Urban Change and City Politics

Through reading and research, this course examines major issues in urban politics, history, and sociology. This course is a seminar, intended for advanced undergraduates with a substantial background in the social sciences.

All books, or at least those for which we will be reading the bulk of the text, are available for purchase in the campus bookstore. They are also on reserve at the circulation desk of Rush Rhees Library; they are on two-hour reserve, but I can change that on request. (You might also consider online sources, including www.abebooks.com, for book purchases.) The required books are these—


All other readings are available at the course website on Blackboard. To access the Blackboard readings off-campus, you will first need to download and run VPN, so that your computer can be viewed as part of the University’s network. You can find VPN at http://rochester.edu/it/vpn/.
Academic honesty. Students must conduct themselves in accordance with the University’s Academic Honesty Policy. In this class, students may discuss readings and course material with anyone they choose—including the professor and other students. But, unless all assignments have been submitted, they may not share, receive, or discuss written work for this class, including outlines, plans, and notes for papers, except as specified in the next sentence. They may receive basic help with spelling and grammar from others, including from Writing Fellows, but never substantive help with their written arguments nor help of any sort with their papers from current or former students in this class.

TRACK ONE: UPPER-LEVEL WRITING REQUIREMENTS (PSC 241W, AAS 242W, HIS 378W)
These requirements also apply to graduate students taking the course for credit.
Informed participation in weekly discussions (35%). Students are required to attend all scheduled class meetings, having read all assigned material; students who do not attend regularly will not receive credit for the course. At all times, students should listen attentively to others, draw others into class discussions, and take risks by asking questions and throwing out new ideas.
Four short papers (30% total). In 2–3 pages, students should critically evaluate the readings, identifying and analyzing a central question. These papers must be analytical: they should scrutinize the logic and evidence marshaled on behalf of an argument and, where appropriate, analyze the relationship between various arguments. These papers must be short—no paper shorter than 600 words or longer than 1,000 words will be accepted—so get to the main point fast. Papers are due in Professor Gamm’s box in Harkness 314 by Tuesday morning at 10:00. No late papers will be accepted without prior permission. Students may write as many as six papers; in calculating the course grade, only the four highest paper grades will be included. By September 8, students pursuing Track One must submit to Professor Gamm a list of the 4 dates on which they plan to submit their short papers; any date on the initial list may be changed with prior notice. Track One students must submit four papers to receive credit for the course.
Research paper (35%). The research paper must draw on a substantial body of outside reading and, in most cases, on primary sources as well. The paper should be 10–15 pages in length. The paper is due December 4. By October 1, Track One students must meet with me and receive approval on their topic and approach. Track One students must submit a research paper to receive credit for the course.
There is no exam.

TRACK TWO: NON-UPPER-LEVEL WRITING REQUIREMENTS (PSC 241, AAS 242, HIS 378)
Informed participation in weekly discussions (35%). Students are required to attend all scheduled class meetings, having read all assigned material; students who do not attend regularly will not receive credit for the course. At all times, students should listen attentively to others, draw others into class discussions, and take risks by asking questions and throwing out new ideas.
Seven short papers (65% total). In 2–3 pages, students should critically evaluate the readings, identifying and analyzing a central question. These papers must be analytical: they should scrutinize the logic and evidence marshaled on behalf of an argument and, where appropriate, analyze the relationship between various arguments. These papers must be short—no paper shorter than 600 words or longer than 1,000 words will be accepted—so get to the main point fast. Papers are due in Professor Gamm’s box in Harkness 314 by Tuesday morning at 10:00. No late papers will be accepted without prior permission. Students may write papers for any seven of the twelve weeks, though students must submit papers in at least two of the first four weeks. Students may write as many as nine papers; in calculating the course grade, only the seven highest paper grades will be included. (This policy does not include students who fail to submit papers in at least two of the first four weeks: in this case, students will receive a “0” for each missing paper, and that paper grade will be included in calculating the course grade.) Track Two students must submit at least seven papers to receive credit for the course.
There is no exam.
Sept. 1   Introduction

Sept. 8   Cities in the Wilderness


Sept. 15  *No class—Rosh Hashanah*

Sept. 22  Industrialization


Sept. 29  Suburbanization


Oct. 6   *No class—Fall Break*

Oct. 13  Housing and Jobs


Oct. 20  Parishes and Congregations

Oct. 27  City Neighborhoods

Letter from Paul Gershkowitz, president, to the membership of Congregation Mishkan Tefila, 4 August 2015.

Nov. 3  Bosses and Reformers


Nov. 10  Community Power


Nov. 17  Immigration


Nov. 24  City Limits

Dec. 1 Race and Rights, North and South


Dec. 8 Revitalization and New Challenges