

**SPECIAL TOPICS IN GUSP: SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT IN URBAN THEORY**  
**GUSP 970 – FALL 2012**  
**TUESDAYS 1:50 – 4:40PM, 442 BERKEY HALL**

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### **Course Description**

The field of urban sociology was born in 1915 at the University of Chicago with the publication of Robert Park's essay entitled *The City*. Together with his collaborators and students, he led the so-called Chicago School of Urban Sociology, cultivating its distinctive ethnographic and ecological approaches. The majority of contemporary urban sociology can be viewed as building upon, or reacting to, these early developments. This course will trace the development of urban sociology from its early European influences, to the formation of the Chicago School, and the subsequent rise of several alternative schools of thought. In addition to considering urban theory specifically, this course will consider two broader themes: first, the use of concepts borrowed from biological ecology to understand social phenomena; second, the process of theory development and evolution, and the utility of so-called 'schools of thought.'

### **Goals and Expectations**

This course has three main goals:

1. Familiarize students with the major schools of thought in urban sociology.
2. Encourage critical thinking about urban processes generally.
3. Strengthen skills in writing, and oral presentation.

This course will follow a seminar format where we will discuss, debate, explore, and challenge the readings each week. Therefore, it is essential that each of you actively participate in the course. I expect each of you to complete the reading assignments prior to class, and come prepared to talk about them. This will require more than simply reading; plan to spend at least as much time outside of class *thinking* about the materials as actually reading them.

### **Readings**

All readings are available on ANGEL.

### **Course Policies**

*Academic Integrity:* The General Student Regulations state that: "[1.00] The principles of truth and honesty are fundamental to the educational process and the academic integrity of the University; therefore, no student shall: [1.01] claim or submit the academic work of another as one's own, [1.02] procure, provide, accept or use any materials containing questions or answers to any examination or assignment without proper authorization, [1.03] complete or attempt to complete any assignment or examination for another individual without proper authorization, [1.04] allow any examination or assignment to be completed for oneself, in part or in total, by another without proper authorization, [1.05] alter, tamper with, appropriate, destroy or otherwise interfere with the research, resources, or other academic work of another person, [1.06] fabricate or falsify data or results." In accordance with the All-University Policy on the Integrity of Scholarship and Grades, any student found in violation of this regulation will receive a failing grade for the course.

*Students with disabilities:* Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Accommodations for persons with disabilities,

with documentation from the MSU Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities, may be requested by contacting me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc). Requests received after this date will be honored whenever possible.

*Attendance & Late Assignments:* If you are unable to attend class, please let me know as early as possible. Late assignments will only be accepted in cases of a documented emergency.

*Questions or concerns:* I want to see you succeed in this course. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me and we can set up a time to talk. Please let me know as soon as possible if you experience any problems completing the course due to illness, disability, personal circumstances, etc. By letting me know early, we can work out a plan to make sure you do not fall behind.

*Final Grades:* Final grades will be assigned based on the following:

90 – 100 points	4.0	70 – 74 points	2.0
85 – 89 points	3.5	65 – 69 points	1.5
80 – 84 points	3.0	60 – 64 points	1.0
75 – 79 points	2.5	0 – 59 points	0.0

## Assignments

*Critical Analysis Essays (25 per essay × 3 essays = 75 points)*

Over the course of the semester, you will write three critical analysis essays, each between 10 and 12 pages long (double-spaced, 12 point font, one inch margins). The critical analysis essays are due every four weeks, on October 9<sup>th</sup>, November 6<sup>th</sup>, and December 4<sup>th</sup>. Each critical analysis essay should respond to one reading or one major concept from the preceding four weeks; they should not attempt to address all of the readings or multiple concepts. The essays should not summarize the reading or merely present your initial reactions to it, but should develop a cohesive argument that integrates, or responds to, the reading. Each essay should include (a) a statement of your argument that is grounded in the reading, (b) evidence or support for your argument, and (c) conclusions and future directions to consider. Essays will be graded using the rubric attached at the end of the syllabus. Do not wait until the last minute to begin working on your critical analysis essays; they each contribute substantially to your final grade and late essays will not be accepted.

