

# Sociology 2367.02: Urban Social Problems

---

## INSTRUCTOR & COURSE INFORMATION

**Instructor:** Lora A. Phillips, MA, ABD

**Class Meetings:** Wednesday and Friday, 2:20pm to 3:40pm

**Classroom:** 136 Jennings Hall

**Office Hours:** Wednesday 12:30pm to 2pm & 3:40pm to 5:30pm; or by appointment

**Office:** 223B Townshend Hall

**E-mail:** phillips.1151@osu.edu

## INTRODUCTION TO COURSE

Although humans are believed to have inhabited the earth for approximately 2.5 million years, we did not begin to establish permanent settlements until approximately 10,000 years ago, and it is only within the last several hundred years that these permanent settlements began to take the form of the cities that we know today. These modern cities have experienced significant growth, development, and change in their short life. This fact is perhaps most true in North America, where greater than 80 percent of people live in urban areas—the highest proportion of urban inhabitants on earth.

At the most basic level, urban areas are worth studying because theory and research in this area is directly relevant to a majority of individuals. Urban areas are the *location* where our lives unfold. Thus, to study urban areas, is really to study ourselves. Of course, we are not isolated actors within our physical environment; rather, we constantly interact with our environment and with others in our environment. Urban areas, therefore, serve as the stage for our human drama. In this capacity, they embody the culture and values of our society and are reflections of our highest potential, worst injustice, and everything in between. In a sense, urban areas are the most tangible manifestation of our *society*. Thus, to study urban areas, is also to study society as a whole.

The course is divided into two sections. Section one sets the scene by exploring the development and structure of cities and considering how these matter for social life. Section two covers a range of particular social problems, including both historical and ongoing problems and modern social problems. It should be noted that the course will focus on the United States context.

## COURSE GOALS

1. To facilitate an understanding of historical, theoretical, and empirical topics surrounding urban areas
2. To elucidate connections between the physical environment, individuals, and society as a whole
3. To improve analytic and research skills through the critical engagement of literature and completion of course projects

## COURSE MATERIALS

All required readings will be posted on Carmen or hyperlinked on the syllabus.

For those students who would like additional instruction, beyond what is required for the course, this optional textbook is recommended:

Macionis, John J. and Vincent N. Parrillo. *Cities and Urban Life*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. (any edition)

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Active Participation.** This course creates a learning community, wherein each individual has certain responsibilities to the community and its members. As the instructor, my responsibilities include selecting important topics, presenting them in an interesting way, and facilitating your learning to the best of my ability. Beyond the course content, though, I also have a responsibility to treat you with respect and create a learning environment where you feel comfortable testing new ideas.

In choosing to take this course, I assume that you have also chosen to meet your responsibilities as a member of the learning community. One such responsibility is active participation. Every student in the course is unique and, thus, brings unique knowledge, experience, and insight to the course. As a result, the contributions that you make add to the learning of all other members of the community—myself included. Active participation also adds to your own learning, since it challenges you to work through ideas rather than simply passively receiving them. In this sense, then, active participation is also a responsibility to yourself.

Active participation has three components: (1) answering questions addressed to the class, (2) participating in group activities and discussions, and (3) completing the required readings (or watching the required videos, viewing the required infographics, etc.) that have been assigned for that day. Regarding component one, the quantity and quality of your contributions will be considered, as a whole, at the end of the semester (note that quantity does not necessarily equal quality). Regarding component two, I expect that each student will contribute to each group activity and discussion. And regarding component three, there will be ten unannounced in-class assignments that will quiz you on the materials assigned for that day. None of the three components is worth a particular amount of points; rather, I will consider whether your participation in each of the three components is satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Earning a satisfactory mark for all three components will earn you 100 points, a satisfactory mark for two of the components will earn you 80 points, a satisfactory mark for one of the components will earn you 60 points, and a satisfactory mark for none of the components will earn you 0 points. I will provide each student with individual feedback about halfway through the semester regarding the status of their participation grade thus far.

Attendance is, of course, required; however, attendance alone will not constitute active participation. Although daily points will not be given for either attendance or participation, a lack of either will negatively affect your grade. In regard to attendance, you are permitted one unexcused absence. Each absence in excess of that one, without university-approved documentation, will result in a loss of one percentage point from your final grade for the course.

