

Manchester Community College  
Social Sciences Division  
Urban Geography

Course Overview and Requirements

Adjunct Lecturer:  
Donald J. Poland, MS, AICP  
E-mail: [dpoland@mcc.commnet.edu](mailto:dpoland@mcc.commnet.edu)  
Web: [www.donaldpoland.com](http://www.donaldpoland.com)

Urban Geography – B-201-G  
Course Details and Contact Information

- Lecturer: Donald J. Poland, MS, AICP
- Classroom: AST E-202
- Class Hours: Monday and Wednesdays 12:30 - 1:50PM
- E-mail: [dpoland@mcc.commnet.edu](mailto:dpoland@mcc.commnet.edu) or [don@donaldpoland.com](mailto:don@donaldpoland.com)
- Phone: 860-655-6897
- Office Hours: (Monday and Wednesday 12:00 to 12:30 or by appointment)
- Lecture Notes: Black and White copies (four slides per page) of all PowerPoint presentations (in PDF file format) used in my lectures are available for download at my website:

[www.donaldpoland.com](http://www.donaldpoland.com)

Urban Geography  
Introduction and Course Goal

- Urban geography is a subfield of human geography, the study of the location of people and their activities over geographic space. Therefore, urban geography more specifically studies cities and urbanized places and how humans behave within these places. Within this study of urban geography we will explore structure of urban areas, how they evolve over time, and how they interact.
- The goal of this course is to introduce the student to the basic concepts of urban geography, provide a general understanding of urban geography, and to introduce students to the methods of analysis geographers use to understand urban places.
  - Students will gain a greater understanding of the urban environments they live in as we explore the application of these concepts to Connecticut and the Hartford metropolitan region.
  - Students will also learn and understanding how the site, situation, and size of a city or metropolitan region directly impact its functions and how it relates to and interacts with other regions.
  - Students will also become familiar with the evolution of cities, neighborhoods, and housing and how housing, transportation, and economics affect how these places interact.

Urban Geography  
General Class Format

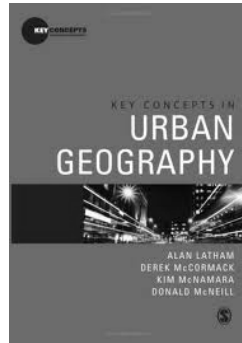
- Materials in this course will be presented in twice weekly lectures and class discussions supplemented by the assigned text and other readings.
- Students **MUST** complete assigned readings prior to each lecture period. This will best facilitate class discussion and contribute to better note taking, which in turn helps during exam preparation.
- One paper and one project are also required. Two exams will be given to reinforce the course materials.



## Urban Geography

### Required Textbook

- The required textbook for the course is *Key Concepts in Urban Geography* by Alan Latham, Derek McCormack, Kim McNamara, and Donald McNeil. SAGE Publications, Inc. Thousand Oaks, California 91320
- This text will be used for all required readings and class discussion.
- Other readings may be required.



## Urban Geography

### Course Policies

- **Attendance:** Obviously, students are expected to attend all lectures. Any absence/late arrival beyond two will result in 10% loss in your participation grade for each occurrence. Also, missing class is not an excuse for not handing in an assignment. Tardiness can affect your grade also. Coming to class late will be marked down as an absence, so please don't be late! Notify me by e-mailing or calling and leaving a message when you expect to be absent or late. Attending class is the most painless way to insure you are exposed to all the necessary information in this course.
- **Assignments:** The project assignment is due during class on the due date for full credit. Projects will be accepted late, but will lose 10% from the final grade for each week it is late. I do not excuse late work due to hardware/software problems. I do not accept e-mailed projects; hard copies are required. No make-ups for the mid-term or final will be given.
- **Academic Misconduct:** Any acts of academic misconduct (including cheating on exams, copying someone else's assignment, plagiarism or providing inaccurate information about absences in class) will be handled according to MCC official policy. You may receive an "F" on an assignment or for a class grade if engaged in cheating or plagiarizing.
- **Withdrawal Policy:** A student may withdraw from this course without penalty anytime before April 6, 2011. Any time after this the student will receive a "W" if they file for a withdrawal.

## Urban Geography

### Course Policies

- The items below are what your course grade will be based on.
  - **Midterm Exam:** The exam will consist of multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions. A grade of zero will be given for missing an exam without notification from the Office of Student Affairs. The exam will cover all lecture and reading materials.
  - **Project:** Discussed in detail below.
  - **Class Participation:** Your presence and participation in class are important and are key elements of the learning process. They show that: a) you are involved in the class, b) whether or not you understand the material, and c) that you know enough to ask good questions or to contribute to the discussion.
  - **Final Exam:** The exam will consist of multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions. A grade of zero will be given for missing an exam without notification from the Office of Student Affairs. The exam will cover all lecture and reading materials since the midterm exam.

