DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY  
University of Toronto  
JPG 1501: Political Economy of Cities  
F 11-1; SS 2124  
(NOTE: this is not an official course outline. It is posted here for informational purposes only)

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OFFICE HOURS: W 11-12; Th 4-5; F 2-3

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Cities are the complicated result of economic and political processes interacting in space. They are, at once, intensely global and intimately local spaces—spaces of production; spaces of everyday life; spaces of dissent. This complexity has only increased in recent years as global processes increasingly influence local planning, production, and everyday life. Social scientists, philosophers, and planners have tried for centuries to understand and describe the political economy of cities. This course is an advanced survey of classic and contemporary work of this kind. Above all, it explores the ways that cities are connected to the wider politico-economic sphere—how, in particular, global political movements like neoliberalism affect everyday life, policy, and planning in cities around the world.

REQUIRED READING:

- Reading packet that will be assembled and distributed by the instructor (details on first day of class)

EVALUATION:

Course Participation—25 Percent—each student is required to come to class prepared to discuss the week’s readings.

Final Paper—75 Percent—each student is required to write and present a final term paper. Papers should be 20 to 25 pages (5,000 to 6,250 words) in length. Those students who do not intend to pursue the study of urban political economy further, are encouraged to write case studies about a changing neighborhood, location of an industry, or a local land use dispute, for example. In doing so, please try to link your particular case study to the wider literature discussed in class. An initial proposal (worth 10 percent of your final paper grade) is due in week 5. Please feel free to consult with me before developing your topic.

SCHEDULE:
14 September: Introduction to the course

21 September: The city as an object of study

**Required Reading:**


**Follow-Up Readings in This Area:**


28 September: The city as a set of underlying processes

**Required Reading:**


*Follow-Up Readings in This Area:*


5 October: The city as something that we want to change

*Required Reading:*


Harvey, D. 1989. From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: the transformation of urban governance in late capitalism. *Geografiska Annaler* 71: 3-17


*Follow-Up Readings in This Area:*


12 October: Proposal Presentations

Please prepare a short (<5 minutes) presentation and a one-page proposal for your term paper. Feedback will be provided in class and, if needed, on the proposal itself. I do not expect the proposal to be a polished piece of work, but rather an initial distillation and articulation of what you intend to study. It is not uncommon for this exercise to prompt a student to change topics later in the term. This acceptable but I do advise that you meet with me to discuss the new topic.

I would also suggest that at some point in the term, everyone meet with me, regardless of your level of focus, the topic, or your interest in the course, to discuss the term paper. Most structural problems that I see in final term papers can be addressed beforehand.

19 October: Marx and the city

*Required Reading:*


- Chapter 1, Introduction: 1-12
- Chapter 2, Karl Marx: 13-30
- Chapter 3, Frederick Engels: 31-48
- Chapter 6, Manuel Castells: 113-132
- Chapter 7, David Harvey: 133-156

*Follow-Up Readings in This Area:*


26 October: The neoliberal city

*Required Reading:*


*Follow-Up Readings in This Area:*


2 November: The creative city

*Required Reading:*


**9 November: The global city**

*Required Reading:*


*Follow-Up Readings in This Area:*


**16 November: Multiculturalism and difference in cities**

*Required Reading:*


Follow-Up Readings in This Area:


23 November: Presentations

30 November: Presentations

7 December: Presentations