

*University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point*  
*Department of Sociology and Social Work*  
**Urban Sociology**  
**Sociology 356**  
**Fall 2017**

Instructor: Krishna Roka  
Email: [krishna.roka@uwsp.edu](mailto:krishna.roka@uwsp.edu)  
Office: CCC 478  
Office hours:  
    Tue: 1:00-2:00 PM  
    Thur: 1:00-2:00 PM

Class schedule:  
    Mon- 8:00 – 9:15 AM  
    Wed- 8:00 – 9:15 AM  
Room: CCC 204

### **Course Overview**

We live in an urban world. More people live in cities than ever before and this process is projected to continue in the near future. Like technology, urbanization is going to affect us no matter where we live. This course will introduce you to some of the major concepts on urban sociology and life in urban areas. While sociology looks at societies broadly, urban sociology will focus on social processes in urban areas. We will look into the history of urban sociology and the major theories on the subject. Also, we will explore the economy, culture and environment in urban areas and apply multiple approaches to understand them. At the end of the course it is expected you will be able to apply your sociological imagination to view your role in the urbanization process. On the other hand, you will understand the influence of global urbanization process in your personal life. Although the focus of the course will be on developed nations, USA, I have included topics and examples from developing countries as well.

The course has the following objectives:

- Explore the rise of cities from early history to contemporary urbanization.
- Become familiar with major theories and concepts in urban sociology.
- Adopt a multidimensional approach to understand urban societies.
- Understand major social, economic and environmental problems in urban societies.
- Gain insights on creating sustainable cities.

## Required texts (available in the bookstore)

- Gottdiener, M. and R. Hutchison. 2014. *The New Urban Sociology*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

## Supplementary reading (STUDENTS BUY IT)

- Philip Langdon. 2017. *Within Walking Distance: Creating Livable Communities for all*. Island Press.

## Course Structure

The course is designed to explore the urban world using multiple sociological approaches. Every week, I will present lecture on the key topics followed by a class discussion. Class presence and participation is crucial for good grades. In addition to class lectures, there will be various assignments and activities.

- **Class discussion (assigned chapter/article):** In the second week, I will divide the class into 6 groups. Each group will lead a class discussion (one per week) on the assigned chapter from the book *Within Walking Distance* and supporting materials for that week. The group will bring the synopsis of the reading materials along with questions and key concepts to stimulate ideas, discussion and debate in the class. Rest of the class will read the chapters and participate in an online discussion forum created for each week. Reading materials for discussion will be available in D2L. Each student must submit at least **150 words** discussion comments on that week's reading materials and **THREE** questions for discussion. Your participation will be graded in the following manner: online forum 3 points/discussion (total 18) and class discussion and presentation 2 points.
- **Group project:** For this assignment, you will work in a group of 3-4 students. Each group will do a comparative analysis of two cities: international and a US city. The international city should have a population of over 100,000 and the US city's population should be more than 500,000. The first part of the analysis should discuss and compare their history, culture, economy, demography, sustainability (waste management, energy, food), challenges (social problems) and the future. The second part of the project should apply the sociological concepts discussed in the course to analyze the problems and discuss how they are tackling them. The final part of the project will include the group's recommendations to address the problems. Each group will write a 15-page project report comparing the two cities, which will be due on Week 15 (double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 size font and APA citation). The group will also present their project to the class on Week 15.

- **Book review:** Each student will write a 1000 words review for the book *Within Walking Distance* which will be due on **Week 11**. Instructions and samples of book reviews are available in D2L website. The book for this assignment has been carefully selected to enhance your knowledge of urban areas.
- **City Experience:** A two-page report on your first big city experience is due on **Week 7**. In addition, each student will share their experience as a short presentation to the class on week 7 & 8. The report will include your application of sociological concepts in narrating the experience. The city you select should be a large city in comparison to where you grew. If you grew in a large city then your report will be on small city experience.
- **Participation (in-class assignments):** Your active participation in class is important to enhance your analytical and oral communication skills. Participation allows you to clarify things, explore new things and hear diverse perspectives of other students. I expect everyone to come prepared to share their views of the course materials every week. In addition, there will be several classroom activities during the course that will be graded for class participation. Examples include: online discussion, short quizzes, video discussion, field trip to the local farmer’s market etc.
- **Attendance (comment cards):** To record your attendance I will collect comment cards for each lecture. You will write a short- 2-3 sentence – question or comment pertaining to the content of the lecture and/or the reading materials. Please buy a pack of 3\*5 card for use in class. The card should include your name and date and should be submitted at the end of each lecture. I will grade random 10 cards; make sure you attend all lectures.  
**Note: Do not turn in your friend’s cards when they are absent or ask other students to turn in your cards when you do not attend the lecture. Evidence of these practices will result in academic misconduct that will affect your grades.**
- **Extra credits:** You may also earn extra credits (a total of **5 points**) by attending lectures and events outside the class. Submit a 1 page, single spaced review paper for each activity you attend. You will receive **1 point** for each event. Other ways to earn extra credits should be discussed with the instructor.

**Grading Procedures**

The final grade will be determined by your participation in class discussions and performance on book review, city report and group project.

