

SOC 113: Urban Sociology

Department of Sociology

Tufts University

Fall 2022

Instructor: Prof. Anjuli N. Fahlberg

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Class Meeting: M/W 3-4:15pm

Class Location: Lincoln Filene Center, Room 201

Office Hours: Mon 4:40-6pm; Thurs 1-3pm

Grader: Guilherme Baratho

Email: Baratho.g@northeastern.edu

Course Description:

Did you know that over 80% of the US population lives in cities? These numbers are even higher for Latin America, and the rate of urban populations is growing steadily in Europe, Asia, and Africa. But what, after all, accounts for such dramatic global urbanization patterns? How does the concentration of diverse groups of people affect group relations, access to resources, and inhabitants' overall quality of life? How do historic forms of inequality get (re)configured in urban areas? And, importantly, how can inequality and injustice be addressed in this context? This course aims to tackle these questions as we consider contemporary dynamics of inequality and social change in cities in the US and across the globe. We will examine how economic, political, social, and symbolic forms of inequality and exclusion have helped to shape the lived realities of diverse urban populations and how governments and civic actors have attempted to address these. The course will draw heavily from ethnographic perspectives of the city, using the stories of individuals and communities to understand how broader social issues affect the urban experience.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Identify the major transformations that led to contemporary social, economic and political dynamics within urban areas, in the US and abroad.
2. Be conversant with the main concepts and theories that animate the field of urban sociology.
3. Discuss how race, class, and gender structure relations between groups in cities.
4. Consider the impacts of urbanization and globalization on different groups in the city.
5. Conduct ethnographic observations and reflections in diverse urban spaces.

Required Texts

1. Stuart, Forrest. 2016. *Down, Out & Under Arrest: Policing and Everyday Life in Skid Row*. University of Chicago Press.
2. Tissot, Sylvie. 2015. *Good Neighbors: Gentrifying Diversity in Boston's South End*. Verso Books.

Classroom Policies

Respect and Inclusivity in the Classroom

Classrooms are spaces for learning. For this to happen, we must first and foremost respect the humanity of all students, instructors, and anyone else in the classroom. Therefore, no discriminatory remarks towards members of any individual based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, etc will be tolerated. Students are encouraged to treat the classroom as a space for learning about and working through multiple perspectives, and are encouraged to reflect critically on their own views and experiences and the dynamics that engender alternative perspectives.

Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions by critically engaging with the material and with key concepts, themes, and stories. Questions or comments that challenge traditional assumptions or normative values are encouraged, though these should always be provided in a thoughtful and respectful manner.

Food

Remaining engaged in class—alert, attentive, and participative—will make the class more interesting and productive for all of us. Students are therefore welcome to bring food and drinks, as these can be helpful to remaining alert. However, please do not be late due to waiting in lines to purchase food.

Plagiarism & Academic Integrity

Tufts holds its students strictly accountable for adherence to academic integrity. The consequences for violations can be severe. It is critical that you understand the requirements of ethical behavior and academic work as described in Tufts' Academic Integrity handbook. If you ever have a question about the expectations concerning a particular assignment or project in this course, be sure to ask me for clarification. The Faculty of the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Engineering are required to report suspected cases of academic integrity violations to the Dean of Student Affairs Office. If I suspect that you have cheated or plagiarized in this class, I must report the situation to the dean.

The general rule on plagiarism is that you should cite any fact that is not widely known and any idea that is not your own—which will be much of what you write! Keep track of what you are reading and where you are obtaining your information, and become comfortable with including the authors' last name(s) and dates of publication after each "borrowed" fact or idea. Citing what you have read not only prevents you from inadvertently committing plagiarism, but also demonstrates to your reader that your writing is well-researched.

As part of this course, I will utilize TurnItIn in the Canvas learning management system to help determine the originality of your work. TurnItIn is an automated system which instructors can use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of websites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. When papers are submitted to TurnItIn, the service will retain a copy of the submitted work in the TurnItIn database for the sole purpose of detecting plagiarism in future submitted works. Students retain copyright on their original course work.

Sources

We now suffer from an over-abundance of information, and it is easy to get overwhelmed by these sources and not know how to find them or which ones are credible. We will discuss this in greater detail in class, but students should be thoughtful about the credibility of each source. As a general rule, these sources are valid: books, scholarly articles, news articles by a mainstream newspaper, and reports issued by the government or major NGOs. You can find many of these on scholar.google.com. Invalid sources include: Wikipedia, blogs, and websites not affiliated with a credible organization.

