

Sociology/USP 901, Spring 2017:  
**Urban Social Structure**

Thursdays, 4:30 – 7:10 pm, Bolton Hall 757

Prof. Marcus Britton  
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 11 am to noon

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**Course Overview**

In sociology, structural perspectives emphasize that understanding social organization requires careful analysis of how individuals and other social actors are distributed across social positions, as well as the patterns of interaction and communication between these positions. Such perspectives assert that examining the development and consequences of social structures is a more fruitful path to understanding social organization than attending to individual cognition or cultural values and norms, or “what goes on in people’s heads.” This course applies structural perspectives to the analysis of urban neighborhoods, cities and metropolitan regions, while also comparing social structural perspectives with those that emphasize the social psychological and cultural dimensions of urban life. Our focus will be on neighborhoods, cities and metropolitan regions in the contemporary United States, but we will also selectively compare and contrast these urban social structures with those in other times and places. While we will primarily consider sociological perspectives on urban social organization, we will also consider relevant perspectives from urban planning, geography, history and policy research.

**Required Texts**

Abu-Lughod, Janet L. 2007. *Race, Space, and Riots in Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Grannis, Rick. 2009. *From the Ground Up: Translating Geography into Community through Neighbor Networks*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Katz, Bruce, and Jennifer Bradley. 2013. *The Metropolitan Revolution: How Cities and Metros are Fixing Our Broken Politics and Fragile Economy*. Washington, DC: Brookings.

Neal, Zachary. 2013. *The Connected City: How Networks are Shaping the Modern Metropolis*. New York: Routledge.

All other assigned readings will be available on the course D2L site in PDF format.

## **Assignments & Grading**

**Class Participation:** I expect each student in the class to complete all the assigned readings each week and to participate actively in the class discussion.

**Response Papers:** Each week except Week 14, each student will be required to submit a 2-page (double spaced) response paper reflecting on the assigned readings for that week at the beginning of class. While response papers do not need to present a formal argument, they should include coherent reflections that demonstrate that you have completed the assigned readings and given them some thought. Each response paper may include brief statements of what you see as the major themes that cut across the assigned readings, findings you thought were particularly surprising or significant, and critiques of specific authors' logic, method or interpretation of evidence. Your response paper should end with 2 or 3 questions that will inform our class discussion.

**Discussion Facilitation:** During our first class meeting, I will ask one student to sign up to be the co-facilitator for each class meeting. As co-facilitator, you will initiate the evening's discussion by making a brief, informal presentation in which you provide a broad overview of the assigned readings and your reaction to them. Your informal presentation should NOT summarize each reading in detail, but instead identify general themes and present critiques, either of arguments or interpretations offered by specific authors or of the overall approach to the topic taken by the assigned readings as whole. Your goals should be to get the discussion going—so don't hesitate to be creative and even provocative. Toward that end, you should produce a brief handout that includes 3-5 discussion questions about each assigned reading. You will then take a lead role (in collaboration with me) in keeping the discussion going throughout the class period. Perhaps most importantly, it will be your responsibility to supply a snack to be shared by the class (nothing elaborate, just a bag of chips, some cookies, or whatever).

**Comparative Analysis of Cities:** During Week 14, we will turn our attention to a comparison of two very different U.S. metropolitan regions: Milwaukee and Las Vegas. In order to facilitate our discussion, students will be expected to write a slightly longer paper (4 to 5 pages, double spaced) which compares and contrasts these two metros in light of the theories and research findings we have read about and discussed throughout the semester and, optionally, additional sources that the student identifies. More detailed instructions for this assignment will be provided after spring break (March 19<sup>th</sup> – March 26<sup>th</sup>).

**Final Paper:** My goal with the final paper assignment is to give you an opportunity to reflect more deeply on some of the assigned readings from the semester, delve further into one (or more) of the topics we covered (or a closely related one), and make progress on a major task that you are required to complete to finish your degree (your master's proposal or thesis, your dissertation, etc.). Accordingly, you may select some variation on one the following options: a literature review, a "white paper"/policy recommendation, or research proposal. Whichever option you choose, the final product should be approximately 15 double-spaced pages and should include complete documentation of your sources using ASA or APA format for both in-text

citations and your reference list. Your cited sources should include, but not be limited to, several of the assigned readings from the course. Due dates associated with this assignment are as follows:

- 1) You must submit a one-page prospectus outlining your topic and approach at the beginning of class on April 20th. You should also be prepared to discuss your topic briefly with the class.
- 2) Your final paper must be uploaded to the Dropbox on D2L by noon on Thursday, May 18th.

