

**Cities of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Seminar**  
**The Political Economy of Urban Sustainability**  
**Geography 488-02**  
**Macalester College**

---

Professor Dan Trudeau  
Office: 104eCarnegie Hall  
Phone: 651-696-6872

Email: [trudeau@macalester.edu](mailto:trudeau@macalester.edu)

Office Hours: 2:20 – 3:20 pm MW, 3-4 pm TR, and by appointment

---

Fall 2015  
T/R: 1:20 – 2:50 pm  
Carnegie 105

### **Course description**

The purpose of this course is to understand practices and concepts that constitute the movement for sustainable cities and investigate the ways in which urban sustainability initiatives are generated and how they vary geographically. The course adopts a political economy perspective to trace the complex interactions of institutions, politics, and economic systems that shape initiatives for more sustainable cities. Students will work in the first part of the course to enhance their understanding of core concepts and best practices that constitute the professional field of sustainable urban development and assemble a framework for analyzing the ways in which sustainability initiatives come to fruition and approach the idea of sustainability in a particular way. Students will conduct a semester-long senior capstone research project that investigates a particular urban sustainability initiative in the world by tracing the political economy of its creation and considering its impact on society, economy, and environment.

### **Learning goals**

Satisfactory work in this seminar will help you develop abilities in areas that will help you work towards excellence in your life after college, whatever vocation you choose.

- Critical thinking – routine activities in this class, including discussion, application of theory, and writing will help you to enhance your analytical reasoning skills.
- Theoretical perspectives on sustainable urban development – theoretical readings in this class provide analytical frameworks to understand how sustainability interests shape and are shaped by urban development agendas. These perspectives will provide you with multiple vantage points from which to examine the evolving field of urban sustainability.
- Project management – successful research demands careful planning and organization as well as thoughtful implementation and reflection. Your capstone project will help you hone your organization skills as you manage the complex task of writing a major research paper.
- Writing and oral presentation – You will hone your skills in written communication as part of preparing your research paper. Furthermore, you will develop your oral presentation abilities through sharing your research in a public presentation.

## **Seminar format and capstone expectations**

Cities of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century will follow the format of a research seminar. As such, learning from each other is a high priority, which you will do through discussions, workshops, and sharing your independent research. Furthermore, I expect that you will take charge of your own learning outside of our class meetings through independent research for your capstone paper. This is not meant to be an isolating experience, however. Talk to your fellow classmates about successes and complications, they will have helpful insights and suggestions. And, of course, I invite—and expect—you to meet with me and discuss your research.

This class is also designed to provide a capstone experience for Geography majors. The assignments in this course are intended to create a culminating experience in which you draw on what you have learned over the past semesters. I expect your work in this class to represent your best research, best writing, and best ability to communicate your ideas. As part of the capstone experience, you are required to make a public presentation.

This is also a reading-intensive class. I have chosen readings to reflect divergent viewpoints on particular subjects. It is thus important that you read all of the assigned readings for a given day in order to ascertain the full breadth of a topic. Furthermore, it is imperative that you complete all of the assigned readings so that you can most effectively participate in class discussions.

## **Text and readings**

There is one required text for this course, which is listed below. Other required readings include websites, articles, and book chapters available through Moodle.

- Moore, Stephen (2007). *Alternative routes to the sustainable city: Austin, Curitiba, and Frankfurt*. Lexington Book: Lanham, MD.

## **A note about our schedule**

We will take a field trip to meet with a variety of practitioners who are working towards urban sustainability in the Twin Cities. This **\*\*All Day\*\*** field trip will take place 8:45 am – 3 pm on Thursday **September 24th**. Lunch will be provided. Note this date in your calendar and make arrangements to attend.

## **Policies**

Academic honesty. I expect the work you do in this course will be your own. Furthermore, take care to properly cite any and all of the work on which you draw. Instances of plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Plagiarism and cheating will result in a failing grade for the class. Furthermore, I will report such instances to the Dean, which may result in suspension or even dismissal from the college.

Being there. The success of the seminar depends upon how much we can learn from each other. The interactive nature of our meetings therefore requires that you come to class prepared. Plan your schedule so that you can arrive and depart on time.

Changes. As the semester unfolds, there may be reason to make changes to the course. In the event of a change to readings, topics, or the schedule, I will announce the changes in class and over email. It is your responsibility to keep up with any changes.