## Urban and Regional Planning

### Evaluation - Grading

#### GRADING SCALE & DISTRIBUTION

Grading this course will be based on the following scale.

- A = 94-100%    B = 83-86%    C = 73-76%    D = 63-66%
- A- = 90-93%    B- = 80-82%    C- = 70-72%    D- = 60-62%
- B+ = 87-89%    C+ = 77-79%    D+ = 67-69%    F = Less than 60%

Graded materials will be weighted according to the following system.

- Mid Term Exam:    25% = \_\_\_\_\_    Final Exam:    25% = \_\_\_\_\_
- Project:    25% = \_\_\_\_\_    Participation:    25% = \_\_\_\_\_
- **TOTAL: 100% = \_\_\_\_\_**
- No extra credit assignments are given. Any assignment that does not follow directions may be given a zero. Any student with a documented learning disability should see me before the first assignment is due.

## Urban Geography

### Course Schedule and Required Reading (Subject to change)

#### Week One: 1/24/ & 1/26

- **1/24: An Introduction to the Changing Field of Urban Geography**
  - Introduction
  - The Field of Urban Geography
  - The Four Traditions
  - Geographic Information Science
- **1/26: Key Concepts in Urban Geography**
  - Location and Movement:
    - Centrality and Mobility

#### Week Two: 1/31 & 2/02

- **1/31: The Origins and Development of Cities**
  - What Are Cities?
  - Theories of Urban Origins
  - Cities As Engines of Economic Growth
  - Structure and Form of Trading Cities
  - Industrial Revolution
- **2/02: Key Concepts in Urban Geography**
  - Location and Movement:
    - Global Cities and Transnational Urbanism

## Urban Geography

### Course Schedule and Required Reading (Subject to change)

#### Week Three: 2/07 & 2/09

- **2/07: Cities in the Less Developed World**
  - The New Urban Majority
  - Demographic Factors Involved in Urban Growth
  - Origins of the Third World Urbanization
  - International Political Economy Perspective
  - Characteristics of Third World Cities
  - Employment Opportunities and the Informal Sector
- **2/09: Key Concepts in Urban Geography**
  - Constructions:
    - Nature and Materiality

#### Week Four: 2/14 (No Class) & 2/16

- **2/14: Cities in the Developed World**
  - Western European Cities
  - Urbanization and the European City
  - Characteristic Features of the European Cities
  - Aspects of Change
  - Cities in Post-Communist Eastern Europe
  - Cities in Japan
- **2/16: Key Concepts in Urban Geography**
  - Constructions:
    - Infrastructure and Architecture

## Urban Geography

### Course Schedule and Required Reading (Subject to change)

#### Week Five: 2/21 (No Class) & 2/23

- **2/23: The Evolution of the American Urban System**
  - The Evolution of the American Urban System
  - The American Urban Hierarchy, 1630 - 2007
  - Metropolitan Dominance
  - Borchert's Transportation Epochs and American Metropolitan Growth
  - Urbanization and Industrialization Among U.S. Urban Centers
  - Urbanization Process
  - Walter Christaller's Central Place Theory
  - Rank-Size Rule
  - Konderatiev Waves
  - Contemporary Urban-Economic Restructuring

#### Week Six: 2/28 & 3/02

- **2/28: Urban Land Use: The CBD and the Growth of the Suburbs**
  - CBD Centrality
  - Traditional CBD Characteristics
  - CBD Redevelopment and Revitalization
  - Contemporary CBD Activities
  - America's New Downtowns
  - Models of Suburban Evolution in North American Metropolises
  - Suburban Sprawl
- **3/02: Key Concepts in Urban Geography**
  - Envisioning and Experiencing:
    - Diagrams and Photography

## Urban Geography

### Course Schedule and Required Reading (Subject to change)

#### Week Seven: 3/07 & 3/10

- **3/07: Urban Housing Markets: Sprawl, Blight, and Regeneration**
  - Basics of Housing and Housing Markets
  - Housing Market Geographies
  - Market Realities: Ongoing Debates over Equal Access to Housing
  - Housing Market Realities: Government Involvement
  - "Blight" and the Fate of Inner-City Housing
  - Neighborhood Revitalization: Gentrification
- **3/10: Key Concepts in Urban Geography**
  - Envisioning and Experiencing:
    - Body, Vitality, and Surveillance

