

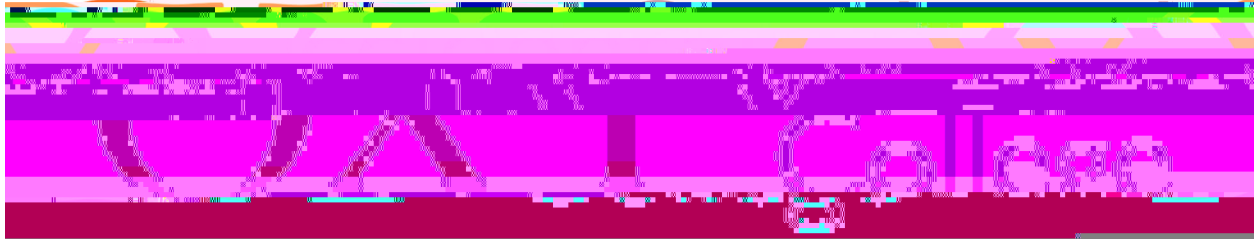
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**URBAN POLICY & POLITICS**  
**Urban & Environmental Policy/Politics 301**  
**Spring 2023**  
**January 23, 2023 – May 8, 2023**

**Asst. Prof. Rick Cole**

**Class Sessions: Mondays 3-6 pm**  
**Office: Urban & Environmental Policy Institute (UEPI)**  
**Office Hours: Mondays 2:30 – 3:30 and by appointment**  
**Phone: (805) 901-4284    Email: [colef@oxy.edu](mailto:colef@oxy.edu)**





## SYLLABUS

### **UEP/Politics 301: URBAN POLICY & POLITICS**

Junior Writing Seminar

#### **FACULTY: Rick Cole**

Office Hours: Mondays 2:30-3:00 pm

#### **CLASS SESSIONS**

Mondays, 3:00 – 6:00 pm

**LOCATION:** Fowler 112

**LENGTH:** 15 weeks

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

We live at an inflection point in human history: the first time a majority of the world's population live in cities and American cities are the epicenter for economic, social and environmental challenges and opportunities. Taught by a senior local government executive, this course deals with the practical realities of power, politics and policy in cities and regions. Grounded in the history and evolution of how cities work and how they are governed, the focus is on how to make lasting change to create a more equitable and sustainable future for American cities. Emphasizing the role of civic, political and management leadership, the class combines theory and practice, using greater Los Angeles as the primary case study. The course includes varied writing assignments with the goal of imparting useful skills for future leaders.

Some of the major questions we will explore:

1. As the U.S. has changed, so has the shape, function, and number of cities and metropolitan areas. How have these changes come about? How and why did the suburbs grow, especially after World War II? How has the physical shape of metropolitan areas -- its architecture, roads, residential areas, open spaces, factories, stores, offices, neighborhoods, downtowns -- changed? What impact have these changes had on how people live their lives? What roles did leaders play in these outcomes?
2. Are there certain "urban" characteristics -- economic, social, political, psychological -- common to cities and metropolitan areas? What is meant by the term "new urban crisis?" Does it affect all urban areas in the same way? How has the distribution of wealth and power in the larger society influenced the economic, social, and physical conditions of cities and metro areas? What are the causes of urban poverty and racial segregation?

3. Why don't cities and urban policies play a larger role in our national political life? Why isn't there a national urban policy designed to help strengthen and improve cities? Should policies help individuals wherever they happen to live? What approaches have been tried? What works? What hasn't? Why? How do we assess proposals to deal with our urban problems? Can innovation and experimentation at the local level successfully forge new solutions to long-standing challenges such as poverty and employment, housing and homelessness, public health, transportation and environment, racial segregation? What are the current policy debates regarding these and other issues?

4. How are cities governed? Who runs our cities? Business? Local politicians? Neighborhood groups? Developers? Bureaucrats? Unions? No one? What role do leaders play in shaping urban policy and politics? What are the different ways that cities and metro areas are governed? What powers should cities have? Regions? States? What difference does it make? The course also explores the political and administrative nuances of formulating policy and the underappreciated challenges of implementing policy.

5. What can we learn from cities around the globe? Using Los Angeles and its suburbs as our primary case study, what are the similarities and differences between Los Angeles and other major American cities including New York, Seattle, Boston, Atlanta, San Francisco, and Chicago? What about global cities like Paris, Copenhagen, Toronto,

but I expect you to develop and refine your own theory of leadership and your own paradigm or theory of change as a framework for approaching civic leadership in its many forms.

## **COURSEWORK**

You will be graded on the following assessments:

### **Participation:**

assignment within one week of the event. It is OK if more than one student attends the same event, but each student must write his/her own paper based on her/his own observations and analysis.

4.