Communication. Do not hesitate to let me know if your peers or I can do anything to help improve the learning environment in our class. I encourage you to talk to me about any changes you would like to see in the course. You are welcome to meet with me before and after class, visit me in my office, or contact me by email.

Completion. All assignments must be completed. Failure to complete the assignments will result in a NC grade.

Course information. A fair amount of course information will be disseminated via email. Check your Macalester email account regularly.

Deadlines. Deadlines for assignments are firm. Penalties for missed deadlines are noted in the assignment descriptions below. Note: in a couple of cases, assignments will not be accepted past their deadlines. If you have obligations that conflict with this class' scheduled assignments, you must see me no later than Friday, September 14th so that we can discuss appropriate accommodations.

Disabilities. If you have a documented disability or any other problem that you think may affect your ability to perform well in this course please see me as soon as possible so that we can discuss appropriate accommodations.

Input. I will be happy to work with you to tailor the class to your interests provided that it will work with the subject of the seminar. I invite your input on readings, assignments and access to news sources that will enrich our discussions.

No extra credit. The number of assignments on which grades in this course are based is non-negotiable.

Respect for learning. Respect for your peers and professor are absolutely essential to create and sustain a supportive learning environment free of disruptions. As we engage in critical discussion and debate, keep your critiques focused on ideas (and not the person voicing the idea). Our goal is to create a positive classroom environment in which you and your classmates feel comfortable having bold conversations and taking risks in the learning process. Examples of behaviors that can be disruptive include chatting and whispering during class, the use of electronic equipment, reading the paper during class, interrupting others, preparing to leave before class is over, and consistently arriving late to class. Please keep these disruptions to a minimum. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom may result in a request to leave the class and/or a referral to the Office of Student Affairs.

Do not hesitate to talk with me if you have any questions or concerns regarding this class. Open communication is key to successful learning. The sooner you voice your concerns, the more opportunity I will have to respond.

## **Assignments (1000 points total)**

Capstone paper (400 points total) A 25-30 page case study research paper. Students will examine the politics and process of implementing a sustainability initiative. Research will focus on an initiative that has found expression in either a policy or bricks-and-mortar development project that endeavors to create a more sustainable city. The development project may be located in any metropolitan region in the world. The first draft is due November 13<sup>th</sup> @ 9pm (100 points)

- The second draft, for peer review, is due Nov 24<sup>th</sup> @ 9 pm
- The final paper is due Dec 17 by 5 pm (300 points)
  - Deadlines are firm. Late assignments will be penalized 20 % per calendar day.

Research Proposal (50 points) A 3-4 page essay in which you describe an issue and representative case that you want to research for your capstone paper. Your proposal will also include a bibliography of an academic literature you will consult in order to place your specific case study in a larger research context.

- The proposal is due September 28 @ 12 pm
  - Late proposals will be penalized 20% per calendar day.

Annotated Bibliography (50 points) Annotations for 10 scholarly sources concerning the literature you will use to frame and examine your case study. This assignment thus extends from your research proposal and helps you prepare for subsequent assignments, namely the paper and the discussion leadership.

- The annotated bibliography is due November 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 1:20 pm
  - Late bibliographies will be penalized 20% per calendar day.

Revised Proposal (100 points) an extended (8 - 10 page) essay that elaborates on the directions that the research will head and identifies the relevant concepts, frameworks, theories, debates, and/or literatures with which you will converse in your case study research. The essay also describes the methodological approach to conducting research on the case study. This assignment thus represents a crucial step in conducting theoretically-informed case study research. As such, it also contributes directly to your capstone paper.

- The review is due Oct 16 by 5 pm.
  - Late essays will be penalized 20% per calendar day.

Discussion Leadership (100 points) Students will co-lead a class discussion on a particular topic linked to their case study research. As discussion leader you are responsible for laying out the main themes and/or debates relevant to the chosen topic, selecting a reading for the class, and organizing discussion around the themes you and the reading present.

- Discussion leadership will take place Nov 5 – 17<sup>th</sup>. Dates for discussion leadership assigned on Oct 27<sup>th</sup>.
  - Unexcused absences from discussion leadership will receive no credit.

Meetings with Professor (50 points total, 25 points each) You are required to schedule two meetings with me. These meetings will serve as tutorials for your research. We will

meet for 15 - 20 minutes to review progress and discuss strategies for further work on your research. Schedule the meeting after you have completed the relevant assignments (see below). Furthermore, it is your responsibility to schedule these meetings by the following deadlines:

- First meeting by Oct 8<sup>th</sup> to discuss research proposal and topic for seminar discussion
- Second meeting by Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> to discuss revised proposal and finalize details for seminar discussion
  - I will award full credit for meetings that reflect an intentional approach to making progress on your capstone project.