*Lead Discussion (25 points)*

On the last day of the course, December 11<sup>th</sup>, we will conclude with a discussion of the merits and shortcomings of the schools of thought we have considered, and speculate about the future of urban sociology. You will select one school of thought and lead a discussion in which you present a case concerning the school's usefulness (or lack thereof) for contemporary urban theory. This is intended to be a casual discussion, rather than a formal conference-like presentation. However, you should still prepare for it by reflecting carefully on the readings and organizing your thoughts in some discussion notes. I would encourage you to prepare a handout to help guide discussion.

## Course Schedule

**September 4<sup>th</sup> Introduction**

### **PART I: WHAT IS THE CITY? HOW SHOULD WE STUDY IT?**

**September 11<sup>th</sup> Early Influences**

Simmel, Georg. [1903] 1950. "The Metropolis and Mental Life," Pp. 409 – 424 in *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, edited by Kurt H. Wolff. Glencoe, IL: The Free Press.

Tönnies, Ferdinand. [1887] 1940. "Conclusions and Outlook," Pp. 261 – 275 in *Fundamental Concepts in Sociology (Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft)*, translated by Charles P. Loomis. New York: American Book Company.

Weber, Max. [1921] 1978. "The City (excerpt)," Pp. 1212 – 1226 in *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

**September 18<sup>th</sup> CANCELLED**

**September 25<sup>th</sup> Jane Addams & Robert Park**

Addams, Jane. 1899. "The Function of the Social Settlement," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 13: 33 – 55.

Park, Robert E. 1915. "The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior in the City Environment," *American Journal of Sociology* 20: 577 – 612.

Park, Robert E. 1929. "The City as a Social Laboratory," Pp. 1 – 19 in *Chicago: An Experiment in Social Science Research*, edited by T. V. Smith and Leonard D. White. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

**October 2<sup>nd</sup> The Chicago School**

Ernest W. Burgess. 1925. "The Growth of the City: An Introduction to a Research Project," Pp. 47 – 62 in *The City*, edited by Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

McKenzie, Roderick D. 1924. "The Ecological Approach to the Study of the Human Community," *American Journal of Sociology* 30: 287 – 301.

Wirth, Louis. 1938. "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *American Journal of Sociology* 44: 1 – 24.

**October 9<sup>th</sup> The Ethnographic Approach [ESSAY DUE]**

Zorbaugh, Harvey Warren. 1929. "The Gold Coast," Pp. 46 – 68 and "The Slum," Pp. 127 – 158 in *The Gold Coast and the Slum: A Sociological Study of Chicago's Near North Side*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Anderson, Nels. 1923. "Types of Hobos," Pp. 61 – 106 in *The Hobo: The Sociology of the Homeless Man*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

## **PART II: THE SCHOOLS**

**October 16<sup>th</sup> The Ecological Approach**

Park, Robert E. 1936. "Human Ecology," *American Journal of Sociology* 42: 1 – 15.

Alihan, Milla Aïssa. 1938. "Conspectus of the Ecological Approach," Pp. 242 – 252 in *Social Ecology: A Critical Analysis*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Duncan, Otis Dudley, Leo F. Schnore, and Peter H. Rossi. 1959. "Cultural, Behavioral, and Ecological Perspectives in the Study of Social Organization," *American Journal of Sociology* 65: 132 – 153.

**October 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**New Urban Sociology**

Molotch, Harvey. 1976. "The City as a Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place," *American Journal of Sociology* 82: 309 – 332.

Gottdiener, Michael and Joe R. Feagin. 1988. "The Paradigm Shift in Urban Sociology," *Urban Affairs Review* 24: 163 – 187.

Smith, David A. 1995. "The New Urban Sociology Meets the Old: Rereading Some Classical Human Ecology," *Urban Affairs Review* 30: 432 – 457.

**October 30<sup>th</sup>**

**The Los Angeles School**

Dear, Michael. 2002. "Los Angeles and the Chicago School: Invitation to a Debate," *City and Community* 1: 5 – 32. [Plus replies by Andrew Abbott, Harvey Molotch, and Robert Sampson]

Gottdiener, Mark. 2002. "Urban Analysis as Merchandising: The 'LA School' and the Understanding of Metropolitan Development," Pp. 159 – 180 in *Understanding the City: Contemporary and Future Perspectives*, edited by John Eade and Christopher Mele. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

**November 6<sup>th</sup>**

**(The Demise of) The New York School [ESSAY DUE]**

Halle, David. 2003. "The New York and Los Angeles Schools," Pp. 1 – 46 in *New York and Los Angeles: Politics, Society, and Culture*, edited by David Halle. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Mollenkopf, John. 2008. "School is Out: The Case of New York City," *Urban Affairs Review* 44: 239 – 265.