**Exam 1.** The first exam will be an in-class exam covering material from section one of the course. It will consist of two essay questions and four short-answer questions, completed in class on the day of the exam. At least one week prior to the exam, five potential essay questions will be handed out. On the day of the exam, I will select two of these questions for you to answer. The short-answer questions will not be provided ahead of time, and they may cover information not encompassed by the essay questions. Thus, the list of potential essay questions should serve as a *partial* study guide, but in order to maximize your likelihood of earning a satisfactory grade, you should also study the lecture notes and other course materials covered during the first section of the course. You are welcome and encouraged to discuss the potential essay questions with your classmates as you study. I am also willing to address any concerns that you may have, until 6pm the evening before the exam. On the day of the exam, bring a pencil or pen. I will provide blue books for you to write on. Please plan to show up on time, as you will not receive extra time to complete your exam if you show up late.

**Exam 2.** The second exam will be a take-home final essay.

Topic: You will apply at least four topics that we covered in class to the City of Columbus, bringing in as much content as possible and focusing especially (but not necessarily exclusively) on content covered in the second section of the course. In order to complete this exam, you are required to travel around (a) the City of Columbus or (b) the Columbus Metropolitan Area, using any mode of transportation that you have access to and prefer. You may opt to select one mode of transportation or select a combination of several. (Please talk to me if you have concerns about your capacity to travel.)

Content: A good paper will (1) accurately and thoroughly explain course concepts, (2) accurately and thoroughly describe Columbus, and (3) accurately link course concepts to the city. You are welcome to argue that particular aspects of Columbus are inconsistent with what we learned in class, so long as you provide sufficient detail and make a compelling argument. You are also welcome to discuss topics we covered in class that seem to be absent in Columbus, so long as you describe what conditions exist instead and speculate reasonably as to why the city did not develop a particular condition. The paper should also include (4) a brief explanation of where, how, and what time(s) of day and day(s) of the week you traveled, with reflection on how this may have influenced what you observed. You are not required to cite lectures, but you should properly cite (in the text and in a reference list) any other course materials that you incorporate. You may choose to include additional sources beyond the course material, but doing so is not required; if you choose to do so, however, be sure to include proper citations. The paper should include at least one source, either from course materials or (if you choose) from beyond these materials.

Format: The paper will be five to seven double-spaced pages (not including the reference list), with 12-point font, one-inch margins, and standard line and paragraph spacing. It will include an introduction, a body, and a conclusion, as well as a reference list and in-text citations. The reference list and in-citations may be formatted using the style guide common in your discipline or using whichever style guide you are most comfortable with, as long it is a real style guide and you use it consistently throughout the paper. Finally, the paper should be free of grammatical and typographical errors.

**Final Paper.** Topic: You will select your own topic, within the criteria set forth here. The topic will be a historical event related to a U.S. city. The event will be tied to the city's history or have otherwise affected the city in a very significant way, beyond simply taking place there. In other words, the event should have affected the entire city and everyone in it somehow. Applicable events include, but are not limited to, a natural disaster, a well-known crime, a factory closing, a riot, or a building development.

Several topics are off limits and, therefore, cannot be selected: Hurricane Katrina, the Oklahoma City bombing, the Boston Marathon bombing, Columbine, Sandy Hook, and September 11.

Content: A good paper will first present the event, laying out what happened in sufficient detail. Beyond describing the event, the paper should demonstrate how this event is linked to the city where it happened. This can be accomplished in one or more of three possible ways. First, you can show how the event would not have happened, if not for the city. Second, you can explore how the entire city was affected while the event was unfolding. Or third, you can discuss long-term change(s) that the city underwent as a result of the event, which affected all or most residents. The city where the event took place should be the focus of the paper—not the national picture; however, it is not entirely off limits to (briefly) discuss the nation as a whole, particularly if you can demonstrate how a particular city can be important for the entire country. Finally, the paper must incorporate information presented in lectures and/or course materials—the more, the better. The paper should also incorporate information that you gather from at least five sources beyond the course material. At least one source must be an academic source (a book, peer-reviewed journal article, or government report), but the remaining sources can be any combination of academic sources and news sources. Note that, although the course is titled “urban social problems,” it is not required that you frame the paper around the idea of a “problem” (although you are welcome to take a stand if this is the approach you feel would be most effective). I am mostly concerned that you demonstrate how place matters in a more broad sense.