- [“Citizen Jane: Battle for the City”](#) Documentary tells the iconic story of the titanic clash between journalist and activist Jane Jacobs and "The Power Broker" Robert Moses over the development of Manhattan
- [“City of Hope”](#) – a 1991 fictionalized story about a real city in New Jersey and how white and black politicians, community activists, and developers promoted and fought against gentrification.
- [“Crash”](#) -- the 2004 Academy Award winner for Best Picture about the racial and social tensions in Los Angeles, inspired by a real-life incident
- [“Daley: The Last Boss”](#) – a 1995 documentary about Chicago Mayor Richard Daley, who ran the city like it was his fiefdom, earning him the reputation as a political “boss.”
- [Detroit](#) – a 2017 fictionalized retelling of the Detroit riot of 1967 and the brutal killings at the Algiers Motel
- [“Do The Right Thing”](#) -- Spike Lee's famous 1989 film about daily life in the Brooklyn ghetto in the early phases of gentrification and has an Oxy alum as one of the actors.
- [“Fruitvale Station”](#) -- a 2013 dramatic film based on events leading to the death of Oscar Grant, a young man who was killed in 2009 by a Bay Area Rapid Transit officer in Oakland.
- [Gentified](#) – this 2020 Netflix comedy series dramatizes the struggle over changing demographics in LA’s Boyle Heights Latino neighborhood (watch the first episode and at least two others)
- [Mayor Pete](#) – this 2021 documentary traces the rise of the Mayor of South Bend, Indiana into an unlikely presidential front-runner
- [Milk](#) – the 2008 Hollywood version of the life of Harvey Milk, the first openly gay man to be elected to public office in a major city, played by Sean Penn
- [“Philly DA”](#) – an eight-part PBS series on the forerunner of the wave of “progressive district attorneys” that began with the election in 2017 of civil rights attorney Larry Krasner as DA in Philadelphia. Watch the first episode and your choice of one of the next seven (except not Episode Six which is assigned for class) for your report.
- [“Quinceañera”](#) – a 2006 dramatic film, set in the LA neighborhood of Echo Park in the early stages of gentrification. It follows the lives of two young Mexican American cousins who become estranged from their families.
- [“Save the Farm”](#) and [“The Garden”](#) – compare two documentaries about how Latino

- [“The Human Scale”](#) -- the Danish architect and professor Jan Gehl has studied human behavior in cities through 40 years, this 2012 documentary illuminates how modern cities repel human interaction, and argues that we can build cities in a way, which takes human needs for inclusion and intimacy into account.
- [“The Places That Make Us”](#) – this 2021 documentary highlights the next generation of





Penalties for academic misconduct are severe (see “Academic Misconduct”), and ignorance of the principles and policies concerning cheating and plagiarism is not a defense. Students with any doubts at all about whether an action or piece of academic work involves academic misconduct should consult their instructors before committing the action or submitting the work.

### **Disability Services**

Please let me know if you need any kind of accommodation. Students with documented disabilities who are registered with Disability Services are required to present their accommodation letter to the instructor at the beginning of each semester or as soon as possible thereafter. Students who experience significant physical or mental impairments can contact Disability Services at (323) 259-2969 to learn about available services and support.

### **Occidental Sexual Misconduct Policy and Resources**

Policy: <http://www.oxy.edu/sexual-assault-resources-support/policies-procedures>

24/7 Confidential Hotline: (323) 341-4141

Campus Safety Emergency Line: (323) 259-2511

Dean of Students Office: (323) 259-2661

## **LESSON PLAN**

Assignments for pre-class reading and watching is subject to change throughout the semester. Students will be notified of changes. Course schedule may also be modified to accommodate guest speakers. \*NYT = New York Times; LAT = Los Angeles Times).

### **WEEK ONE: January 23, 2023**

We'll start by outlining the focus and structure of the class.

Then we'll break into groups for students to reflect on your own experiences:

- What is your story of place? Where have you lived? How has that place shaped you?
- Where have you traveled? What is your favorite place and why?
- How have your experiences with place shaped your views on place?

Then we will begin our exploration of urban policy and politics:

- What is a city? We'll explore the ideas of urbanist Jane Jacobs
- How are cities shaped? We'll look at the continuum of power – politics – policy
- The rise of American cities: we'll look back at how the industrial revolution spawned cities that were dirty, filthy, unhealthy, overcrowded and extremely productive places
- What shaped American cities in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century? We'll look at the political and policy implications of race, transportation, and the marketing of suburbia as well as “urban renewal” and the “urban crisis”

Then we'll begin to outline how power, politics and policy shape place – and how policy is formulated, using Bardach/Patashnik's “Practical Guide for Policy Analysis” and their Eightfold Path:

1. Define the Problem
2. Assemble Some Evidence
3. Construct the Alternatives
4. Select the Criteria
5. Project the Outcomes
6. Confront the Trade-offs
7. Stop, Focus, Narrow, Deepen, Decide
8. Tell Your Story

Finally, we will begin to examine the role of leadership in all this

### **WEEK TWO: January 30, 2023**

#### **Lecture: The New Urban Crisis**

Watch these videos before coming to class:

- [KCDC Annual Meeting 2016: Joel Kotkin debates Richard Florida](#) (38 minutes)

- [“Urbanized”](#) (85 minutes)
- [“The Future of Cities”](#) (18 minutes)

Read before class:

- Florida, *The New Urban Crisis*, Preface and Chapters 2-5, pp. 13-68

### **WEEK THREE: February 6, 2023**

#### **Lecture: How National Policy Shapes Cities**

Read this before class:

