

SOCI 222 Urban Sociology

Fall 2020

Monday and Thursday, 11:35am-12:55pm

Instructor: Dr. Jan Doering

Email: jan.doering@mcgill.ca

Office hours: Thursday, 2-3pm, via Zoom

Please sign up online: <https://calendly.com/jandoering>

Enter meeting ID 962 6910 7592 into Zoom or use this link:

<https://mcgill.zoom.us/j/96269107592>

Note: This link is only for office hours, not for regular course meetings

Teaching Assistants:

Lysandre Champagne

Email: lysandre.champagne@mail.mcgill.ca; office hours: TBA

Eliane Nevares

Email: eliane.nevares@mail.mcgill.ca; office hours: TBA

Course Description

A growing majority of humans around the world lives in cities. Most of today's societal shifts in fashion, politics, lifestyle, and labour—to name just a few—materialize first and foremost in cities. In many ways, society itself has become an urban phenomenon. To understand society, therefore, we have to comprehend cities and urban life. Urban sociology is the study of the city's cultural, social, and material form and content. In this course, we will review and apply sociological approaches that help to understand various kinds of urban phenomena, including neighbourhoods, ethnic segregation, gentrification, urban lifestyles, and more.

Learning Goals

After completing this course, you should be able to:

- understand the role of cities in contemporary societies.
- analyze the shape and texture of city space as a function of social, cultural, and political forces.
- interpret how new communities—such as ethnic, gay, or lifestyle communities—and new forms of behaviour emerge in cities and how they are connected to urban space.
- examine place-based identities, how those identities emerge, and how they shape the local culture and economy.

Remote Delivery Process and Procedures

This course will be conducted remotely in its entirety. I anticipate no need for in-person meetings or activities. Below, I describe the general weekly process for the course. Please note that

changes in this process as well as the syllabus as a whole (including assignments and grading) may become necessary during the course as I am adjusting to the new situation just as you are.

During most weeks, your study process will involve the following steps:

1. Watch the reading lecture(s) for the week. Reading lectures contextualize the assigned reading(s) and give you some pointers. Watch them before doing the respective reading(s). They are available under the “lecture recordings” tab.
2. Read the assigned readings. They are all available on MyCourses under the “content” tab. However, after the end of add/drop period (Tuesday, September 15), you must read the assigned readings on Perusall, a peer-based online reading tool. Perusall enables you to discuss the readings together with other students. Please note that engaging the readings on Perusall is a course requirement and will constitute part of your grade (see “Assignments and Grading”).
3. Watch the topic lecture(s) for the week. The topic lectures are designed to be watched after you have completed the respective readings. They are available under the “lecture recordings” tab.
4. If you can and wish, attend the weekly course meeting via Zoom. This meeting will take place during class time on Mondays, unless Monday is a holiday. The course meeting will provide opportunities for you to discuss and engage the readings and course materials as well as to ask questions. Attending the weekly course meetings is not mandatory, and all meetings will be recorded and shared on MyCourses. Sign into these meetings through the Zoom tab on the MyCourses course page. Before attending the weekly course meeting, you should watch all pre-recorded lectures and do the readings. If you cannot attend the weekly course meetings, you can ask questions about the readings and lectures on the MyCourses discussion board.
5. With the beginning of class time on Thursday, quizzes or group assignments will sometimes be made available to you. See the schedule below for dates. For completing group assignments, you can use class time work remotely with your group members, but it's up to you and your fellow group members to decide when and how you want to complete group assignments.

I understand that the remote learning process can pose additional challenges for individual students. Me and the teaching assistants will do our best to accommodate you. For this purpose, it is essential that you contact me or the teaching assistants about challenges you might face as early as possible. Please do not contact us at the last minute about foreseeable problems.

Since the course takes place online, it is essential that you regularly check the MyCourses announcements and your email for course-related messages from me and the teaching assistants. If you have questions, ask them during course meetings or post them on the MyCourses discussion boards. Do this instead of emailing me or the teaching assistants. This way, all students can benefit from your question and our answer. If you don't receive a reply from us on MyCourses within 48 hours, you may email us. Always consult the syllabus for relevant information before posting questions or emailing us. If the answer to your question is on the syllabus, we reserve the right to ignore your query.