Class discussion (16*3+2)	20%
Group project/final paper	40%
City experience	10%
Book review	20%

Class attendance	10%
<hr/>	
Total	100%

The final grade will be calculated using the following schedule

Course grade	Percentages
A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	84-89
B	80-83
C+	75-79
C	70-74
D	60-69
F	<60

### Course Schedule

Wk	Date	Topic	Readings and activities*
1	Sep 5-8	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>China's new megalopolis would be bigger than Uruguay and more populous than Germany</i>- Quartz (d2l)</li> <li>• <i>Dysfunctional nations, rising cities</i> (d2l)</li> <li>• World Urbanization Prospects (d2l)</li> </ul>
2	Sep 11-15	The New Urban Sociology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gottdiener - Chapter 1</li> </ul>
3	Sep 18-22	Rise of cities Origins of Urban Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gottdiener - 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>The Developing World's Urban Population Could Triple by 2210</i>- Citylab</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
4	Sep 25-29	Rise of Urban Sociology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gottdiener - 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Urban Ecology Center <a href="http://urbanecologycenter.org/">http://urbanecologycenter.org/</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Class discussion 1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Chapter 1: Philadelphia</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5	Oct 2-6	Contemporary Urban Sociology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gottdiener - 4</li> <li>• <i>Urban sociology theories document</i> (d2l))</li> <li>• <b>Class discussion 2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Chapter 2: New Haven</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

6	Oct 9-13	Urbanization in the US	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gottdiener - Chapter 5</li> <li>• Ghetto- Chapter 3 (Harlem)</li> <li>• <b>Class discussion 3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Chapter 3: Brattleboro</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
7	Oct 16-20	Suburbanization and Globalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gottdiener – Chapter 6</li> <li>• Human Planet BBC Series, Episode 8- Surviving the Urban Jungle</li> <li>• <b>City experience presentation and discussion</b></li> </ul>
8	Oct 23-27	Urban and Suburban Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gottdiener – Chapter 7</li> <li>• <b>City experience presentation and discussion</b></li> <li>• <b>Due: Book review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
9	Oct 30-Nov 3	Urban Neighborhoods and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gottdiener - Chapter 9</li> <li>• Lyon and Driskall: Planned communities (125-140) (ereserve)</li> <li>• <b>Class discussion 4</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Chapter 4: Chicago</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
10	Nov 6-10	Urban Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gottdiener - Chapter 9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Feeding Cities – Part I only (d2l)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Why haven't China's cities learned from America's mistakes? (d2l)</li> <li>• <b>Class discussion 5</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Chapter 5: Portland</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
11	Nov 13-17	Urbanization in the Developing World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gottdiener – Chapter 11</li> <li>• <b>Class discussion 6</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Chapter 6: Starkville</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
12	Nov 20-22	Urban Planning and Environmental Issues <b>Communities in urban areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gottdiener – Chapter 12</li> <li>• Lyon and Driskall: Community development (107-123) (ereserve) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Community led renovation</i></li> <li>○ <i>Sustainable urbanization: place matters- PennIUR</i></li> <li>○ <i>The return of America's cities- PennIUR</i></li> <li>○ <i>Transforming cities- PennIUR</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
13	Nov 27-Dec 1	Metropolitan Social Policy <b>Ideas for new cities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gottdiener – Chapter 13</li> <li>• What is gentrification? (d2l)</li> <li>• Is gentrification all bad? (d2l)</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing treeconomics (<a href="http://goo.gl/2aHxWy">http://goo.gl/2aHxWy</a>)</li> <li>• <i>What life will be like in the cities of the future- Time</i></li> </ul>
14	Dec 4-8	The future of urban sociology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gottdiener - Chapter 14</li> <li>• The future of urban sociology (d2l)</li> <li>• Our future is urban (<a href="http://goo.gl/0CW5aq">http://goo.gl/0CW5aq</a>)</li> <li>• <i>America's urban future</i>-NYT</li> <li>• <i>The city of 2030</i>- UCLG</li> </ul>
15	Dec 11-14	Group project presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final project report due</li> <li>• Rewrite due* (*get approval from the instructor)</li> </ul>
16	Dec 18-22		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exam week_No class</li> </ul>

\*Additional materials could be added during the semester

### Class Policy

**Attendance and participation:** Class attendance and participation is important to this course. Both physical and mental presence during the class is critical to understand the topics in the course. There will be no excuse for absence, unless there was an emergency for which I will need a written explanation. During the course we will engage in discussing major concepts and active participation from students is highly encouraged. Despite the class size I will accommodate discussion when required. Late arrival and leaving early will be marked as absence and will result in negative grade.

**Readings:** Textbooks and other reading materials for the course have been carefully chosen. It is required for students to read them prior to the class. Reading assignments must be completed as required by the course.

**Writing:** For writing assignments, students must write clearly and concisely. A high level of writing is expected for the course. Written papers with grammatical errors, inconclusive logics, drafts and poor structure are unacceptable and will result in poor grade. Students must become aware of plagiarism and cite sources used for the assignment. Any evidence of plagiarism will automatically result in an F grade. A high level of academic integrity is expected throughout the course. For the UWSP's policy on academic integrity and plagiarism visit this link: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/Academic%20Integrity%20Brochure.pdf>.

Each paper should be written in a format with 1 inch margin, 12 size font, use Times New Roman font and include sources.

**Late submission:** All assignments must be submitted by the time mentioned in the course structure. Late submission will result in negative grades.

**Use of technology:** Use of technology in the classroom is not required for the course. Therefore, use of cell phones, tablet/ipad, computer and other electronic devices are not allowed in the class. Using electronic devices during class will affect your grade. No recording of lecture is permitted without the instructor's permission.

**Meeting:** I welcome students meeting to discuss course materials and assignments. There will be a sign-up sheet in my office for you to schedule a meeting time during my office hours. You can also contact me to schedule a meeting outside my office hours.

**Safe environment:** The class strives for a safe environment to promote knowledge sharing. Disrespectful, degrading, or offensive language will not be tolerated. Any personal experiences shared in the class should remain confidential.