

Instructor: Takashi Tsukamoto

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Office: GRAM 234

Office hours: Wed. 5:00PM – 6:00PM (and by appt.)

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Days	Time	Room
Wed	06:30 PM- 09:20 PM	GRAM 203

PSC520: Urban Political Systems

Course Description

This course is designed to provide a theoretical overview to understand the nature of urban politics and policy decisions that shape American cities and metropolitan regions. By critically reviewing their external and internal conditions, we will identify issues central to effective and democratic governance of our communities. The topics we will be covering throughout the course include:

- Urban politics in the context of American political history and culture
- American federal system and its impact on urban communities
- Urban political economy and policy decisions
- Problems in contemporary American metropolis, such as sprawl, continued racial tensions and disparities, immigration, and government fragmentation
- Globalization and changing economic realities
- Effective urban governance and role of local government

Course Goals:

At the end of the semester, you will be knowledgeable about:

- Biases in the American urban politics and their consequences
- Characteristics and conditions of urban political economy
- Contents and implications of urban government and governance
- Opportunities for and limits of urban policy actions
- Local policy decisions and debates in light of urban politics and changing external environments

You will achieve these course goals through: assigned readings and weekly questions, class discussions and presentations, and papers with research contents

Course Requirements (modified requirements for undergraduate students):

- Five topic papers: 30%
- One research paper (including research design and outline): 30%
- Presentation: 15%
- Class participation: 25%

Topic paper

One-to-two page paper (single-space, typed in a 12-point font with 1-inch margins) in response to a prepared topic/question (given to you in later dates). You should discuss your original thoughts, using class readings and discussions as the basis. Also, some research contents to bolster your points will be expected.

Urban Research Paper and Presentation

A separate instruction will be provided.

NOTE:

1. No late papers will be accepted. No extra-credit work is offered.

2. Cite your papers properly (e.g. the APA, MLA), including for Internet sources. Avoid plagiarism. Plagiarism includes unidentified quotes, paraphrases, or summaries. Whether intentional or not, plagiarism is a form of cheating. Plagiarism will result in an “F” on the assignment and in the course.
3. If you have special needs because of a learning disability, please feel free to discuss this with me.
4. Blackboard is used as the main source of telecommunication.

Grading Policy:

Final grades are determined according to the following schedule. Class attendance and active participation will be factored in for borderline grade adjustments.

A	93-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69
A-	90-92	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	60-66
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72	F =	Below 60

Required Books: The following books should be available at the school bookstore

- Bernard H. Ross and Myron A. Levine, *Urban Politics: Power in Metropolitan America* (Seventh edition), Thomson Wadsworth [Text]
- Elizabeth A. Strom and John H. Mollenkoph, *The Urban Politics Reader*, Routledge [Reader]

Other Reading Materials:

- E-reserves and other reading materials are on Blackboard

Week	Topic and Reading
1	8/27 (instructor, out of town) Sorry, no meeting.
2	9/03 Text: Ch. 1: The Urban Situation Reader: “A Top 10 List (p9-)” & “Poverty, Social Rights and the Politics of Place (p19-)” E-reserve: Gross and Hambleton, “Global trends, diversity and local democracy”
3	9/10 Text: Ch. 2: The Evolution of Cities and Suburbs Reader: “The Postwar Politics of Urban Development (p155-)” BB: CQ Property Rights Class video: “House We Live In” (VH11393)
4	9/17 (Topic paper 1 due) Text: Ch. 3: Recent Trends Reader: “‘Overview’ and ‘Economic Restructuring,’ (p28-)” & “Social Polarization (p41-)” Class video: “Brooklyn Matters” (VH)
5	9/24 Text: Ch. 6: Machine Politics & Ch. 7: Reform Politics Reader: “Tammany Hall (p53-),” “The Ward Organization (p58-),” “Writing the Rules to Win the Game (p67-)” & “Resistance from Outside (p85-)”
6	10/01 (Topic paper 2 due) Text: Ch. 5: Structure and Leadership Style & Ch. 9: Urban Bureaucracy and Service Delivery Reader: “Why Political Machines Have Not Withered Away(p76-)” & “Urban Sacrifice (p294)”

7	10/08 Text: Ch. 4: Who Has the Power? Reader: “How to Study Urban Power p99-),” “Who Governs? (p110-)” “The Interests of the Limited City (p120-)” & “Looking Back to Look Forward (p130-)”
8	10/15 (Topic paper 3 due) Ch. 15: Financing Urban America Reader: “In Search of the Growth Coalition (p141),” “Political Economy of Fiscal Crisis (p168-),” “The Political Economy of Urban Regimes (p175-)” & “Congress Threatens to Leave D.C. (p189-)”
9	10/22 Text: Ch. 8: Citizen Participation and Decentralization & Text: Ch. 10: Women and the Gendered City Reader: “Community Empowerment Strategies (p191-),” “Gender, Development and Urban Social Change p204-)” & “Wanting in (p240-)”
10	10/29 (Topic paper 4 due) Text: Ch. 11: Suburban Politics and Metropolitan America (p339-p364) Reader: “Can People of Color Achieve Equality? (p219-),” “Demobilization in the New Black Political Regime (p230-),” “Black, White, and Blurred (p249-)” & “Ethnic Stability and Urban Reconstruction (p254-)”
11	11/05 Text: Ch. 11: Suburban Politics and Metropolitan America (p364-p375), Text: Ch. 12: The Politics of metropolitan Governance & Ch. 13: The Politics of Regional Cooperation Reader: “Regionalisms Old and New (p303-)” Class video: “Paving the American Dream” (VH) BB: CQ Smart Growth
12	11/12 (Topic paper 5 due) Ch. 14: National and State Policy toward Cities Reader: “Swimming Against the Tide (p269-),” “The Urban Electorate in Presidential Elections (p283-)” & “Are Europe’s Cities Better (p314-)”
13	11/19 Ch. 16: The Future of Urban America Reader: “The American City in the Age of Terror (p321-)” & “A Progressive Agenda (p330-)”
14	11/26 Thanksgiving Holiday, thanks!
15	12/03 Research paper presentation
16	12/10 Research paper presentation Final paper due

Changes may occur to the above schedule to accommodate unexpected events