

GEOG 351 Urban Geography

12:30-13:45, Tu and Th

Instructor: Dr. Yifei Sun
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Office: Sierra Hall 130E

Office hours: 14:00 – 15:30, Tuesdays and Thursdays

Classroom: SH108

Textbook:

Paul L. Knox and Linda McCarthy, 2005. *Urbanization: An Introduction to Urban Geography* (2nd edition). Upper addle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Course Goals and Outcomes

This course is a systematic examination of the spatial structure and dynamics of the contemporary city: cities as points and areas. It will introduce both theories and empirical evidences with an emphasis on American urban changes. Topics that will be covered include changes in the landscape, demographics, economic activities, transportation modes and cultural features of cities in America and abroad. It is hoped that such a class will expose students to various issues in urban life, familiarize them with the concepts and theories of urban development, and equip them with the basic skills of analyzing various urban-related issues.

The course will consist of lectures, movies, readings, student presentation and class discussion. Course materials are posted on WEBCT. All CSUN students can get a campus email account and then can access the course materials there. Students are required to submit their assignments through WEBCT, and the documents must be in Microsoft DOC format, or in Rich Text format. Other formats such as WPS will not be acceptable. It is the students' responsibility to set up a campus email account, and learn how to access and use WEBCT. Otherwise, your assignments will not be graded, unless approved by the instructor.

Tentative Schedule (*Subject to changes*)

Week 1 (Jan 30th – Feb 3) - Introduction (Chapter 1 of Knox)

Tu: Introduction to Geography

Th: Introduction to Urban Geography

Video: *The Five Themes of Geography*

Assignment: Account set up

Week 2 (Feb 6-10) – Origins and Evolution of Cities (Chapter 2 of Knox)

Tu: Lecture on Urban History

Th: Lecture on Urban History

Video: *Legacy: The Mandate of China*

Also: City Assignment

Assignment: Review on *Legacy: The Mandate of China*

Week 3 (Feb 13 -17) – Urban Systems I: American Urban Systems (Chapter 3 from Knox)

Assignment: History of the City you were assigned

**Week 4 (Feb 20- 24) – Urban Systems II: Principles of Urban Systems
(Chapter 4 from Knox)**

Assignment: Shopping Plaza

Week 5 (Feb 27 – Mar 3) – Urban Landuse (Chapters 5 and 6 from Knox)

Week 6 (Mar 6 – 10) – No class (Chicago AAG annual conference).

Assignments:

1. Watch and review the video: *Roger and me*
2. Ride the Valley Orange Line

Week 7 (Mar 13 – 17) – Urban Landuse continued

Th: Video: *The End of Suburbia*

Assignment: Review on *The End of Suburbia*

Week 8 (Mar 20 – 24) – Review and Test

Th: Mid-Term

Week 9 (Mar 27 – Mar 31) – Social Geography I: Segregation (Chapters 12 from Knox)

Assignment: Segregation Index

**Week 10 (Apr 3 – 7) – Social Geography II: Neighborhood Change
(Chapters 13 from Knox)**

Week (Apr 10 -14) – No Class: Spring Break

Week 11 (Apr. 17 – 21) – Social Geography III: Neighborhood Change

Tu: Video: *Do the Right Thing*

Assignment: Review on *Do the Right Thing*

Week 12 (Apr 24 – 28) – Mental maps (Chapter 14 from Knox)

Assignment: Mental maps

Week 13 (Apr 29 – May 5) – Urban Planning and Governance (Chapter 16 and 17 from Knox)

Assignment: City promotion

Week 14 (May 8 – 12) – Urban Futures (Chapter 18 from Knox)

Video: *America the Ugly/Smart Growth*

Assignment: Review on *America the Ugly and Smart Growth*

Week 15 (May 15 – 18) – Presentations

Final Exam: May 23 (12:45 pm – 2:45pm)

Grading Policies and Requirements1) Grading items

Test 1	25%
Test 2	25%
Assignments and movie reports	25%
Term paper and presentation	15%
Attendance and participation	10%

Final grades will depend on the students' absolute performance. In other words, the students' scores will not be curved. Therefore, there is no limit of "A's".

2) Exams and tests (50%) Each exam will counts 25% for the final grade and the final exam will be non-cumulative. Students are expected to be familiar with the materials covered by the instructor, students, and motives in class. No make-up exams will be given except in extremely unusual situation when the instructor is informed in advance.

3) Assignments and movie review reports (25%) All the assignments and movie reports are due a week after they are assigned. Students will be asked to write a 2-page review on selected movies (they are not just for fun!) Late submission of assignments will get a 10% penalty for each day late. Assignments late for more than a week without the instructor's approval will not be accepted.

4) Term paper and presentation (15%) Each student is required to write a 8-10 page term paper on a topic that is relevant to this class. The paper will be graded upon a few items: innovativeness of the topic, the organization and structure of the paper, clarity of the writing, logic of the reasoning, references, among others. The students are required to cite at five papers published in academic journals and citations formats should follow those published in the journal *Urban Geography*.

6) Attendance and participation (10%). Students need to come to class on a regular basis. Each student is allowed three absences without approval, after which ten points will be deducted from the final grade. The approved absences are only granted when the instructor is notified and agrees in advance.

7) Academic honesty

Each student is expected to work independently and cheating and plagiarism could lead to a grade of "F".

Note: this syllabus is tentative and subject to change. It is the students' responsibility to be aware of all the changes that are announced in class.