

**Geography 448 – A01
Urban Social Geographies
University of Victoria
Fall 2015**

Instructor:	Reuben Rose-Redwood, Ph.D.
Office:	David Turpin Building, Room B354
Telephone:	(250)-721-7331
Email:	redwood@uvic.ca
Office hours:	Mondays and Thursdays, 1:20 p.m.—2:20 p.m.
Course time:	Mondays and Thursdays, 11:30 a.m. —12:50 p.m.
Course location:	Cornett Building, Room A128

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers an advanced overview of scholarship on the social and cultural geographies of the city. The primary objective of the class is twofold: (1) to critically engage with both classic and contemporary writings on urban social life and the cultures of cities, and (2) to gain practical experience with urban data collection and analysis by conducting a collective research project on a significant aspect of social and cultural geography in the Greater Victoria Region. By the end of the semester, students will have acquired the skills necessary to analyze and interpret a variety of important socio-spatial issues currently facing cities today, while also contributing to the study of urban social geography through a course-based research project.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Critically engage with both classic and contemporary writings on the social and cultural geography of cities
- Provide an advanced overview of major paradigms and thematic areas in urban social geography
- Examine methodological issues that arise when conducting urban geographical research

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Acquire an advanced understanding of the key concepts and issues that have been explored in the scholarly literature on the social and cultural geography of cities
- Develop the ability to critically evaluate contrasting paradigms and approaches to urban social geography
- Enhance urban geographical research skills by collecting and analyzing primary-source data related to the social and cultural geography of Victoria
- Improve research, writing, and public speaking competencies in preparation for graduate school and/or a professional career in an urban-related field

CLASS FORMAT

Since this is an advanced-level undergraduate course, it will be run largely as a “seminar,” allowing more time for group discussion of the assigned readings. Each week, we shall typically spend one class session in a roundtable discussion of the readings and another class session working on the group research project. Students are expected to have read the assigned readings prior to attending class each day as well as actively participate in class discussions. There will be one take-home midterm exam halfway through the semester and a take-home final exam due during finals week, which will largely be based on the course readings.

READINGS

Required Course Texts

- All reading materials will be available on the CourseSpaces page for this class (<http://coursespaces.uvic.ca>).

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING SCHEME

Your final grade will be based on the following calculation:

Take-Home Midterm Exam	25%
Take-Home Final Exam	30%
Group Research Project	30%
Readings Presentation	5%
Attendance & Participation	10%
Total:	100%

Grading Scale

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	D	F
90-100%	85-89%	80-84%	77-79%	73-76%	70-72%	65-69%	60-64%	50-59%	49% or Less

COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: COURSESPACES

We will be using the CourseSpaces management system as a medium for the posting of relevant course materials and related course information (<http://coursespaces.uvic.ca>).

ASSIGNMENTS

Take-Home Midterm Exam (25%)

As a seminar-based course, it is important that all students do the assigned readings prior to each class session to participate in productive class discussions. In order to evaluate reading comprehension and critical engagement with urban geographic concepts discussed in class, there will be one take-home midterm exam, which is worth 25% of your course grade. Two weeks prior to the exam due date, I will post four essay exam questions on CourseSpaces. Each essay should be 2 pages in length, single-spaced, 12-pt Times New Roman font, 2.54 cm margins, and

no large spaces between paragraphs. Late exams will not be accepted unless there is university-excused absence.

Take-Home Final Exam (30%)

The final exam will also be a take-home exam, following the same format discussed above for the midterm exam. The final exam will be due during finals week, and the final exam questions will be posted on CourseSpaces during the last week of classes. A hardcopy of the final exam should be placed in the GEOG 448 dropbox next to the main geography office in the B-Wing of the Turpin Building. The exact due date for the submission of the final exam will be announced in class. Late exams will not be accepted unless there is university-excused absence.

Group Research Project (30%)

Students will design and implement a semester-long, group research project on a particular aspect of the social and/or cultural geography of the Greater Victoria Region. At the beginning of the semester, students will select a research topic on CourseSpaces for the group research project. The primary method of data collection will consist of archival research, semi-structured interviews, and on-site fieldwork observation. We will discuss the details of the research project further in class, but the end product will consist of the following:

