

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY
University of Toronto
GGR 458: Advanced Topics in Urban Geography
Fall Term 2015: W 2-4
Location: SS 2125

Professor:

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Course website:

Blackboard (updated frequently)

Course description:

This course selects a special topic in urban geography and covers it with more depth than would otherwise be the case in a more survey-oriented class. The aim is to utilize this single topic as a vehicle to understanding how urban geographical ideas are produced more widely. Students are expected to actively participate in this course. The theme of this year's course will be urban decline.

Readings:

Availability to be explained in class.

Course objective:

The objective is to provide students a vehicle for developing several urban themes more intensively than they would otherwise in a purely lecture-oriented course.

Policies:

Email: Generally I prefer that you come to see me during my office hours rather than asking in-depth questions (that require in-depth responses) over email.

Additionally, email cannot be used to submit any assignment for this course. Only hard copies of assignments will be accepted.

Blackboard grades: I will attempt to post grades on blackboard as quickly as possible to inform you of your standing in the class. It should be noted however that the grades you see on Blackboard are not official. If you notice a discrepancy between the grade recorded on Blackboard, and the mark listed on one of your assignments or tests, you should assume that the hard copy is correct (not Blackboard). If you notice discrepancies of this sort, please bring them to my attention as soon as possible.

Absences from class or examinations: Attendance for the lecture period during the term will not be recorded. It is your responsibility to obtain and retain the course material, which will includes lecture. Examination and scheduled presentation absences are however a very different matter. The only excusable absences from the midterm exam or your presentation dates are *documented* medical or family emergencies. For medical absences, have your doctor fill out an illness verification form

(<http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/>) that clearly excuses you for work *on the day of the exam* (i.e. a note saying that you were sick the week before the exam is not sufficient). The form should be delivered to the instructor *within three days* of the missed assignment, presentation, or examination date. Family emergencies vary more in nature, so please contact the instructor as soon as possible about necessary documentation should you find yourself in this situation.

For assignments, you need to demonstrate more than why you were feeling ill on the day it was due. Assignments are circulated and posted on Blackboard during the first few weeks of class, so generating documentation that you were sick on the day it was due or in the days leading up to it will not be sufficient for the instructor to grant an extension. Please plan ahead and do not wait until the last minute to begin them so that you do not find yourself in this situation.

Without proper documentation for missing an assignment, or being absent from an exam, you will receive a grade of zero for the piece of work in question.

Hard copies of exams and assignments: It is your responsibility to retain a hard copy of all graded work at least until you have received an official mark for the class.

Digital copies of the assignments: It is your responsibility to maintain a digital copy of term work even after you have submitted a hard copy to the instructor.

Penalties for late term work: Written term work will incur a penalty of 10 percent per day (with nothing accepted one week after the deadline).

Academic integrity: I expect that most of you are well-acquainted with the university's policies regarding plagiarism and academic misconduct. Briefly, the quotation or paraphrasing of an author without proper citation is strictly prohibited, as is the submission of an assignment that you did not complete (e.g. buying a term paper, re-using old term papers). For more information about this matter, please visit: www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/students. If you are unclear on how to properly cite an author, please visit your college's writing centre.

Turnitin.com: Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

Disability services: If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: disability.services@utoronto.ca or www.accessibility.utoronto.ca.

Grade breakdown:

Midterm (20 percent): The test will be essay-based and take place during the regular course period on October 21 (in our regular classroom). Further details about its content will be announced in class preceding the exam.

Book review (40 percent—combined): You are required to write an 10-page critical book review and to present it in class (a sign-up sheet will be available on the second week of class). Details are available on an assignment sheet posted to Blackboard.

Final paper and presentation (40 percent—combined): The capstone project for this class is an 8-10 page paper on the topic of urban decline. Papers are due on the final day of class. You must also present the contents of your research to the class on either TBA or TBA (sign up sheets will be available later in the term). Details about this assignment will be presented in class and are available on an assignment sheet posted to Blackboard. You are also encouraged to visit me during office hours or after class to develop your paper.

Schedule:

* Reading posted to the course Blackboard site (all other readings available directly from Robarts Library-online)

Week 1 (September 16): Introduction to the course

Week 2 (September 23): Urban decline in context

Required Reading:

Dewar, M. and Weber, M. (2012). City abandonment. in: R. Crane and R. Weber (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Urban Planning*. Oxford University Press. (available as an online resource through the UofT Library)

* Donald, B. and Hall, H. (2010). Slow Growth and Decline in Canadian Cities. Pp. 258-273, in P. Filion, M. Moos, T. Vinodrai, and R. Walker (eds), *Canadian Cities in Transition* 5th edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fol, S. (2012). Urban Shrinkage and Socio-Spatial Disparities: Are the Remedies Worse than the Disease? *Built Environment*, 38(2): 259-275.

Wiechmann, T. and K. Pallagst (2012). Urban shrinkage in Germany and the USA: A comparison of transformation patterns and local strategies. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 36(2): 261-80.

Week 3 (September 30): City building and unbuilding

Required Reading:

Akers, J. (2013). Making markets: Think tank legislation and private property in Detroit. *Urban Geography*, 34(8): 1070-1095.

Mallach, A. (2011). Demolition and preservation in shrinking US industrial cities. *Building Research and Information*, 39(4): 380-394.

Rhodes, J. and Russo, J. (2013). Shrinking 'smart'? Urban redevelopment and shrinkage in Youngstown, Ohio. *Urban Geography*, 34(3): 305-236.

Weber, R. (2002). Extracting value from the city: Neoliberalism and urban redevelopment. *Antipode*, 34(3): 519-540.

Week 4 (October 7): Framing urban decline

Required Reading:

- Eisinger, P. (2015). Detroit futures: Can the city be reimagined? *City and Community*, 14(2): 106-117.
- Foster, J. (2014). Hiding in plain view: Vacancy and prospect in Paris' Petite Ceinture. *Cities*, 40: 124-132.
- Hall, H. (2009). Slow growth and decline in Greater Sudbury: Challenges, opportunities, and foundations for a new planning agenda. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 18(1): 1-26.
- Mayer, H., & Greenberg, M. (2001). Coming back from economic despair: Case studies of small- and medium-sized American cities. *Economic Development Quarterly*, 15(3): 203-216.

Week 5 (October 14): Race and urban decline

Required Reading:

- * Hackworth, J. (2015). Why there is no Detroit in Canada. Working Paper. Available at: http://individual.utoronto.ca/hackworth/Detroit_Canada.pdf
- * Massey, D., & Denton, N. (1993). *American Apartheid: Segregation and the making of the underclass*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press. (Chapter 2: "The construction of the ghetto", 17-59).
- Metzger, J.T. (2000). Planned abandonment: The neighborhood life-cycle theory and National Urban Policy. *Housing Policy Debate*, 11(1): 7-40.
- Tighe, J., & Ganning, J. (2015). The divergent city: Unequal and uneven development in St. Louis. *Urban Geography*, 36(5): 654-673.

Week 6 (October 21):

- MIDTERM TEST

Week 7 (October 28):

- Student Book Reviews
- Class Conversation
- Theme: TBA

Week 8 (November 4):

- Student Book Reviews
- Class Conversation
- Theme: TBA

Week 9 (November 11):

- Student Book Reviews
- Class Conversation
- Theme: TBA

Week 10 (November 18):

- Student Book Reviews
- Class Conversation
- Theme: TBA

Week 11 (November 25):

- Declining Cities Poster Presentations

Week 12 (December 2):
- Declining Cities Poster Presentations