Diversity and Accessibility

The diversity of students' experiences, perspectives, and abilities is essential to an informed and holistic classroom learning environment. Students with unique learning needs or who require special accommodations should speak to me at the beginning of the semester so provisions can be made accordingly. Please also contact the Student Accessibility Services office at Accessibility@tufts.edu or 617-627-4539 to make an appointment with an SAS representative to determine appropriate accommodations. Please be aware that, per Tufts University guidelines, accommodations cannot be enacted retroactively, making timeliness a critical aspect for their provision.

Technology in the Classroom

Technology in the classroom is usually not ideal, as students (and professors!) can get easily distracted when emails or messages pop up automatically. However, tis the season to be technological, so you will be allowed to use your electronic devices during class time to take notes or access readings or handouts.

I am counting on each of you to minimize distractions on your computer—please shut off instant notifications whenever possible and avoid chatting with friends or searching the web during class. I reserve the right to ask students to close their laptops at some moments in the class if students appear too distracted.

Quarantine

It is likely that many of us will need to quarantine for some of the semester. If you need to Zoom into class, please let me know ahead of time so I can make sure to prepare the technology. If you do become ill and will not be able to attend class or complete an assignment on time, please let me know and make a plan to get notes from a classmate.

Communication

Please email me or stop me after class for any questions or concerns or to talk further about the course material. I will be happy to provide you additional ideas and resources relevant to your areas of interest. While out-of-class communication with me is not required to get a good grade, students who actively email or talk to their instructors are much more likely to understand the assignments, gain greater insights into the topics, and perform well.

I will make every effort to respond to email within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends and holidays. Feel free to email again if I have not responded within that time frame (and you need a response right away), as sometimes things fall through the cracks.

Office Hours

I hold regular office hours and all students are encouraged to attend. While it is not necessary to visit all professors all the time, getting into the habit of talking to your professors outside the classroom is very important and will, in the long run, contribute to your relationships with faculty, your own thinking and reflection, and your overall success as a student. Good reasons to come to office hours include: (a) there was something about the class you didn't understand or have additional thoughts you'd like to discuss; (b) you would like to talk about your class project and brainstorm ideas; (c) you are having personal challenges and are afraid they might impact your participation in the class; or (d) you would like to discuss any other academic/research/work issues that fall within my areas of study or experience.

You can schedule an office hours appointment here: <https://calendly.com/anjuli-fahlberg/officehours>. You will receive an automatic email with a link to my Zoom meeting room. On Mondays, you may come to my office at the scheduled time if you prefer to meet in person. If I don't see you, I'll assume we're meeting on Zoom. On Thursdays, only Zoom meetings will be possible. Please email me or swing by my office on Monday if you need to speak to me and were unable to get a spot.

Grades

Please note that all grades are given with careful consideration, based on the description of the project and the rubric. Comments will also be provided to explain your grade. If, however, you feel like your grade does not reflect your performance, you may request that I review your grade. Please keep in mind that a revision of your assignment could result in your grade staying the same, rising, or potentially even going down. If you are not doing as well in the course as you hoped, come see me **early in the semester** and I will be happy to brainstorm a game plan.

Below is the conversion scale I use when calculating final grades. I round up for scores that end in 0.5 or higher.

A+ 98-100	C 74-76
A 94-97	C- 70-73
A- 90-93	D+ 67-69
B+ 87-89	D 64-66
B 84-86	D- 60-63
B- 80-83	F 59 or below
C+ 77-79	

Assignments:

Attendance and Participation	10%
Exams (2)	40% (20% each)
Ethnographies of the City (2)	50% (25% each)
Total	100%

Grader: Guilherme Baratho

Guilherme will be assisting me with grading the exams for the course and the final paper. Please consult with him if you have questions about your exam grades. He can be reached at barathog@northeastern.edu.

Guilherme is interested in Brazil's politics and urban structure. Before joining Northeastern in 2021, he completed his Master's in Sociology at the University of Chicago and holds a B.A. in Sociology, minor in Portuguese, from the University of California, Los Angeles. Outside of academia, he enjoys discovering music on vinyl and playing guitar.

Late Policy

All written assignments should be submitted by the due date and time. **Late assignments will be docked 3 points for each day late.**

- **MAJOR ILLNESS OR EMERGENCIES:** Exceptions may be granted for major illnesses, family emergencies, or jury duty. Serious illnesses must have documentation from health services or your doctor, and all other serious emergencies must first be reported to and documented by your advising dean.
- **MINOR ILLNESS OR STANDARD OUTSIDE OBLIGATIONS:** Exceptions for assignments will generally not be granted for minor illnesses or standard outside obligations, including travel, work, performances, job interviews, games, and so forth. If you have a question about whether your circumstance qualifies, please ask at least two weeks in advance. Extenuating circumstances are more likely to be considered with advance notice rather than at the last minute.
- **ANY ONGOING ISSUES:** If you have ongoing issues (i.e., chronic or mental or physical health conditions), please speak either to the Student Accessibility Services office or to your advising dean and I will be happy to work with them to put a plan in place.