In addition, I encourage you to submit a rough draft of your paper in advance of the deadline, ideally by the last day of class (Thursday, May 11). I will do my best to provide feedback on your draft if I receive it after that, but I cannot guarantee that you will receive a detailed review.

### Grading Scale

|                            |     |                         |     |
|----------------------------|-----|-------------------------|-----|
| Class Participation        | 15% | Discussion Facilitation | 15% |
| Comparative Analysis Paper | 15% | Response Papers         | 25% |
| Final Paper                | 30% |                         |     |

95% = A; 90% = A-; 97% = B+ ; 94% = B; 80% = B-; 70% = C-; 60% = D- ; >60% = F

### Policies

*Attendance and class participation.* As noted above, it is essential that you come to each class meeting prepared, having completed all the assigned readings and prepared to participate actively in class discussion. Attendance is required. *Repeated absences and/or failure to participate in discussions will result in a lower grade.*

*Classroom environment.* Many of the assigned readings express strong, controversial political views, explicitly or otherwise. I encourage you to challenge the perspectives offered by the assigned readings, by me, and by your fellow students. However, please voice opinions, disagreements and criticism in a respectful tone; I will make every effort to do the same. We all have a responsibility to ensure that the classroom environment provides both a venue for the free exchange of ideas and perspectives and a welcoming, respectful environment.

*Grading:* Except in cases of medical or family emergency, late work will not be accepted. Please come and talk to me in the event of such an emergency. Grade appeals must be submitted in writing.

*Disability Accommodation:* To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the UWM Accessibility Resource Center and inform me as soon as possible about special accommodations so that I can best meet your needs. The Accessibility Resource Center, Mitchell Hall Room 112, (414) 229-6287, <http://www4.uwm.edu/arc/>

## Course Schedule

### Part I: Social Structures and the Social Psychology of Urban Experience

*Week 1: Introductions (1/26)*

*Week 2: Sociological Perspectives on Social Organization & Social Structure (2/2)*

#### Required Readings:

Blau, Peter. 1977. "A Macrosociological Theory of Social Structure." *American Journal of Sociology* 83(1):26–54.

Britton, Marcus L. 2011. "Close Together, but Worlds Apart? Residential Integration and Interethnic Friendship in Houston." *City & Community* 10(2):182–204.

Mayhew, Bruce H. 1980. "Structuralism vs. Individualism: Part 1, Shadowboxing in the Dark." *Social Forces* 59(2):335–74.

Small, Mario L. 2002. "Culture, Cohorts and Social Organization Theory: Understanding Local Participation in a Latino Housing Project." *American Journal of Sociology* 108(1):1–54.

*Week 3: Cities and Urbanism – Social Psychological and Historical Perspectives (2/9)*

#### Required Readings:

Lofland, Lyn. 1973. "Chapter 1 / The Problematic World of Strangers" and "Part 1 / Urban Public Order: The Historical Transformation." Pp. 3–91 in *World of Strangers: Order and Action in Urban Public Space*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Simmel, Georg 1971 [1903]. "The Metropolis and Mental Life." Pp. 324–39 in *Georg Simmel on Individuality and Social Forms*, edited by Donald N. Levine. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

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

#### Recommended (Optional) Readings:

Braudel, Fernand. 1992 [1979]. "Chapter 8: Towns and Cities." Pp. 479–558 in *The Structures of Everyday Life*. Vol 1, Civilization and Capitalism, 15<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> Century. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

## Part II: Public & Parochial Spaces; Neighborhoods as Sites of Social Interaction

### Week 4: Public Space (2/16)

#### Required Reading:

Blumenberg, Evelyn, and Renia Ehrenfeucht. 2008. "Civil Liberties and the Regulation of Public Space: The Case of Sidewalks in Las Vegas." *Environment and Planning A* 40: 303–22.

Britton, Marcus L. 2008. "'My Regular Spot': Race and Territory in Urban Public Space." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 37(4):442–68.