Format: The paper will be six to eight double-spaced pages (not including the reference list), with 12-point font, one-inch margins, and standard line and paragraph spacing. It will include an introduction, a body, and a conclusion, as well as a reference list and in-text citations. The reference list and in-citations may be formatted using the style guide common in your discipline or using whichever style guide you are most comfortable with, as long it is a real style guide and you use it consistently throughout the paper. Finally, the paper should be free of grammatical and typographical errors.

Process: You will complete this assignment in four steps. First, you will hand in a proposal, which will provide a brief (no longer than one page) description of the city and historical event you have selected. The proposal will also include a list of the sources you intend to use, which may be included on the same page as your description or listed on a second page. These sources can be switched or supplemented in the future, as needed, without consulting with me; however, any possible topic changes after the proposal has been submitted should be discussed with me first. Second, you will hand in a rough draft of a portion your paper for me to review. This rough draft should only include the body of the paper (since the bulk of the citations are there) and the reference list. It will mostly (though not necessarily entirely) be a completion grade. If it appears that you made a sincere effort to meet the requirements outlined in the rubric, you will receive full credit. I will also provide detailed feedback regarding concerns that may cause you to lose points on your final paper. Third, you will bring one stapled copy of the full draft of your paper to class for a peer review exercise. You will exchange your paper with classmates, who will then review it for content and grammatical errors. Finally, you will revise your draft and submit a hard copy of your final paper.

#### **EXTRA CREDIT**

Extra credit will be offered at my discretion, and students should not expect additional extra credit opportunities beyond those enumerated in this syllabus. Further, extra credit will never be offered on an individual basis; all extra credit opportunities will be offered to the entire class.

**E-mail a Selfie.** During the first week of class, e-mail me a selfie. The quality of classroom interaction improves significantly when I get to know you and you get to know your classmates. To this end, having a photograph will allow me to quickly learn everyone’s names. The selfie will not be used for any purpose other than learning your name. (+1 point extra credit)

**Come to Office Hours.** Office hours provide another opportunity for me to get to know you as a student, beyond addressing any questions or concerns that you have about the course. Come to office hours during the regularly scheduled time or by appointment, at any point throughout the semester. Please note that the awarding of extra credit depends on whether you come to office hours and not how frequently you come to office hours, although you are encouraged to come as frequently as you find beneficial. (+1 point extra credit)

**GRADING**

All readings and assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late assignments will be penalized five percentage points per day, up to 25 percent off. After that point, no late assignments will be accepted.

Grades for this course are based on a point scale. The total number of points possible is 600.

| <u>Course Component</u> | <u>Total Points Possible</u> | <u>Grade Scale (Percent)</u>          |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Active Participation    | 100                          | A 93-100    A- 90-92.9                |
| Exam 1                  | 150                          | B+ 87-89.9    B 83-86.9    B- 80-82.9 |
| Exam 2                  | 150                          | C+ 77-79.9    C 73-76.9    C- 70-72.9 |
| Paper Proposal          | 10                           | D+ 67-69.9    D 60-66.9               |
| Paper Draft             | 40                           | F 59.9 or below                       |
| Final Paper             | 150                          |                                       |

**GE STATEMENT**

Sociology 2367.02 meets the **GE Social Science requirement**, in the category of Organizations and Politics. Students who take this course will: 1) understand the theories and methods of scientific inquiry as they are applied to the studies of individuals, groups, organizations, and societies; 2) comprehend human differences and similarities in various social, cultural, economic, geographic, and political contexts; and 3) develop the ability to comprehend and assess individual and social values, and recognize the importance of these values in social problem solving and policy making. Sociology 2367.02 fulfills these goals in the course requirements outlined in this syllabus.

Sociology 2367.02 meets the **GE Writing and Communication requirement**, in the category of Level Two. Students who take this course will: 1) demonstrate the ability to read carefully and express ideas effectively through critical analysis, discussion, and writing; 2) apply written, oral, and visual communication skills and conventions of academic discourse to the challenges of a specific discipline; and 3) access and use information critically and analytically. Sociology 2367.02 fulfills these goals in the course requirements outlined in this syllabus.

**DISABILITY STATEMENT**

If you need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, please contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 in room 150

Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

### **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understood the University's Code of Student Conduct, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's Code of Student Conduct and this syllabus may constitute "Academic Misconduct."