Attendance and Participation (10%)

Discussion is critical to our best learning—and “unlearning.” You are therefore expected to attend every class and to come prepared, having done the readings and reflected on your opinions of them. A good grade depends on your (a) arriving on time, (b) not missing more than two classes, (c) paying attention during class and participating (aim for at least two comments per class), (d) making contributions that demonstrate you’ve done the readings and reflected on them, and (e) completing short class assignments. Please email me before class if you will be absent—I will notice!

Note: Some students struggle with regular participation due to shyness or concern that their comments/questions are not “good enough.” If you are one of them, please come see me in office hours at the beginning of the semester so we can develop some strategies to help with participation. And remember, the only difference between you and talkative students is that the latter’s ideas get heard and yours don’t. You are all learning—no idea or question is “better” than another—so tell us what’s on your mind. Class is better with your voice in it!

Exams (2 exams, 20% each= 40%)

We will have two in-class exams during the semester. Exams will be in an essay/short-answer format and will test students’ understanding of the readings and class discussions. Students will not need to have memorized details from the readings. Instead, focus on (a) the main arguments of the texts or course discussions; (b) the main concepts, their definitions and some examples; (c) major questions and themes discussed in class; and (d) the similarities and differences between authors’ arguments and views.

Exams will be in class on 03/02 and 04/27.

Ethnographies of the City (2 papers, 25% each = 50%)

There is no better way to learn about the city than to immerse yourself in it. Students should engage in two mini-ethnographies in targeted urban areas in Boston, Somerville (NOT on Tufts campus), or another city. Each paper should be 6-8 pages long (not including bibliography) and contain a **minimum** of 4 references to course material (different from your last paper) and 3 references to outside academic sources (journal articles or books).

1. Select a location. Your papers should be from two of the following types spaces (to be done in any order). I’ve listed some examples below each. If you have an idea not listed, please consult me first:

A public area

- A public park
- A train station and/or on the train (or bus)
- A festival or free concert (please follow COVID guidelines)
- A neighborhood
- A police station, hospital, welfare office, etc waiting room (with permission from staff if they are likely to notice you)

A private business

- A restaurant
- A food court
- A shopping area
- A used clothing store

A political space

- A protest or rally
- A political campaign
- City hall or other municipal building
- The area outside a courthouse or city hall

2. Do some research. What information/history might be useful to know about this space?
3. Generate some questions/topics you want to explore while you are there. Write these down and bring them with you.
4. Spend approximately two hours in that area. Try to be inconspicuous. Bring a notebook or tablet, and take 3-5 pages of notes in any format. Observe what is happening around you.
 - Who is there? Who isn't? What might explain these presences and absences?
 - What are some of the different uses of the space?
 - What does the space seem to be "producing" in terms of social relations, behaviors & practices, feelings, possibilities?
 - In what ways are social inequalities being manifested?
 - What themes/concepts from the course do you notice? In what ways are they similar and different from the ways the authors discussed them?
 - What questions do you have about the history/politics/etc of the space?
5. Identify the three themes that most stood out to you. What did you find most interesting? What resonated with course discussions? What differed?
6. Write your paper. Each paper should contain the following:
 1. A compelling introduction that provides an anecdote and/or background information about your site and what you found most interesting.
 2. A brief background section that explains what research you did and why you chose this site, and gives the history and current demographic and policy information relevant to your site.
 3. Three thematic sections. Each thematic section should include (a) 1-3 anecdotes/thick description, connections to one or more course concepts or theories, and analysis of what the anecdotes teach us about these concepts/theories. *Strong papers will not only appropriately apply the concept but demonstrate how the anecdote challenges or extends the concept in a useful and/or teaches us something new about urban sociology.*
 4. A conclusion that identifies the most important take-aways from your paper for our understanding of urban sociology.
 5. Uploaded field notes (in Word or a screenshot of written notes).

Please submit a plan for your two papers by 2/05. It should include:

- A description of which spaces you intend to visit for your two papers. Note: you can still change these later in the semester, but this will help you start the semester with a plan.
- Some themes/questions you think might be interesting to explore.
- Specific dates that you plan to visit each proposed site. These can change if necessary but please provide your preliminary plan.
- Please be strategic about timing. Some sites may be worth visiting later in the semester after we have completed the relevant readings.

Papers will be due on 03/19 and 05/10.