Clark, Terry Nichols. 2011. "The New Chicago School: Notes Toward a Theory," Pp. 220 – 241 in *The City Revisited*, edited by Dennis R. Judd and Dick Simpson. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

**PART III: SOME ALTERNATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON THE CITY**

**November 13<sup>th</sup>**

**The Culturalists**

Fischer, Claude S. 1975. "Toward a Subcultural Theory of Urbanism," *American Journal of Sociology* 80: 1319 – 1341.

Lloyd, Richard. 2002. "Neo-Bohemia: Art and Neighborhood Redevelopment in Chicago," *Journal of Urban Affairs* 24: 517 – 532.

Borer, Michael Ian. 2006. "The Location of Culture: The Urban Culturalist Perspective," *City and Community* 5: 173 – 197.

**November 20<sup>th</sup>**

**The Feminists**

Markusen, Ann R. 1980. "City Spatial Structures, Women's Household Work, and National Urban Policy," *Signs* 5: S22 – S44.

McDowell, L. 1983. "Towards an Understanding of the Gender Division of Urban Space," *Environment and Planning D* 1: 59 – 72.

Spain, Daphne. 2002. "What Happened to Gender Relations on the Way from Chicago to Los Angeles?" *City and Community* 1: 155 – 169. [Plus reply by Sonya Michel]

**November 27<sup>th</sup> The Globalists & Network Analysts**

Craven, Paul and Barry Wellman. 1973. "The Network City," *Sociological Inquiry* 43: 57 – 88.

Friedmann, John. 1986. "The World City Hypothesis," *Growth and Change* 17: 69 – 83.

Smith, David A. and Michael Timberlake. 1993. "World Cities: A Political Economy/Global Network Approach," *Research in Urban Sociology* 3: 181 – 207. [Plus Pp. 85 – 86 from Smith/Timberlake in *World Cities in a World System*, edited by Knox & Taylor, 1995.]

**December 4<sup>th</sup> The Physicists & Mathematicians [ESSAY DUE]**

Zipf, George Kingsley. 1946. "The  $P_1P_2/D$  Hypothesis: On the Intercity Movement of Persons," *American Sociological Review* 11: 677 – 686.

Schelling, Thomas C. 1969. "Models of Segregation," *American Economic Review* 59: 488 – 493.

Bettencourt, Lius and Geoffrey West. 2010. "A Unified Theory of Urban Living." *Nature* 467: 912 – 913.

**December 11<sup>th</sup> Discussion: The Future of Urban Theory**

I have set this day aside for a broader discussion on the future of urban theory. You will select a "school of thought," "perspective," or "paradigm" and lead discussion on its merits (or lack thereof) for contemporary urban theory. You may:

- Select a school/perspective we have not already discussed
- Provide a reading for us to discuss (send to me by 11/27)
- Incorporate your own interests & ideas from your own discipline

This is not a formal conference-style presentation. Instead, I'd like each of you to lead discussion, just as we've done throughout the semester. However, you should still prepare with some discussion notes for yourself, and perhaps prepare a handout to guide discussion.

**GUSP 970 Critical Analysis Paper  
Grading Rubric**

<p><b>(1) Statement of Argument (8 points)</b></p> <p><b>Description:</b> Did the paper make a clear argument that was grounded one of the course readings? Was the argument original? That is, did it go beyond a mere summary of the reading?</p> <p><b>Comments:</b></p>	Score:
<p><b>(2) Support of Argument (8 points)</b></p> <p><b>Description:</b> Did the paper provide convincing support or evidence of the argument using course material or outside sources?</p> <p><b>Comments:</b></p>	
<p><b>(3) Conclusions and Future Directions (5 points)</b></p> <p><b>Description:</b> Did the paper offer conclusions and future directions based on the argument?</p> <p><b>Comments:</b></p>	
<p><b>(4) Organization and Clarity of Writing (4 points)</b></p> <p><b>Description:</b> Was the paper well organized and well-written? Was it free of spelling and grammar errors? Were sources appropriately cited?</p> <p><b>Comments:</b></p>	
<p><b>Total (25 points)</b></p>	