year *J. John Palen, The Urban World, 8ed (Paradigm, 2008)* is the required textbook. Make sure you get the paperback 8<sup>th</sup> edition rather than earlier hardcover editions since the 2008 8<sup>th</sup> edition is both the cheapest and the most up-to-date.

In order to provide special attention to Canadian urban patterns class lectures and discussion will provide data on Canada. We will examine similarities and differences with south of the border patterns. Info and data sheets on Canadian cities will be provided in class.

### Class Focus and Participation

The focus in this short course is on North American urbanization with special attention to Canadian patterns. Class, will be run on an informal seminar style basis. This means participation by class members is **strongly** encouraged. Since the text in effect provides you with a set of notes, students should be prepared to use our class time critically discuss and evaluate the assigned readings. Since students have much of the basic information in the text, I hope to conduct the class in seminar fashion which allows us to range more freely. The goal is a learning experience for all of us, not simply rote repetition. Use the syllabus as a guide, not as a bible. Changes may be made based on class needs. To provide detailed local Calgary data and insight I hope to bring in at least one outside speaker. Hopefully, we will have a major planning official from the city of Calgary discuss recent city developments and planning.

## Attendance

By your attendance and by your participation you contribute to this short class. Students are adults and will be treated as such. Keep in mind that you are expected to participate, and non-attendance will definitely affect your class participation grade. Also as a courtesy to the other students please arrive on time. Remember that the success of a short course depends as much on the students as on the instructor.

## Assignments

A short three-week class requires both study and involvement on your part. To insure that students are processing the material there will be quizzes on July 8<sup>th</sup> and July 16<sup>th</sup>. Details on quizzes will be given in class. There will be no class paper. Instead small group (3 person) presentations analyzing major Canadian cities will be presented in class on July 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. These papers will be based on readings, data available on the web, and, when possible, your own observations. Analysis, not just description, is the goal. Students consistently rate the student presentations as one of the strong points of the course. The presentation will substitute for the final examination. Detailed information will be provided in class. You are encouraged to contact the instructor if you have any questions.

## Grades

Grades will be compiled on the following basis:

Two Quizzes (15% each)	30%
Class participation	20%
Class presentation	50%

The instructor reserves the right to raise, but not lower, a student's letter grade on the basis of class performance.

## Honour System

Students in this class are adults and no difficulty with academic integrity is expected. However, University regulations require that it be stated that cheating or plagiarism will result in an automatic "F" for the course.

## PART ONE: THE EVOLUTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY

The emphasis of this introductory section is on the evolutionary growth of the North American city as influenced by historical, sociological, economic, and ecological factors. The development of North America into an urban continent receives special attention.

- (July 2)                    A.    The Emergence of the City  
Organization of the Course. Introduction of the socio-evolutionary conceptual framework and the description of the ecological complex as a tool for organizing material. Alternative political-economic models. The how and why of urban growth from Jarmo to the 20th century. Emphasis on the importance of environment in earliest period and social organization in latter periods. The city as a focus of change. ( Urban World, pp. 2-46 Read for overview.)
- (July 6)                    B. The Emergence of the North American City and Metropolitan Areas  
The e significance of population growth, technology, and the natural environment on evolving urban social organization in Canada and the United States. North American urban development up to roughly 1950. ( Urban World , pp. 50-69 )
- (July 7)                    C.    The Ecology of North American Cities  
The spatial structure of N. American cities and how it has evolved. Differences from European patterns. Canadian and U.S. differences. The "Chicago School" of sociology. The changing CBD. Segregation of functions and succession of land uses. Canadian patterns. Sunbelt vs Snowbelt. Outer Metropolitan growth. Edge cities. ( Urban World, pp. 72-112)
- (July 8)                    **First Quiz** ( Material in class and up to p, 112 in the text)

## PART TWO: THE CONTEMPORARY URBAN MILIEU: POVERTY, RACE AND ETHNICITY

The central focus is on lifestyles and how they change or resist change over time. Is community dying? The question of social mobility both in the suburbs and city. The questions of ethnicity and race.