Course Readings

Week 1	Introduction
01/19	Welcome! Class on Zoom
Week 2	Cities and Inequalities
01/24	Engels, Frederick. 1845. <i>The Conditions of the Working Class in England</i> . 57-77.
01/26	DuBois, W.E.B. 1899. <i>The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study</i> . Univ of Pennsylvania Press. Chapters on Methods, The Problem, and Health.
Week 3	Urban Ecology and the Chicago School
01/31	Park, Robert. 1925. <i>The City</i> . Pp 1-33.
02/02	Reckless, Walter. 1926. "The Distribution of Commercialized Vice in the City: A Sociological Analysis." 239-251.
02/05	Proposal for ethnography papers due
Week 4	Political Economy
02/07	Perlman, Janice. 1979. <i>The Myth of Marginality</i> .
02/09	Wilson, William Julius. 1995. "The Political Economy and Urban Racial Tensions." <i>The American Economist</i> (39) 1.
Week 5	Policing Race
02/14	Stuart, Forrest. 2016. "Down, Out & Under Arrest: Policing and Everyday Life in Skid Row. University of Chicago Press. Intro and Chapter 1 (p. 1-77)
02/16	Stuart, Forrest. 2016. "Down, Out & Under Arrest: Policing and Everyday Life in Skid Row. University of Chicago Press. Chapter 2 (p. 78-124)
Week 6	Urban Education & Inequality
02/21	Stuart, Forrest. 2016. "Down, Out & Under Arrest: Policing and Everyday Life in Skid Row. University of Chicago Press. Chapter 3 (p. 125-163).
02/23	Stuart, Forrest. 2016. "Down, Out & Under Arrest: Policing and Everyday Life in Skid Row. University of Chicago Press. Chapter 5 & Methodological Appendix (p. 205-249 & 271-290).

Week 7	Taking Stock
02/28	Review session
03/02	First exam
Week 8	Gentrification, from Space to Politics
03/07	Tissot, Sylvie. <i>Good neighbors: Gentrifying Diversity in Boston's South End</i> . Verso Books. Intro & Ch 1 (1-36)
03/09	Tissot, Sylvie. <i>Good neighbors: Gentrifying Diversity in Boston's South End</i> . Verso Books. Ch 2 (37-78)
Week 9	Culture and Whiteness in the Gentrifying City
03/14	Tissot, Sylvie. <i>Good neighbors: Gentrifying Diversity in Boston's South End</i> . Verso Books. Ch 3 (79-143)
03/16	Tissot, Sylvie. <i>Good neighbors: Gentrifying Diversity in Boston's South End</i> . Verso Books. Ch 5 (197-251)
03/19	First ethnographic paper due midnight
3/19-3/27	Spring Break, no class
Week 10	The Globalization of Cities
03/28	Tali Hatuka, Issachar Rosen-Zvi, Michael Birnhack, Eran Toch & Hadas Zur. 2018. "The Political Premises of Contemporary Urban Concepts: The Global City, the Sustainable City, the Resilient City, the Creative City, and the Smart City." <i>Planning Theory & Practice</i> (19) 2. Begin watching: <i>Urbanized: A Film by Gary Hustwit</i> (available on YouTube).
03/30	Finish watching: <i>Urbanized: A Film by Gary Hustwit</i> (available on YouTube).
Week 11	Marketing the Global City
04/04	Polson, Erika. 2016. <i>Privileged Mobilities: Professional Migration, Geo-Social Media, and a New Global Middle Class</i> . New York: International Academic Publishers.
04/06	Adams, Kathleen. 2003. "Global Cities, Terror and Tourism: The Ambivalent Allure of the Urban Jungle. In <i>Postcolonial Urbanism: Southeast Asian Cities and Global Processes</i> , edited by Ryan Bishop, John Phillips and Wei Wei Yeo. Ch 2. Project: The Marketing Strategies of Global Cities.

Week 12	Urban Social Movements
04/11	Project: The Marketing Strategies of Global Cities
04/13	Harvey, David. 2003. "The Right to the City"
Week 13	Protest & Resilience
04/18	Patriot's Day, No Class
04/20	Understanding Occupy. Contexts. https://contexts.org/articles/understanding-occupy/#bamyeh .
04/22	Fahlberg, Anjuli, Thomas Vicino, Ricardo Fernandes & Viviane Potiguara. 2020. "Confronting Chronic Shocks: Social Resilience in Rio de Janeiro's Poor Neighborhoods." <i>Cities</i> (99).
Week 14	Looking Forward, Looking Back
04/25	Haase, Annegret. 2020. Covid-19 as a Social Crisis and Justice Challenge for Cities. <i>Frontiers in Sociology</i> , Nov (5). Review Session
04/27	Second Exam
Week 15	Wrapping Up
05/02	Final class: What did we learn? What will you remember?
05/10	Second ethnography paper due