- Dreier, *Place Matters*, Chapter 5, *From FDR to Obama: A Brief History of Urban Policy*, pp. 136-174
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- [Wolf, "The Fight over Amazon is the fight over the future of the Democratic Party" \(CNN, February 15, 2019\)](#)
- [Matsakis, "The Truth About Amazon, Food Stamps, and Tax Breaks" \(Wired, Sept. 6, 2018\)](#)
- [Leonhardt, "New York Did Us All a Favor by Standing Up to Amazon" \(NYT, February 17, 2019\)](#)
- [Kroessler, "Much Ado About Amazon"](#)
- [Troy, "The DiBlasio Debacle" \(City Journal, January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022\)](#)
- [Tynan, Bas, and Cohen, \*Unmasking the Hidden Power of Cities: Using Their Authorities, Energy and Promise to Secure the Common Good\*, June 2018 \(pages 1-19 only\)](#)
- [Sassen, "Who Owns Our Cities – And Why This Urban Takeover Should Concern Us All" \(Guardian, November 24, 2015\)](#)

**WEEK FIVE: February 20, 2023, President's Day Holiday**

**WEEK SIX: February 27, 2023**

## **Lecture: Economics, Budget, finance and taxation**

Watch this video before class:

- [What if you could decide how government spends funds?](#) 10 minutes

Read before class:

- Dreier *Place Matters* Chapter 6 – “City Limits: What Can Motown Teach Us About Wealth, Poverty and Municipal Finance?”
- [Cole, Four Horseman of the Fiscal Apocalypse \(Planning Report, April 29, 2020\)](#)
- [Mayor Garcetti's Proposed FY 21-22 Budget Summary](#)
- [Detailed Departmental Budgets, Volume 1](#)

**Lecture: Public Safety, Police, & Criminal Justice**



## **WEEK THIRTEEN: April 17, 2023**

### **Lecture Poverty and Homelessness**

Read before class:

- Dreier *Place Matters* Preface; Chapter 1 – “Place Still Matters”; Chapter 2 – “The Facts of Economic Segregation and Sprawl”; Chapter 3 – “The Costs of Economic Segregation and Sprawl”
- [Committee for a Better Los Angeles, “No Going Back” Report, 2020 Read the Executive Summary and Introduction pp. 11-19 as well as sections on Economic Stress, pp. 20-38, Black Life in Los Angeles pp. 39-51; Immigrants 148-164; Alternatives to Incarceration pp. 165-173; Transportation pp. 186-194](#)
- [Smith, “No Going Back’ To Racist Past, LA Civic Leaders Say of Post-COVID Future” \(LAT, Sept. 9, 2020\)](#)
- Judge Carter injunction & appeals reversal:
  - Injunction reporting: [LA Times](#), [La Mag](#)
  - Appeal & reversal: [La Mag](#), [Legal analysis](#)
  - [Text of the Injunction](#) (skim)
  - [Text of the Appeals ruling](#) (skim)
- [CA Auditor report](#) on COVID-19 and CA Homeless Population
- [Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness](#), pp 1-66 and the [“Homelessness” section of the “No Going Back” Report](#), pp. 65-77
- [Gladwell, “Million Dollar Murray” \(New Yorker, February 13, 2006\)](#)
- [Cole, “LA County Flying Blind on Homeless Data” \(San Gabriel Valley Tribune, December 20, 2020\)](#)
- [Cole, “Homelessness is a Manmade Disaster” \(Pasadena Star-News, January 2, 2020\)](#)

## **WEEK FOURTEEN: April 24, 2023**

### **Lecture and Guest Speaker: How Policy Gets Made**

Read before class:

- Santa Monica Policy Playbook (Copy to be provided)

### **Lecture: The Challenge of Affordable Housing**

Watch these videos before class:

- [“City Rising”](#) (one hour)

Read before class:

- Phillips, *The Affordable City* pp. 1-220
- [“50 Years of Gentrification: A Timeline”](#) (The Next City)



- [Anbinder, "The Pandemic Disproved Urban Progressives' Theory About Gentrification" \(The Atlantic, January 2, 2021\)](#)
- [Cole, LA Mayor's 'I-Team' Seeks to Minimize Displacement During Urban Revitalization \(The Planning Report, February 13, 2015\)](#)
- [Dreier, "Why America Needs More Social Housing" \(American Prospect, April 16, 2018\)](#)

**WEEK FIFTEEN: May 1, 2023**

**Lecture: The Future of Cities, Nationally and Globally**

Watch these videos before class:

- ["SCAG 2012 Compass Blueprint Intro"](#) (3 minutes)
- ["Bruce Katz: The Global Metropolitan"](#) Revolution (18 minutes)
- ["Revitalizing a City by Revitalizing a Stream"](#) (11 minutes)
- ["Urbanized"](#) (85 minutes)

Read before class:

- Florida, *The New Urban Crisis* pp. 87-166
- Dreier,

Dreier, *Place Making and Displacement in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area*, *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 2018, 38(1), 1-15.

Dreier, *Place Making and Displacement in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area*, *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 2018, 38(1), 1-15.