The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process." Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an "excuse" for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the University's Code of Student Conduct (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Other sources of information on academic misconduct (integrity) to which you can refer include:

- The Committee on Academic Misconduct web pages (<http://oaa.osu.edu/coam.html>)
- Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity ([oaa.osu.edu/coam/ten-suggestions.html](http://oaa.osu.edu/coam/ten-suggestions.html))
- Eight Cardinal Rules of Academic Integrity ([www.northwestern.edu/uacc/8cards.html](http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/8cards.html))

## TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

### Section One

#### Introduction to Course

Wednesday, January 10

#### Definitions & Development of Modern Cities – Part I

Friday, January 12

**Read** “The Condition of the Working-Class in England in 1844”

<http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/mod/1844engels.asp>

#### Development of Modern Cities – Part II

Wednesday, January 17

**Read** “Great Migration” <http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/great-migration>

#### Structure & Agency

#### Making Sense of Modern Cities: Social Psychology and Social Relations (Day 1)

Friday, January 19

**Review** “Great Migration” <http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/great-migration>

#### Making Sense of Modern Cities: Social Psychology and Social Relations (Day 2)

Wednesday, January 24

**Read** “Urbanism as a Way of Life” by Louis Wirth

#### Making Sense of Modern Cities: Growth & Development

Friday, January 26

**Read** “The City as a Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place” by Harvey Molotch

#### Location & Structure of U.S. Metropolitan Areas

Wednesday, January 31

**Paper Proposal Due**

Friday, February 2

**Read** “Parks for Profit: The High Line, Growth Machines, and the Uneven Development of Urban Public Spaces” by Kevin Loughran

#### Global Cities

Wednesday, February 7

Friday, February 9

**Read** “Urbanization in Developing Countries” by Vernon Henderson

#### Bringing It Together: Urban Development, Structure, and Social Problems

Wednesday, February 14

#### Exam 1

Friday, February 16

**Exam 1 (during class)**

## **Section Two**

### Segregation

Wednesday, February 21

**View** “The Racial Dot Map” <http://demographics.coopercenter.org/racial-dot-map/>

Friday, February 23

**Read** “1920s-1948,” “1934-1968,” “1970s-Present” (including all links under “Specific Land Use Policies that Impact Segregation”) from The Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston

<http://www.bostonfairhousing.org/timeline/>

**Watch** “The Racist History of Chicago’s Housing Policies” [https://youtu.be/LN\\_8KlpmZXs](https://youtu.be/LN_8KlpmZXs)

Wednesday, February 28

**Listen to/Read Transcript** “A New Kind Of Segregation, Income Segregation?”

<http://www.npr.org/2012/08/13/158694543/a-new-kind-of-segregation-income-segregation>

### Suburbanization and Sprawl

Friday, March 2

**Read** “The Drive-in Culture of Contemporary America” by Kenneth T. Jackson

**Read** “An Inner-Ring Suburb on the Edge, Maple Heights Can’t Offer Residents Much – Not Even Basketball Hoops”

[http://www.cleveland.com/naymik/index.ssf/2015/10/an\\_inner-ring\\_suburb\\_on\\_the\\_ed.html](http://www.cleveland.com/naymik/index.ssf/2015/10/an_inner-ring_suburb_on_the_ed.html)

### Decentralization & Deindustrialization

Wednesday, March 7

**Read** “Long Commutes Are Awful, Especially for the Poor”

<http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/06/long-commutes-are-awful-especially-for-the-poor/395519/>

Friday, March 9

**Rough Draft of Final Paper Due (remember: body only)**

**Read** “Detroit and Deindustrialization”

<http://www.dollarsandsense.org/archives/2013/0913bluestone.html>

### Spring Break

NO CLASS: Wednesday, March 14, and Friday, March 16

### Poverty

Wednesday, March 21

**View** “Poverty and Race in America, Then and Now”

[http://apps.urban.org/features/PovertyRace\\_DW/Map.html](http://apps.urban.org/features/PovertyRace_DW/Map.html)

Friday, March 23

**Watch** “The Line” <https://youtu.be/zZxjb4gB93A>

### Housing

Wednesday, March 28

**Watch** “The Pruitt Igoe Social Housing Development” <https://youtu.be/yruO2wqiOTU>

### In-Class Activity: Writing Workshop

Friday, March 30

**Bring one stapled copy of the full draft of your final paper to class**

Crime & Criminal Justice

Wednesday, April 4

Friday, April 6

**Final Paper Due**

Education

Wednesday, April 11

**Read** "Introduction" in *Our Schools Suck: Students Talk Back to a Segregated Nation on the Failures of Urban Education* by Gaston Alonso, Noel Anderson, Celina Su, and Jeanne Theoharis