Assignments and Grading

A) Final exam: 35%

The final exam will take place remotely via MyCourses during the final exam period in December according to the university's exam schedule, which will become available during the semester. The exam will cover all course content, including the material covered in the readings, lectures, and in-class exercises, and it may consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

B) Perusall reading grade (average of pass/fail credit per assigned reading): 10% total

After the end of add/drop period (Tuesday, September 15), you are required to engage the course readings by using Perusall, a browser-based, collaborative reading tool. Perusall enables you to discuss the readings together with other students. Perusall will grade your reading engagement on a pass/fail basis for each single reading. It considers the quantity and quality of comments and the degree to which your comments engage and also inspire other students.

In order to receive credit for completing a reading, you have to a) complete the reading in full before the course meeting for which I have assigned it (deadline: 11:30am), and b) engage the reading by substantially commenting on passages, asking pertinent question, and addressing the comments and questions that other students have logged. Note that you won't receive credit if you complete your reading late or if you do not substantially engage the reading by logging comments on questions on Perusall.

At the end of the course, your overall Perusall reading grade will be the simple average of your pass/fail grades for each assigned reading. For example, if I had assigned only four readings and you would have received credit for three readings, your reading grade would be 75%.

C) Four in-course quizzes (5% each): 20% total

Throughout the semester, we will hold four short quizzes through the MyCourses platform. Quizzes will become available at the beginning of class time on Thursdays. For the dates, please see the schedule below. You will have 48 hours to take the quiz. Once you open a quiz, you will have 60 minutes to complete it. The quizzes are designed to take about 15 minutes so you will have ample time to complete them even if your internet connection breaks down or you face other challenges. There is no make-up option for missed quizzes. If you miss a quiz, I will shift the weight of the quiz (5%) onto your final exam.

D) Group work: 35% total

Group work is an important component of this course. Throughout the semester, you will complete several tasks together with three other students. Please note that assignments to groups will be strictly random—no reassessments will be made. The only exception to this rule is that we will try to match students approximately by time zone. Note also that the division of labour within your group is up to you and your fellow students. If you have to miss a group exercise,

you should therefore communicate with your group members rather than the instructor or teaching assistants. Your overall group work grade comprises several items:

- Three group exercise reports: 7.5% total. Over the semester, we will do three group exercises. For each exercise, your group must submit a short report (graded pass/fail, each worth 2.5% of your overall course grade). The exercise instructions will be made available with the beginning of class time on Thursday, and you will have 48 hours to submit your group report. For the dates, see the schedule below. Please note that late submissions will not be accepted.
- Group-based short paper: 20%. By the end of Tuesday (Montreal time), December 8, your group must submit a short paper that explores the urban reputation of a particular town or city. Instructions for this paper will be shared with you during the semester. Late papers will incur a penalty of one full letter grade (e.g., from A- to B-) for each 24 hour period that has begun after the submission deadline.
- Peer evaluation grade: 7.5%. To encourage everyone's participation in the making of the exercise reports and short paper, you will have the opportunity to evaluate your group members' contribution by the end of the class. Instructions will be shared with you during the semester. Each student's peer evaluation grade will be computed as the simple average of the peer evaluations they receive. Do not complain to me about your peer evaluation grade—I will not alter it. It is up to you to take a productive role within your group that ensures a favorable peer evaluation. Please note that submitting your peer evaluation grades is mandatory and late submission will not be accepted. If you do not submit a complete evaluation for all of your group members before the deadline (to be announced), you will receive a zero for own participation grade, independent of the grades your group members may have given you.

Course Policies and Statements

- **Inclusive learning environment:** As the instructor of this course I endeavour to provide an inclusive learning environment. If you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the [Office for Students with Disabilities](#), 514-398-6009.
- **Recording of live sessions:** To make lectures and other course sessions accessible to students who cannot attend class, I will record course meetings. You will be notified through a ‘pop-up’ box in Zoom that a session is being recorded. By remaining in the session, you agree to the recording, which implies that your image, voice, and name may be disclosed to classmates and that recordings will be made available in MyCourses to students registered in the course.
- **Copyright and the reproduction of course material:** Instructor-generated course materials (e.g., lectures, notes, summaries, exam questions) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without the explicit permission of the instructor. Specifically, you may not reproduce or place in the public domain lecture and course session recordings. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow-up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.