Presentation of Research (100 points) You will share your research findings in a 15-minute public presentation at Macalester College, which will be scheduled during our regular meeting times on Dec 8<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>.

Reflection essays (100 points total, 25 points each) You are required to write four ~500 word essays that offer a synthesis of and reflection on assigned readings for a particular discussion day (see schedule for specific dates). Focus your reflection on claims, arguments, and/or insights presented in one or more of the readings. Your essay should exhibit a line of reflective thought in which you articulate your position on ideas presented in the readings. Your essays must also include at least one question, relevant to the readings, which you would like to ask of your classmates. Thus, these essays should help you prepare for participation in the discussion and shape its direction.

Reading reflection essays are to be submitted online via Moodle by 9 am on the day of the discussion date. This will allow me sufficient lead-time to review the reflections in advance and plan the discussion. Proofread your essays so that they are free of grammatical and spelling errors.

- You are required to complete four essays. I will grade the essays in a credit/no credit fashion
  - Late reflection essays will receive no credit.

Review of peer papers (50 points) Review and provide written and oral feedback on the papers of two classmates. You will also receive feedback on your paper from two classmates.

- Written and oral feedback shared in class on Dec 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - Late reviews will receive no credit.

Your final grade will be based on performance in all parts of the course. Letter grades will be assigned according to the following distribution:

<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory</u>	<u>Failing</u>
A (1000-930)	B+ (899-880)	C+ (799-780)	D+ (699-680)	NC (< 600)
A- (929-900)	B (879-830)	C (779-730)	D (679-630)	
	B- (829-800)	C- (729-700)	D- (629-600)	

## SCHEDULE of READINGS and ASSIGNMENTS

Topic	Day	Readings	Assignment/Deadlines
<b>Week 1: Cities of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</b>			
Introductions	Sept 3	Rees Maniates	
<b>Week 2: Defining sustainability</b>			
Researching urban sustainability	Sept 8	Berke Portney Yin	Students meet in small groups to discuss potential research interests and ask questions in order to prepare for writing a proposal
Story and sustainability	Sept 10	Moore Ch 1 & 2	Reflection essay 1
<b>Week 3: Urban Sustainability Case Studies</b>			
Urban Form and Sustainability Social sustainability	Sept 15	Crewe and Forsyth Neuman p. 17-20 Vallance et al	Explore three and appraise one of the resources listed on p. 3 of the proposal assignment
Curitiba and Frankfurt	Sept 17	Moore Ch 3 & 4	
<b>Week 4: Urban Sustainability Case Studies</b>			
Other examples	Sept 22	Moore Ch 5	Report on urban sustainability initiative
Sustainability Field Trip	Sept 24	Online readings	
<b>Week 5: Political Economy of Urban Development</b>			
Library visit – Room 206	Sept 29	Trudeau & Christiansen	Proposal due Sept 28 by 12 pm
City as a growth machine	Oct 1	Logan and Molotch Dilworth and Stokes	Reflection essay 2

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignment/Deadlines</b>
<b>Week 6: Critiques of Political Economy</b>			
Urban Regimes and New Urban Politics	Oct 6	Stone Jonas et al.	
Feminist critiques	Oct 8	Gibson-Graham Krueger and Agyeman	Reflection essay 3 Deadline for meeting #1
<b>Week 7: Analyzing sustainability in practice</b>			
Urban sustainability in Amman	Oct 13	Goldberg Butzer et al.	
Analyzing urban sustainability	Oct 15	No Readings	Revised Proposal description due Oct 16
<b>Week 8: Analyzing sustainability in practice</b>			
Alternate routes to the sustainable city	Oct 20	Moore Ch 6 & 7 Agyeman	Reflection essay 4
No Class	Oct 22	<i>Fall Break</i>	
<b>Week 9: Framing Sustainability</b>			
Just Sustainability Talking about leadership of seminar discussion	Oct 27	No Readings	
Valuing sustainability	Oct 29	Benson & Craig	Oct 29 Deadline for meeting #2
<b>Week 10: Contemporary Urban Issues</b>			
Essentials of an academic paper Writing style and voice	Nov 3	Orwell	Annotated Bibliography due Bring an example of “good writing” to class to discuss
Student-led seminar discussion I	Nov 5	TBD	Work on your paper