- (a) *Data*: Audio recordings to be submitted to the course instructor of a series of interviews conducted with research participants (8-10 interviews per group, an estimated 45-60 minutes per interview). Audio files should be burned onto a CD that will be submitted on the last day of class. Please name the audio files using the full name or pseudonym of the interviewee. Signed consent forms must also be provided for each interview. All audio files should be password-protected using a password provided by the instructor to comply with the ethics requirement for data management at UVic.
- (b) *Research Article*: Each group will write a 15-20 page, double-spaced, 12-pt font, 2.54 cm margins research article (no large spaces between paragraphs) that should be formatted for submission to the journal, *The Geographical Bulletin*, and should include some variant on the following sections (although you can be a bit more creative with section titles):
 - Abstract (150 words, include up to 5 key words)
 - Introduction
 - Literature Review
 - Methods
 - Results
 - Conclusion

A hardcopy of the research article should be submitted to the instructor on the last day of class, and a digital copy should be burned onto a CD for submission as well, along with the audio files for archival purposes.

- (c) *Group Presentation*: Each group will present their findings to the class at the end of the semester (estimate approx. 20 minutes per presentation).

Readings Presentation (5%)

At the beginning of the semester, students will sign up for a date to present the assigned readings for a class session. Presentations should consist of a 10-15 minute presentation that provides (1) a brief description of the authors' biographies, (2) a summary of the key argument and focus of each reading, (3) a description of the evidence employed to support the authors' arguments, (4) a statement about what you think about the authors' arguments, and (5) a list of 5 or more questions that you'd like to pose to the class. Presenters will also assist the instructor in leading the class discussion on their assigned date of presentation.

Attendance & Participation (10%)

Attendance and participation are crucial to the successful completion of this class. A sign-in sheet, therefore, will be distributed at the beginning of each class session. Each student is responsible for signing the attendance sheet. If a student has a university-excused absence, this should be discussed with the instructor, preferably before the date of absence. Active involvement in group discussions will also be taken into account as part of the participation grade for the course. Additionally, each student is required to attend at least one of *The City Talks* public lectures as part of their participation in this course. If a student cannot attend one of these talks due to a scheduling conflict, please consult the instructor at the beginning of the semester to make other arrangements. For more information about *The City Talks* schedule, see <http://thecitytalks.ca>.

OFFICE HOURS

I strongly encourage you to come to my office hours. As the course instructor, my main goal is to help you learn, so if you have any questions about the material, or the class in general, you are more than welcome to come speak with me during office hours.

EMAIL

Send all email to me using the email address listed on the first page of the syllabus (redwood@uvic.ca). Please include the course number (GEOG 448) in the email subject title. I will do my best to respond promptly to your questions.

PLAGIARISM

All class assignments should be prepared by the student(s) submitting the assignment. Plagiarism, or any other form of academic dishonesty, will not be tolerated in this course. Plagiarism consists of: (a) submitting someone else's work as your own without the use of proper citation or (b) paraphrasing another's ideas without acknowledging the author's work through citation. If you have any questions concerning matters of plagiarism, please see the following link: <<http://www.uvic.ca/library/research/citation/plagiarism/index.php>>.

COURSE EXPERIENCE SURVEYS (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via MyPage and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile

device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Below is the course schedule of readings and assignments for the entire semester. I will do my best to stick to this schedule, although I do reserve the right to make changes if necessary.

Course Schedule

Week 1

Thursday, September 10: Course overview

No readings assigned.

Week 2

Monday, September 14: Urbanism as a way of life

Readings

Simmel, G. (2002 [1903]), "The Metropolis and Mental Life," in G. Bridge & S. Watson (Eds.), *The Blackwell City Reader*, Oxford and Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 11-19.

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

Brenner, N. (2013), "Theses on Urbanization," *Public Culture* 25(1): 85-114.

Thursday, September 17: Research project session

No assigned reading.

Week 3

Monday, September 21: Theorizing the urban—from Chicago to LA and beyond

Readings

Dear, M. and S. Flusty (1998), "Postmodern Urbanism," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 88(1): 50-72.

Brenner, N. (2003), "Stereotypes, Archetypes, and Prototypes: Three Uses of Superlatives in Contemporary Urban Studies," *City & Community* 2(3): 205-216.

Roy, A. (2009), "The 21st-Century Metropolis: New Geographies of Theory," *Regional Studies* 43(6): 819-830.

Thursday, September 24: Research project session

No assigned reading.

Week 4

Monday, September 28: Phenomenologies of the city and the social life of urban spaces

Readings

Jacobs, J. (1961), "The Uses of Sidewalks: Safety," from *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, R. LeGates and F. Stout (eds.), *The City Reader*, New York: Routledge, pp. 106-111.