Jacobs, Jane. 1993 [1961]. "Chapter 2 / The Uses of Sidewalks: Safety" and "Chapter 3 / The Uses of Sidewalks: Contact." Pp. 37–96 in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Modern Library Edition. New York: Modern Library.

Lofland, Lyn. 1998. "Chapter 1: Toward of Geography and History of the Public Realm" and "The Normative or 'Legal' System: Patterns and Principles." Pp. 1 – 50 in *The Public Realm: Exploring the City's Quintessential Social Territory*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

### Week 5: Neighbors and Neighboring (2/23)

#### Required Reading:

Grannis, chapters 1 through 5, pp. 1-57

Hampton, Keith, and Barry Wellman. 2003. "Neighboring in Netville: How the Internet Supports Community and Social Capital in a Wired Suburb." *City & Community* 2(4):277–311.

Neal, "Chapter 2 / Community: Lost or Found," "Chapter 3 / Subculture / Finding Your Crowd in a Crowd," and "Chapter 5 / Form / Getting from Here to There," pp. 11–49, 69–87

Rothman, Hal. 2002. "Chapter 11 / Community from Nothingness: Neighborhoods of Affinity." Pp. 291–316 in *Neon Metropolis: How Las Vegas Started the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Routledge.

#### Recommended (Optional) Reading:

Lee, Barrett A., and Karen E. Campbell. 1999. "Neighbor Networks of Black and White Americans." Pp. 119–46 in *Networks in the Global Village*, edited by Barry Wellman. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

*Week 6: Neighbors and Neighboring (continued) (3/2)*

Required reading:

Grannis, chapters 6 through 14, Pp. 59 – 200.

*Week 7: Neighborhood Attachment, Social Control & Reputation (3/9)*

Required Reading:

Selections from Suttles, Gerald. 1972. *The Social Construction of Communities*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Pais, Jeremy, Christie D. Batson, and Shannon M. Monnat. 2014. “Neighborhood Reputation and Resident Sentiment in the Wake of the Las Vegas Foreclosure Crisis.” *Sociological Perspectives* 57(3):343–63.

Sampson, Robert. 2012. “Chapter 5 / Legacies of Inequality,” “Chapter 6 / ‘Broken Window’ and the Meanings of Disorder,” and “Chapter 7 / The Theory of Collective Efficacy.” Pp. 97–178 in *The Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

**Part III: Governing Cities, Building & Sustaining Metropolitan Regions**

*Week 8: Urban Political Economy & Interorganizational Networks (3/16)*

Molotch, Harvey. 1976. “The City as a Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place.” *American Journal of Sociology* 82(2):309–32.

Neal, “Chapter 4 / Politics / We Don’t Want Nobody Nobody Sent” and “Chapter 6 / Function / Working Together,” pp. 50-66, 88–106

Rast, Joel. 1999. “Chapter 1: The Politics of Urban Economic Development” and “Chapter 4: Community Economic Development and the Crisis of Machine Politics.” Pp. 3–21, 83–106 in *Remaking Chicago: The Political Origins of Urban Industrial Change*. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press.

Sampson, Robert. 2012. “Chapter 14: Leadership and the Higher-Order Structure of Elite Connections.” Pp. 329–54 in *The Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Read TWO of the following chapters from: Segbers, Klaus, ed. 2007. *The Making of Global City Regions: Johannesburg, Mumbai/Bombay, Sao Paulo and Shanghai*, edited by Klaus Segbers. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

- 1) Parnell, “Defining the City Strategy in Johannesburg,” pp. 139–67
- 2) Masselos, “Formal and Informal Structures of Power in Mumbai,” pp. 168–85
- 3) Schiffer & Deak, “Legitimizing Power Structures in Sao Paulo,” pp. 186–206
- 4) Wu, “From ‘State-Owned’ to ‘City Inc.’: The Case of Shanghai,” pp. 207–31

Spring Break: March 19<sup>th</sup> – March 26<sup>th</sup>

*Week 9: Metropolitan Regions as Networks and Actors (3/30)*

Neal, “Chapter 7 / Regional: From City to Metropolis,” pp. 109–24

Katz & Bradley, chapters 1 – 5, pp. 1–109

*Week 10: Urban Sprawl and Global Warming (4/6)*

Gonzalez, George A. 2009. *Urban Sprawl, Global Warming and the Empire of Capital*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

*Week 11: Sustainable Urban Development and Urban Agriculture (4/13)*

De Sousa, Christopher. 2012. “Milwaukee’s Menomonee Valley: A Sustainable Re-Industrialization Best Practice.” UIC Institute for Environmental Science and Policy Sustainable Brownfields Consortium. <http://brownfields.org.uic.edu/research-results/documents/MenomoneeValley-final-12-7-11.pdf>

Dodman, David. 2009. “Blaming Cities for Climate Change? An Analysis of Urban Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventories.” *Environment and Urbanization* 21(1):185–201.