#### Week Eight: 3/14 & 3/16 (Exam)

- **3/14: Landscapes of Production**
  - Understanding the Economies of Cities
  - Interurban Industrial Production and Location
  - Intraurban Industrial Production and Location
  - Political Economy Approaches
- **3/16: Mid-term Exam**
- **Week Nine: 3/21 & 3/23**
  - **SPRING BREAK**

## Urban Geography

### Course Schedule and Required Reading (Subject to change)

#### Week Ten: 3/28 & 3/30

- **3/28: Urban Housing Markets: Sprawl, Blight, and Regeneration**
  - Basics of Housing and Housing Markets
  - Housing Market Geographies
  - Market Realities: Ongoing Debates over Equal Access to Housing
  - Housing Market Realities: Government Involvement
  - Sprawl and the Suburbanization of Housing
  - "Blight" and the Fate of Inner-City Housing
  - Neighborhood Revitalization: Gentrification
- **3/30: Key Concepts in Urban Geography**
  - Social and Political Organizations:
    - Segregation and Urban Politics

#### Week Eleven: 4/04 & 4/06

- **4/04 12: Metropolitan Governance and Fragmentation**
  - Urban Governance and the Growth of Services
  - Who Governs the City
  - Contemporary Fragmentation in the Metropolis
  - Countering the Fragmented Metropolis
- **4/06: Key Concepts in Urban Geography**
  - Social and Political Organizations:
    - Community

## Urban Geography

### Course Schedule and Required Reading (Subject to change)

#### Week Twelve: 4/11 & 4/13

- **4/11: Planning a Better City**
  - Making the Case for Planning
  - Development of Modern Planning
  - Comprehensive Plans and Tools of Modern Planning
  - A Historical Context
  - Planning Authority and Law
  - Planning Application and Regulations
- **4/13: Key Concepts in Urban Geography**
  - Site and Practices:
    - Consumption

#### Week Thirteen: 4/18 & 4/20

- **4/18: New Orleans and Katrina**
- **4/20: Key Concepts in Urban Geography**
  - Site and Practices:
    - Media

## Urban Geography

### Course Schedule and Required Reading (Subject to change)

#### Week Fourteen: 4/25 & 4/27

- **4/25: Segregation, Race, and Urban Poverty**
  - Current Patterns of Racial Residential Segregation
  - Hypersegregation
  - Race and the North American City
  - Poverty and the City
  - Responding to Urban Poverty
- **4/27: Key Concepts in Urban Geography**
  - Site and Practices:
    - Media

#### Week Fifteen: 5/02 & 5/04

- **5/02: Hartford and Suburbanization**
- **5/04: Key Concepts in Urban Geography**
  - Site and Practices:
    - Public Spaces and Commemoration

#### Week Sixteen: 5/09 & 5/11

- **5/09: Selected Readings: Sprawl, Growth Management, and Smart Growth**
  - Specific readings to be determined.
- **5/11: Final Exam**

## Urban Geography

### Project – Due April 18, 2011

- For this project you will need to visit one place from Location A and one from Location B to answer the questions that follow for both locations.
  - **Location A** - Downtown Hartford (Near Main and Pratt Street), Manchester Center, West Hartford Center, Blue Back Square West Hartford, Rockville Center
  - **Location B** - Buckland Hills Area Manchester, Berlin Turnpike (Newington near Wal Mart), Silas Deane Highway Wethersfield, Route 44 Avon, Spencer Street Manchester
- **Form:** How many stories are the buildings? Are the buildings near the street or set back a long distance from the street? How wide (lanes) are the streets? Is there on-street and/or off-street parking? Is off street parking in parking lots? Is parking in front or behind buildings? Is parking provided in garages? Are fees required for parking? Parking meters? Parking Attendants? Both? Are there sidewalks? If so, are they narrow or wide? Are there bus stops providing access to public transportation?
- **Function:** What are the types of uses (i.e. stores, offices, residential units, and so on) that exist? Is there a difference in uses on the first floor versus the second or higher floors? What types of retail stores exist? Are they national chains or locally owned? Are there restaurants? Do the restaurants include outdoor dining?

## Urban Geography

Project – Due April 18, 2011

---

- **Other Information:** What day of the week and what time did you visit each location? Did you see people walking the streets? Were people socializing? Did you see newspaper boxes, bike racks, or park benches? What are the speed limits on the streets? Are there any other things you noticed about each location that made an impression of you? Last, be prepared to discuss your visits and these places in class.
- In addition to answering the specific question about each location, you will need to write a 5-7 page narrative about the places you visited. Write this narrative based on what you have learned in the class and your personal reaction/experiences to these places. This should be written based on your personal perspective, thoughts, and ideas. It is not a formal research paper. I want to know what you think.