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignment/Deadlines</b>
<b>Week 11: Contemporary Urban Issues</b>			
Student-led seminar discussion II	Nov 10	TBD	Work on your paper
Student-led seminar discussion III	Nov 12	TBD	Work on your paper First Draft due Nov 13 by 9 pm
<b>Week 12: Contemporary Urban Issues</b>			
Student-led seminar discussion IV	Nov 17	TBD	Work on your paper
Checking in, updates, troubleshooting & Short tutorial on presentations	Nov 19	Christiansen Tufte	
<b>Week 13: Looking ahead</b>			
What to do after Macalester	Nov 24	No readings	*meet in Harmon Room (Library) Second draft of paper due to reviewers by 9pm
No Class	Nov 26	<i>Thanksgiving Day Break</i>	No Class
<b>Week 14: Writing Workshop</b>			
Peer Review	Dec 1	Read Peer Drafts	Exchange Peer Reviews
No Class	Dec 3		Work on your paper
<b>Week 15: Presentations</b>			
Presentations - CC 215	Dec 8	No readings	
Presentations - CC 214	Dec 10	No readings	
<b>Week 16: Finals</b>			
Final paper	Dec 17		<b>Final paper due by 5 pm</b>

## List of Assigned Readings

- Agyeman, J. (2013). *Introducing Just Sustainabilities: policy, planning, practice*. Zed Books: London.
- Benson, M., and Craig, R. (2014). The end of sustainability. *Society & Natural Resources* 27(7): 777-782.
- Berke, P. (2008). The evolution of green community planning, scholarship, and practice. *Journal of the American Planning Association* 74(4): 393 – 407.
- Butzer, K. (2012). Collapse, environment, and society. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 109(10): 3632-3639.
- Crewe, K., and Forsyth, A. (2011). Compactness and connection in environmental design: insights from ecoburbs and ecocities for design with nature. *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design* 38: 267–288.
- Dilworth, R., and R. Stokes (2012). Green growth machines, LEED ratings and value free development: the case of the Philadelphia property tax abatement. *Journal of Urbanism* 6.
- Garde, A. (2009). Sustainable by design? Insights from U.S. LEED-ND pilot projects. *Journal of the American Planning Association* 75(4): 424 – 440.
- Gibson-Graham, J. K. (1996). *The end of capitalism (as we knew it)*. Blackwell: Oxford, UK.
- Goldberg, J. (2013). The modern king in the Arab Spring. *The Atlantic* (April) <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/04/monarch-in-the-middle/309270/>
- Jonas, A., Gibbs, D., and A. White (2011). The New Urban Politics as a Politics of Carbon Control. *Urban Studies* 48(12): 2537 – 2554.
- Kruegar, R., and J. Agyeman, J. (2005). Sustainability schizophrenia or ‘actually existing sustainabilities?’ *Geoforum* 36: 410 – 417.
- Logan, J. and H. Molotch (1987). *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Maniates, M. (2001). Individualization: plant a tree, buy a bike, save the world? *Global Environmental Politics* 1(3): 31 – 52.
- Moore, S. (2007). *Alternative routes to the sustainable city: Austin, Curitiba, and Frankfurt*. Lexington Book: Lanham, MD.

- Neuman, M. (2005). The compact city fallacy. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 25: 11–26.
- Orwell, G. (1946). *Politics and the English language*. The Complete Works of George Orwell, [http://www.george-orwell.org/Politics\\_and\\_the\\_English\\_Language/0.html](http://www.george-orwell.org/Politics_and_the_English_Language/0.html), Accessed 24 August 2012.
- Portney, K. (2003). *Taking sustainable cities seriously*. The MIT Press: Cambridge, MA.
- Rees, W. (1997). Is ‘sustainable city’ an oxymoron? *Local Environment* 2(5): 303 – 310.
- Stone, C. (1993). Urban regimes and the capacity to govern: a political economy approach. *Journal of Urban Affairs* 15(1): 1 – 28.
- Trudeau, D., and Christiansen, L. (2015). “The study of cities and politics.” In M. Shally-Jensen, ed., *American Political Culture: an Encyclopedia*, Denver: ABC-CLIO.
- Tufte, E. (2003). *The cognitive style of PowerPoint*. Graphics Press: Cheshire, CT.
- Yin, R. (2009). *Case Study Research*, Fourth Edition. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Vallance, S., Perkins, H., and Dixon, J. (2011). What is social sustainability? A clarification of concepts. *Geoforum* 42: 342–348.