- **Make-up policy:** If you miss a quiz, I will shift the weight of that quiz onto your final exam. Thus, if you miss one quiz, your final exam will account for 40% rather than 35% of your final course grade. There are no make-up options for Perusall reading assignments or for group work grading components. If you have to miss group assignments, communicate with your group members rather than the course instructor.
- **Regrading policy:** You have the right to request that your exam be regraded. If you request a regrade, please note that I will regrade your entire assignment, not just specific passages that you may have flagged. Regrading may improve or lower your grade.
- **Academic integrity:** McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information). If a student is caught engaging in fraudulent activity, the student may fail the assignment in question or the entire course, and I will report that student to the Dean of Students. Note that to support academic integrity, your assignments may be submitted to text-matching software to check for plagiarism.
- **Language:** In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté.
- **Land acknowledgment:** McGill University is on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. We acknowledge and thank the diverse Indigenous people whose footsteps have marked this territory on which peoples of the world now gather.
- **Attendance:** I do not take attendance. It is up to you to decide whether you want to attend course meetings or not. However, please note that exams and exercises will test not only the readings but may also include material covered only during course meetings. Furthermore, your group members may base their peer evaluation (see item "D" under Assignments and Grading) in part on whether you attended group work meetings.
- **Policy regarding extra credit and “rounding up” grades:** Regardless of circumstances, I never give extra credit, because extra credit is unfair to the rest of the class. I also never “round up” grades, even if a student tells me that they need this for applying to law school or similar things. Please don't me ask for it.

Schedule

Week 1. Thursday, September 3. Introduction.

Week 2. Monday, September 7: Labor Day: no class.

Week 2. Thursday, September 10. Urbanization and the industrial city.

- Engels, Friedrich. 1845. *The Situation of the Working Class in England*. Excerpts from chapter 3, “The Great Towns.”
- Lofland, Lyn H. 1973. *A World of Strangers. Order and Action in Urban Public Space*. New York: Basic Books. Chapter 1 (“The Preindustrial City).

Week 3. Monday, September 14. The Chicago School (1).

- Simmel, Georg. 1971 [1903]. “The Metropolis and Mental Life.” Chapter 20 in Donald Levine (ed.), *On Individuality and Social Forms*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Burgess, Ernest. 1925. “The Growth of the City: An Introduction to a Research Project.” Pp.46-62 in Robert Park, Ernest Burgess, and Roderick McKenzie (eds.), *The City*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Week 3. Thursday, September 17. No course meeting or assignments.

Week 4. Monday, September 21. The Chicago School (2). Reminder: you must engage these and all subsequent readings on Perusall.

- Park, Robert. 1952 [1925]. *Human Communities: The City and Human Ecology*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press. Chapter 3 (“Community Organization and the Romantic Temper.”).
- Cressey, Paul G. 1932. *The Taxi-Dance Hall: A Sociological Study in Commercialized Recreation and City Life*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 5 (“The Life-Cycle of the Taxi-Dancer”).
- Zorbaugh, Harvey W. 1929. *The Gold Coast and the Slum: A Sociological Study of Chicago’s Near North Side*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 3 (“The Gold Coast”).

Week 4. Thursday, September 24. Group exercise 1 will be introduced. It will be due 48 hours later.

Week 5. Monday, September 28. Communities in the city (1).

- Fischer, Claude S. 1975. “Toward a Subcultural Theory of Urbanism.” *American Journal of Sociology* 80(6):1319–41.
- Lloyd, Richard. 2006. *Neo-Bohemia. Art and Commerce in the Postindustrial City*. New York, NY: Routledge. Chapter 5 (“Living like an Artist”).
- Ghaziani, Amin. 2019. “Cultural Archipelagos: New Directions in the Study of Sexuality and Space.” *City & Community* 18(1):4–22.

Week 5. Thursday, October 1. Quiz 1 will be made available. It will be due 48 hours later.

Week 6. Monday, October 5. Communities in the city (2).

- Lawrence, Bonita. 2004. “*Real*” Indians and Others. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press. Chapter 8 (“Maintaining an Urban Native Community”).
- Klinenberg, Eric. 2001. “Dying Alone: The Social Production of Urban Isolation.” *Ethnography* 2(4): 501-531.

Week 6. Thursday, October 8. No course meeting or assignments.