Environmental Justice

Friday, April 13

**Read** "Denaturalizing Disaster: A Social Autopsy of the 1995 Chicago Heat Wave" by Eric Klinenberg

Gentrification

Wednesday, April 18

**Read** "Gentrification and its Discontents"

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2010/06/gentrification-and-its-discontents/308092/>

**Watch** "Gentrification 'Without the Negative' in Columbus, Ohio"

<http://www.theatlantic.com/video/index/382568/gentrification-without-the-negative-in-columbus-ohio/>

In-Class Activity: Fixing the City

Friday, April 20

Exam 2

Course Conclusion

Wednesday, April 25, 4:00pm to 5:45pm

**Exam 2 Due**

Please plan to attend the entire time slot designated for the final

**Sociology 2367.02 – Urban Social Problems**  
**Rubric – Paper Proposal**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Points: \_\_\_\_\_/10

Body

\_\_\_\_\_ Lists the city (1 point) and the historical event (1 point)

\_\_\_\_\_ Provides a description of the topic (3 points)

Sources

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes at least five sources (5 = 3 points; 3-4 = 2 points; 1-2 = 1 point; 0 = 0 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ At least one of the sources is an academic source (1 point)

\_\_\_\_\_ Sources are listed in sufficient detail to be located (1 point)

Comments:

**Sociology 2367.02 – Urban Social Problems**  
**Rubric – Paper Draft**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Points: \_\_\_\_\_/40

Body

\_\_\_\_\_ Describes the historical event (10 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ Discusses the significance of the historical event for the city (10 points)

Sources

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes in-text citations (10 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes a reference list (8 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ At least one of the sources is an academic source (2 points)

Comments:

# Sociology 2367.02 – Urban Social Problems

## Rubric – Final Paper

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Points: \_\_\_\_\_/150

### Introduction

\_\_\_\_\_ Quickly draws the reader in (5 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes a thesis statement (5 points)

### Body

\_\_\_\_\_ Describes the historical event (30 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ Discusses the significance of the historical event for the city by either (a) showing how the event would not have happened if not for the city, (b) exploring how the entire city was affected while the event was unfolding, and/or (c) discussing the long-term change(s) that the city underwent as a result of the event, which affected most or all residents (30 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ Incorporates course material (20 points)

### Conclusion

\_\_\_\_\_ Brings closure (5 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ Synthesizes main points made in the body (5 points)

### Sources

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes in-text citations (5 points), which are properly formatted (5 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes a reference list (5 points), which is properly formatted (5 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes at least five sources (5 points), with at least one academic source (5 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ All of the sources in the text are in the reference list and vice versa (5 points)

### Clarity

\_\_\_\_\_ Writes without spelling or grammar errors (5 points)

### Format

\_\_\_\_\_ Formats consistently with the guidelines articulated in the syllabus (5 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ Meets 6- to 8-page length requirement (5 points)

# Sociology 2367.02 – Urban Social Problems

## Rubric – Exam 2

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Points: \_\_\_\_/150

### Introduction

\_\_\_\_\_ Quickly draws the reader in (5 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes a thesis statement (5 points)

### Body

\_\_\_\_\_ Explains where, how, and what time(s) of day and day(s) of the week traveling took place (5 points) and reflects on how this may have influenced observations (5 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ Course Topic 1: Accurately and thoroughly (a) explains course concept and (b) describes Columbus, and accurately links course concept to the city (15 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ Course Topic 2: Same criteria as Course Topic 1 (15 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ Course Topic 3: Same criteria as Course Topic 1 (15 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ Course Topic 4: Same criteria as Course Topic 1 (15 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ At least three of the course topics discussed were covered in class after the first exam (10 points)

### Conclusion

\_\_\_\_\_ Brings closure (5 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ Synthesizes main points made in the body (5 points)

### Sources

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes at least one in-text citation (5 points), which is properly formatted (5 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes a reference list (5 points), which is properly formatted (5 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ All of the sources in the text are in the reference list and vice versa (5 points)

### Clarity

\_\_\_\_\_ Writes without spelling or grammar errors (15 points)

### Format

\_\_\_\_\_ Formats consistently with the guidelines articulated in the syllabus (5 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ Meets 5- to 7-page length requirement (5 points)