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Days	Time	Bldg
M/W	02:00pm- 03:15pm	GRAM 424

## **Spring 2007 PSC323: Urban Politics**

### **Course Description**

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

- The major problems facing urban communities: e.g. poverty, deindustrialization, central city decline, race, sprawl, environment and urban sustainability
- Factors impacting urban communities: e.g. federal urban policies, privatism and NIMBYism, metropolitan government fragmentation, social and demographic changes, globalization
- Government structures and relationships in which urban politics functions: e.g. central-local relationship, regional relationship, the forms of city governments
- The participants 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 and land-use, citizen participation

### **Course Goals:**

At the end of the semester, you will be familiar with:

- Biases involved in urban politics, policies and government structures
- External factors challenging our communities
- Power and interests of urban political actors
- Major urban problems and conflict of interests
- Contributions you can make to better community decision-making

### **Course Expectations:**

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

- Take all exams and submit exam papers by due dates
- Attend class regularly. The instructor reserves the right to conduct “pop-quizzes”

\* \*After missing classes four times without documented “good” reasons, your final grade will be reduced by a third of letter grade for every class missed

- 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 be familiar with their assigned role, the issues which relate to that role, and act in accordance with the role. 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 class. 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.

View Greensboro’s city council and zoning commission meetings to know the procedures at the following online broadcasting:

City of Greensboro Council Meeting at:

[http://greensboro.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view\\_id=2](http://greensboro.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=2)

City of Greensboro Zoning Commission Meeting at:

<http://www.greensboro-nc.gov/Departments/Planning/boards/zoning/>

- There will be 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. No exam/paper will be accepted that is not typed. Grades will be based upon both substance (e.g., content, supporting evidence, incorporation of class readings and lectures) and style (organization, grammar, clarity, format and citation).

### **Percentage Distribution**

- Exam 1: 30%; Exam 2: 30%; Exam 3: 30% of final grades, plus 10% for class participation and contribution

### **NOTE:**

1. All papers must be submitted via email (to my email address in the above) before the class time of the due date. No late papers will be accepted.
2. You may not collaborate on the take-homes. Do not allow others in the class to read your paper or discuss how you intend to answer a question. These exams should be the product of your own reflection on the material read and studied.
3. 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://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>)

4. If you have special needs because of a learning disability, please feel free to discuss this with me.
5. Blackboard is used as the main source of telecommunication. I will use the email addresses recorded there. Please be aware.
6. 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	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

- Urban Politics: Power in Metropolitan America by Bernard H. Ross, Myron A. Levine, Wadsworth Publishing; 7 edition (August 4, 2005)
- Camelot: A Role-Playing Simulation for Political Decision Making by James Woodworth, W. Robert Gump, James R. Forrester, Wadsworth Publishing; 5 edition
  - Additional reading materials may be provided on later dates as handouts or posted on Blackboard

**Schedule:**

Week	Topic and Reading (Mon)	Topic and Reading (Wed)
1	1/08 Introduction	1/10 The Urban Situation: Overview Text Ch. 1
2	1/15 <b>MLK Day</b>	1/17 Two Societies Vogel & Harrigan: "The City as a Place of Opportunity" 115-154 (e-reserve) Video: "Two Societies"
3	1/22 The Divided Metropolis Judd & Swanstrom: "National Policy and the Divided Metropolis" 131-164 (e-reserve)	1/24 The Evolution of Cities and Suburbs Text Ch. 2 Video: "House We Live In"
4	1/29 Globalization and Gentrification Text Ch. 3	1/31 Globalization and Community "Local Politics in a Global Era" by S. E. Clarke and G. L. Gaile (BB)
5	2/05 Who Governs? Text Ch. 4, Camelot Ch. 1 & 2 Molotch: "The City as a Growth Machine" 309 – 320 (BB)	2/07 Urban Machine Text Ch. 6

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic and Reading (Mon)</b>	<b>Topic and Reading (Wed)</b>
6	2/12 Reform Politics Text Ch. 7	2/14 Urban Political Economy Kantor et al: "The Political Economy of Urban Regimes" (e-reserve) The Onion "Congress Threatens To Leave D.C." (BB)
7	2/19 Exam. 1	2/21 City Government Structure Text Ch. 5, Camelot Ch. 3 & 7
8	2/26 Citizen Participation Text Ch. 8 Video: "Holding Ground"	2/28 Urban Finance Text Ch. 15 Camelot Ch. 4
	3/05 <b>Spring Break</b>	3/07 <b>Spring Break</b>
9	3/12 Preparation for Simulation Camelot Ch. 5, 6, 8, 9 & 10	3/14 Simulation Camelot Ch. 11, 12 & 13
10	3/19 Simulation Camelot Ch. 11, 12 & 13	3/21 Simulation Camelot Ch. 11, 12 & 13
11	3/26 Simulation Camelot Ch. 11, 12 & 13	3/28 Simulation Camelot Ch. 11, 12 & 13
12	4/02 Simulation Camelot Ch. 11, 12 & 13	4/04 Exam. 2
13	4/09 Suburban Politics Text Ch. 11 Video: "The Hate Next Door"	4/11 Women and the Gendered City Text Ch. 10 Silla Brush: "The Pipe Dreamer" (BB)
14	4/16 Metropolitan Governance Text Ch. 12 Barnes and Ledebur: "The Regional Economic Commons" (e-reserve)	4/18 Urban Sustainability Video: "Cities - Reinventing the World" or "Paving the American Dream"
15	4/23 New Regionalism Text Ch. 13 Action Greensboro: "Building Consensus for Greensboro's Future" (BB)	4/25 Intergovernmental Relations Text Ch. 14
16	4/30 The Future of Urban American and Text Ch. 16	
	Exam 3	
	5/07 12:00PM – 3:00PM	

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