Week 7. Monday, October 12. Thanksgiving: no class.

Week 7. Thursday, October 15. The Chicago School (3): neighborhood effects.

- Sampson, Robert J. 2011. *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Chapters 1 (“Placed”), 2 (“Neighborhood Effects”), and 7 (“The Theory of Collective Efficacy”).

Week 8. Monday, October 19. “Place” and urban reputations.

- Suttles, Gerald D. 1984. “The Cumulative Texture of Local Urban Culture.” *American Journal of Sociology* 90(2):283–304.
- Molotch, Harvey, William Freudenburg, and Krista E. Paulsen. 2000. “History Repeats Itself, But How? City Character, Urban Tradition, and the Accomplishment of Place.” *American Sociological Review* 65(6):791–823.
- Gottdiener, Mark, Claudia C. Collins, and David R. Dickens. 1999. *Las Vegas: The Social Production of an All-American City*. Malden, MA: Blackwell. Chapter 3 (“Media Vegas: Hype, Boosterism, and the Image of the City”).

Week 8. Thursday, October 22. Group exercise 2 will be introduced. It will be due 48 hours later.

Week 9. Monday, October 26. The micro organization of urban interactions.

- Goffman, Erving. 1963. *Behavior in Public Places: Notes on the Social Organization of Gatherings*. New York, NY: Free Press. Selection from chapter 6 (“Face Engagements”).
- Anderson, Elijah. 1990. *Code of the Street*. New York: W.W. Norton. Chapter 2 (“Campaigning for Respect”).

Week 9. Thursday, October 29. Quiz 2 will be made available. It will be due 48 hours later.

Week 10. Monday, November 2. The Political Economy School.

- Molotch, Harvey. 1979. “Capital and Neighborhood in the United States.” *Urban Affairs Quarterly* 14(3):289-312.
- Harvey, David. 2008. “The Right to the City.” *New Left Review* (53):23–40.
- Hoang, Kimberly Kay. 2014. “Flirting with Capital: Negotiating Perceptions of Pan-Asian Ascendancy and Western Decline in Global Sex Work,” *Social Problems* 64(4): 507-529.

Week 10. Thursday, November 5. Group exercise 3 will be introduced. It will be due 48 hours later.

Week 11. Monday, November 9. Gentrification.

- Lees, Loretta. 2008. “Gentrification and Social Mixing: Towards an Inclusive Urban Renaissance?” *Urban Studies* 45(12):2449–70.
- Freeman, Lance. 2005. *There Goes the 'Hood: Views of Gentrification from the Ground Up*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press. Chapter 3 (“There Goes the 'Hood”).

Week 11. Thursday, November 12. Quiz 3 will be made available. It will be due 48 hours later.

Week 12. Monday, November 16. Urban politics.

- Barnard, Alex V. 2011. “‘Waving the Banana’ at Capitalism: Political Theater and Social Movement Strategy among New York’s ‘freegan’ Dumpster Divers.” *Ethnography* 12(4):419–44.
- Doering, Jan, Daniel Silver, and Zack Taylor. 2020. “The Spatial Articulation of Urban Political Cleavages.” *Urban Affairs Review*. Prepublished online in July, 2020. DOI: 1078087420940789.

Week 12. Thursday, November 19. No course meeting or assignments.

Week 13. Monday, November 23. Race and ethnicity (1).

- Fong, Eric and Brent Matthew Berry. 2017. *Immigration and the City*. Malden, MA: Polity Press. Chapter 5 (“Immigrant Businesses and Ethnic Economies”).
- Massey, Douglas S. and Nancy A. Denton. 1993. *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*. Chapter 4 (“The Continuing Causes of Segregation”).

Week 13. Thursday, November 26. TA-assisted review for the final exam.

Week 14. Monday, November 30. Race and ethnicity (2).

- Valverde, Mariana. 2012. *Everyday Law on the Street. City Governance in an Age of Diversity*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 8 (“Mosques and the Politics of Local Planning”).
- Hyra, Derek S. 2017. *Race, Class, and Politics in the Cappuccino City*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 5 (“Race, Class, and Sexual Orientation”).

Week 14. Thursday, December 3. Quiz 4 will be made available. It will be due 48 hours later.

Week 15. Monday, December 7. Course wrap-up.