- (July 8)                    A.    Images of Urban Life  
The social diversity of the city. The image of the city in culture. Sociological theories (Determinist, Compositional, and Subcultural). Bobos and urban villagers. "Urbanism as a way of life" thesis. (Urban World, pp 148-165)
- (July 9)                    B.    Life in the Big City  
Urban behavior and the rules of the game. Strangers, crime and social behavior. Urban crowding, stress, social alienation, and crime. (Urban World, pp 167-184)
- (July 13)                   C.    Questions of Race, Ethnicity, and Gender  
The adjustment of racial groups to urban life. The changing economic, social and family life in the inner city. Homelessness in the city. Ethnic groups, Visible Minorities and First Nations in Canada. Blacks, Asians, and Hispanics in the U.S. Gendered space. (Urban World , pp. 188-226)

## PART FOUR: SUBURBS AS THE NEW FRONTIER

The emphasis in this section is on suburbia as the New North American frontier. Attention is given to detailing how contemporary suburbs differs from cultural myths regarding suburbia.

- (July 14)                    The Changing Face of Suburbia  
Amount and nature of suburbanization. Postwar experiences. Different types of suburbs. Minority suburbanization. Is Canada different? Are suburban lifestyles different? The Myth of suburbia. Beyond baby boomers. (Urban World, pp. 114-143)

(July 15)                      Planning, Jane Jacobs, and New Urbanism  
Sprawl, and the New Urbanism. The ideas of Jane Jacobs.  
Visionary and retirement communities. (Urban World, pp.  
259- 263, 266-277, 286-289)

(July 16)                      **Second Quiz** (Class and reading material since first exam)

PART FIVE: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Planned urban change and the goals and mechanisms of such change are the focus of this section.

(July 20)                      Toward the Urban Future  
Social Planning. Planning for the city of the future.  
Some examples. Quo Vadis? Urban World, pp. 353-370  
Read rapidly for overview.)

(July 21)                      Calgary Planning Official

(July 22&23)                      **STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**

**Exam Policies:** You must provide advance notice to the instructor if you are unable to take an exam. All requests for deferral of an examination due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while the student has the physical or emotional problem rather than after recovery. Deferred exams may be allowed in the following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. If you have missed an exam for a legitimate reason, you will be able to write a "make up" exam as close to the original exam as possible. The date and location will be at the convenience of the Sociology Department. Travel arrangements and misreading of the syllabus are not valid reasons for requesting a deferred exam. Deferred exams will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student.

**Ethics Research:** Students are advised that any research with

human subjects--including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation--must have the approval of the Departmental Ethics Committee. In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required.

**Academic Misconduct:** cheating is regarded as a serious academic offense. Students are advised to consult the University Calendar, which presents a Statement of Intellectual Honesty and definitions and penalties associated with cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct.

**The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP)**

legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, e.g., outside an instructor's office or the Department main office. Term assignments must be returned to students individually, during class, or during the instructor's office hours; if a student is unable to pick up her/his assignment s/he may provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

**Safewalk:** The University of Calgary provides a "safe walk" service to any location on Campus, including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones, and campus housing. For Campus Security/Safewalk call 220-5333. Campus Security can also be contacted from any of the "Help" phones located around Campus.

**Academic Accommodation**

Students with a disability, who require academic accommodation, need to register with the Disability Resource Centre (MC 295, telephone 220-8237). Academic accommodation letters need to be provided to course instructors no later than fourteen (14) days after the first day of class. **It is a student's responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre and to request academic accommodation, if required.**

Handing in Papers Outside of Class, Return of Final Papers, and Release of Final Grades

1. When students are unable to submit papers at class, they should make arrangements to hand in their papers directly to the instructor or teaching assistant rather than at the Sociology Department main office.
2. Final papers will not be returned through the Sociology Department main office. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a

public place, (i.e., outside an instructor's office, the department office, etc.). Students who want their final papers returned by mail must attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with the paper. Otherwise final papers will only be available for pick-up during the instructor's office hours at the end of this term or the beginning of the next term.

3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology department. They are only available online.