

Instructor: Takashi Tsukamoto
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 Office hours: T/Th. 1:30PM – 2:30PM (and by appt.)
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Days	Time	Bldg
T/Th	11:00am- 12:15pm	GRAM 209

Spring 2009 PSC323: Urban Politics

Course Description

This course is designed to provide a thorough understanding about how urban politics works and what conditions impact urban governments in the United States. The topics we will be covering throughout the course include:

- The major problems facing urban communities: e.g. deindustrialization, central city decline, poverty, racial/ethnic divide, sprawl, and urban sustainability
- Factors affecting urban communities: e.g. intergovernmental relations, privatism and NIMBYism, metropolitan government fragmentation, social and demographic changes, and globalization
- Government structures in which urban politics functions: e.g. central-local relationship, regional relationship, forms of city government
- Interests and stakes in community decision-making: e.g. machine politics, community power, urban regime, the growth machine, racial and ethnic tensions, central cities vs. suburbs
- Main urban policy issues: e.g. downtown revitalization, growth management, regionalism, city finance, race/ethnicity, and land-use

Course Goals:

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

- Major urban problems and conflict of interests
- External factors challenging our communities
- Biases involved in urban politics, policies and government structures
- Power and interests of urban political actors
- Community decision-making process

Course Expectations:

Active student participation is expected in this course. You are expected to:

- Take all exams and submit all assignments
- Attend class regularly. The instructor reserves the right to conduct “pop-quizzes”
- Read the assigned course materials
- Be punctual and respectful to others (no disruptive behaviors, no cell phones and other telecommunication devices use), and stay for the entire class

Course Requirements:

- Simulation
 A major component of this course is a city council/zoning commission simulation exercise where students take on roles in a fictional city called Camelot. The purpose of this simulation is to make the course material more relevant to the real world and provide a more stimulating learning environment. Students must know assigned roles, study the issues and contribute to the simulation. No specific grade will be given for particular simulation roles. The simulation experience is included in Exam 2.

All students must participate in the simulation to complete the course requirements. If you are not able to attend on the days indicated on the syllabus, you should drop the course. Attendance during the simulation is included in the grading of Exam 2. Only “excused” (medical or other documented emergencies) absences will be permitted for the simulation portion of the course. The simulation is a course requirement. Failure to participate or lack of preparation that undermines the simulation experience could reduce your Exam 2 score to zero and you may not pass the course.

- One assignment: a city council and zoning commission report - Details will be given to you on later dates.
- Two in-class exams (Exam 1 and 2) and one take-home exam (Exam 3). Exam questions/instructions will be given to you on later dates.

NOTE:

1. No late papers will be accepted.
2. 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. (Useful reference: <http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/violation/plagiarism/>)
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. I will use the email addresses recorded there. Please be aware.
5. No extra-credit work is offered.

Grading Policy:

Final grades are determined according to the following schedule. Class attendance and active participation will be factored in for the borderline grade adjustments. No extra-credit work is offered.

A+	97-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69
A	93-96	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	60-66
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	F=	Below 60

Grade Breakup

- Exam 1: 25%, Exam 2: 30%, Exam 3: 30%, Assignment: 10% of final grades, plus 5% for class participation/attendance

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

- Dennis R. Judd and Todd Swanstrom, *City Politics: The Political Economy of Urban America* (Sixth edition), Pearson Longman [Text]
- Camelot: A Role-Playing Simulation for Political Decision Making by James Woodworth, W. Robert Gump, James R. Forrester, Wadsworth Publishing; 5 edition [Camelot]
- Additional reading materials: posted on Blackboard (BB)

Schedule:

Week	Topic and Reading (Tue)	Topic and Reading (Thu)
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1	1/20 Introduction	1/22 The Evolution of city politics: Overview Text Ch. 1 Camelot Ch. 1
2	1/27 Urban Growth and Governance Text Ch. 2	1/29 Machine Politics and Reform Text Ch. 3 and 4 (p70-p88)
3	2/03 Forms and Authorities of Local Government Text Ch. 4 (p88 - p99); Camelot Ch. 3 & 7 “An Overview of Local Government” (BB)	2/05 Local Governments in North Carolina “Incorporation, Abolition, and Annexation” “City and County Governing Boards” “Do North Carolina Local Governments Need Home Rules?” (all BB)
4	2/10 Race, Ethnicity, National Politics and Urban Policy Text Ch. 5 & 6	2/12 Race, Ethnicity, National Politics and Urban Policy Video: “The House We Live In” “Katrina’s Window” (Blackboard)
5	2/17 Urban Policy and the Politics of Race Text Ch. 7 & 9	2/19 Financing Urban America Text Ch. 12 Camelot Ch. 4
6	2/24 The Rise of the Sunbelt Text Ch. 8	2/26 Exam 1
7	3/03 Community Power and Local Policy Making Camelot Ch. 2, 5 & 6 CQ Property Rights (Blackboard)	3/05 Video: “Brooklyn Matters”
	3/10 SPRING BREAK	3/12 SPRING BREAK
8	3/17 Preparation for Simulation Camelot Ch. 8, 9 & 10 Report Assignment Due	3/19 Simulation Camelot Ch. 11, 12 & 13
9	3/24 Simulation Camelot Ch. 11, 12 & 13	3/26 Simulation Camelot Ch. 11, 12 & 13
10	3/31 Simulation Camelot Ch. 11, 12 & 13	4/02 Simulation Camelot Ch. 11, 12 & 13
11	4/07 Simulation Camelot Ch. 11, 12 & 13	4/09 Exam 2
12	4/14 Suburban Politics Text Ch. 10	4/16 Governing the Sprawled Metropolis Text Ch. 11
13	4/21 Video: “Paving the American Dream” CQ Smart Growth (BB)	4/23 The Fall and Rise of the Inner Cities Text. Ch. 13 CQ “Downtown Renaissance” (BB)
14	4/28 Governance in the Global Era Text Ch. 14 CQ Upward Mobility (BB) Obama/Biden: Investing in America’s Cities (BB)	4/30 The Political Fault Lines of the Global Era Text Ch. 15
15		5/07 Exam 3

Changes might have to be made to the above schedule to accommodate unexpected events and other conditions