Gough, Meghan Z., and John Accordino. 2013. “Public Gardens as Sustainable Community Development Partners: Motivations, Perceived Benefits, and Challenges.” *Urban Affairs Review* 49(6):851–87.

Hawkins, Christopher V., Rachel M Krause, Richard C. Feiock, and Cali Curley. 2016. “Making Meaningful Commitments: Accounting for Variation in Cities’ Investments of Staff and Fiscal Resources to Sustainability.” *Urban Studies* 53(9):1902–24.

Holgate, Claudia. 2007. "Factors and Actors in Climate Change Mitigation: A Tale of Two South African Cities." *Local Environment* 12(5):471–84.

Tornaghi, Chirara. 2014. "Critical Geography of Urban Agriculture." *Progress in Human Geography* 38(4):551–67.

*Week 12: Segregation & Inequality in U.S. Metropolitan Areas (4/20)*

Bischoff, Kendra, and Sean Reardon. 2013. "Residential Segregation by Income, 1970-2009." Spatial Structures in the Social Sciences, Brown University.  
<https://s4.ad.brown.edu/Projects/Diversity/Data/Report/report10162013.pdf>

Logan, John R. "Separate and Unequal in Suburbia." Census Brief prepared for Project US2010. Spatial Structures in the Social Sciences, Brown University.

Logan, John R., and Brian J. Stults. 2011. "The Persistence of Segregation in the Metropolis: New Findings from the 2010 Census." Census Brief prepared for Project US2010.  
<https://s4.ad.brown.edu/Projects/Diversity/Data/Report/report2.pdf>

Marques, Eduardo, Renata Bichir, and Celi Scalon. 2012. "Residential Segregation and Social Structure in Sao Paulo: Continuity and Change since the 1990s." Pp. 135 – 52 in *Residential Segregation in Comparative Perspective: Making Sense of Contextual Diversity*, edited by Thomas Maloutas and Kuniko Fujita. Surrey, UK: Ashgate.

Massey, Douglas S., Jonathan Rothwell, and Thurston Domina. 2009. "The Changing Bases of Segregation in the United States." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 74(1): 74–90.

Netto, Vinicius M., Maira Pinheiro Soares and Roberto Paschoalino. 2015. "Segregated Networks in the City." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 39(6):1084 –102.

#### **Part IV: Comparative Analyses of U.S. Cities**

*Week 13: Urban Riots and Resistance to Segregation & Inequality (4/27)*

Abu-Lughod, Janet L. 2007. *Race, Space, and Riots in Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles*. Oxford University Press. READ pp. 3–125 and (a) pp. 129–94 (NYC) OR (b) pp. 197–295 (LA)



*Week 14: Comparison of Las Vegas & Milwaukee (5/4)*

Moehring, Eugene P. 2000. "Chapter 8: The City Building Process" and "Epilogue: Las Vegas, 1970 – 2000." Pp. 233 – 91 in *Resort City in the Sunbelt, Las Vegas, 1930–2000*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press.

Rothman, Hal. 2002. "Chapter 10 / The Instant Metropolis: Building a City without Basements or Closets." Pp. 261–89 in *Neon Metropolis: How Las Vegas Started the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Routledge.

Selections from Gurda, John. 1999. *The Making of Milwaukee*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

**Part V: Interurban Networks**

*Week 15: Regional, National & Global Urban Networks (5/11)*

Katz & Bradley, chapters 7–9, pp. 144–208

Neal, "Part 3 / Macro-Urban Networks: Networks of Cities," pp.109-177

Sassen, Saskia. 2016. "The Global City: Enabling Economic Intermediation and Bearing Its Costs." *City & Community* 15(2):97–108.