Seamon, D. (2012), "'A Jumping, Joyous Urban Jumble': Jane Jacobs's *Death and Life of Great American Cities* as a Phenomenology of Urban Place," *Journal of Space Syntax* 3(1): 139-149.

Klemek, C. (2007), "Placing Jane Jacobs within the Transatlantic Urban Conversation," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 73(1): 49-67.

Thursday, October 1: Film—*The Social Life of Small Urban Places*

No assigned reading.

Week 5

Monday, October 5: The political life of urban public spaces

Readings

Mitchell, D. (1995), "The End of Public Space? People's Park, Definitions of the Public, and Democracy," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 85(1): 108-133.

Bondi, L. (1998), "Gender, Class, and Urban Space: Public and Private Space in Contemporary Urban Landscapes," *Urban Geography* 19(2): 160-185.

Madden, D. (2010), "Revisiting the End of Public Space: Assembling the Public in an Urban Park," *City & Community* 9(2): 187-207.

Thursday, October 8: Research project session

No assigned reading.

Week 6

Monday, October 12: Class cancelled, Thanksgiving

No assigned reading.

Thursday, October 15: Capitalism and the political economy of cities

Readings

Molotch, H. (1976), "The City as a Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place," *American Journal of Sociology* 82(2): 309-332.

Harvey, D. (1989), "The Urban Process Under Capitalism: A Framework for Analysis," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 2(1-4): 101-131.

Moreno, L. (2014), "The Urban Process Under Financialised Capitalism," *City* 18(3): 244-268.

Week 7

Monday, October 19: Race, racism, and social injustice in the city

Readings

Anderson, K. (1987), "The Idea of Chinatown: The Power of Place and Institutional Practice in the Making of a Racial Category," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 77(4): 580-598.

Gotham, K.F. (2000), "Urban Space, Restrictive Covenants and the Origins of Racial Residential Segregation in a US City, 1900-50," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 24(3): 616-633.

Nayak, A. (2010), "Race, Affect, and Emotion: Young People, Racism, and Graffiti in the Postcolonial English Suburbs," *Environment and Planning A* 42(10):2370-2392.

Thursday, October 22: Research project session

*****TAKE-HOME MIDTERM DUE IN CLASS*****

No readings assigned.

Week 8

Monday, October 26: Gender and the production of urban space

Readings

Hayden, D. (1980), "What Would a Non-Sexist City Be Like? Speculations on Housing, Urban Design, and Human Work," *Signs* 5(3): 170-187.

Spain, D. (2002), "What Happened to Gender Relations on the Way from Chicago to Los Angeles?" *City & Community* 1(2): 155-169.

Michel, S. (2002), "Response to Daphne Spain: 'What Happened to Gender Relations on the Way from Chicago to Los Angeles?'" *City & Community* 1(2): 171-176.

Gürel, M. (2009), "Defining and Living Out the Interior: The 'Modern' Apartment and the 'Urban' Housewife in Turkey during the 1950s and 1960s," *Gender, Place & Culture* 703-722.

Thursday, October 29: Research project session

No readings assigned.

Week 9

Monday, November 2: Spaces of social memory and the politics of commemorative streetscapes

Readings

Rose-Redwood, R. (2008), "From Number to Name: Symbolic Capital, Places of Memory and the Politics of Street Renaming in New York City," *Social & Cultural Geography* 9(4): 431-452.

Alderman, D. and J. Inwood (2013), "Street Naming and the Politics of Belonging: Spatial Injustices in the Toponymic Commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr.," *Social & Cultural Geography* 14(2): 211-233.

Light, D. and C. Young (2014), "Habit, Memory, and the Persistence of Socialist-Era Street Names in Postsocialist Bucharest, Romania," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 104(3): 668-685.

Thursday, November 5: Research project session

No assigned reading.

Week 10

Monday, November 9: Class cancelled, reading break

No assigned reading.

Thursday, November 12: Special topic—review of literature for group research project

Readings to be based upon topics for group research projects.

Week 11

Monday, November 16: Special topic—review of literature for group research project

Readings to be based upon topics for group research projects.

Thursday, November 19: Research project session

No assigned reading.

Week 12

Monday, November 23: Student presentations

No assigned reading.

Thursday, November 26: Student presentations

No assigned reading.

Week 13

Monday, November 30: Student presentations

No assigned reading.

Thursday, December 3: Course wrap-up and reflections

No assigned reading.

*** RESEARCH PROJECTS DUE AT START OF LAST DAY OF CLASS ON DECEMBER 3.**

Note: Final Exam will be due during finals week. Exact date to be announced in class.

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.