

# University of Florida Political Science

## POS 6146 Urban Politics Spring 2016

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352-226-8618 (by appointment or in emergency, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.)  
Thursdays 3-6 in Anderson Hall 034

### Course Content

The catalog course description reads: “Explores processes, actors, and institutions in local U.S. politics. Briefly examines significant issue areas including fiscal crisis, racial conflict, and education.” Beyond the course description, the semester’s work seeks to capture a sense of the challenges, opportunities, and technical issues people deal with on a daily basis in their communities. Urban politics as a study presents the full range of human behavior, from inefficiency, corruption, and exclusion to innovation, renewal, and inclusion. The course assignments and discussions are designed to offer broad exposure to this area of study in a time that can be both exciting and disturbing.

### Course Texts

*Theories of Urban Politics*, 2nd edition  
Jonathan Davies and David Imbroscio  
Sage 2008  
ISBN 978-1412921626

*City Politics*, 9th edition  
Dennis Judd and Todd Swanstrom  
Routledge 2014  
ISBN 978-0205996391

### Format of Class Sessions

Weekly classes will include discussion of the readings, presentations by the professor, and presentations by class members. Active participation in class sessions is expected of class members.

### Assignments

#### *Weekly discussion points*

In each week with assigned readings, class members come to class with prepared “discussion points” drawn from the readings. One or two discussion points are developed from each of the assigned readings. Each discussion point identifies a specific concept the class member found interesting in the reading, and it may ask a question, state a position, or challenge the key concept.

Class members will present one or more of their discussion points during the first part of the class session. Thoughtful presentation of discussion points is expected that demonstrates thorough reading and preparation. Individual class member contributions to discussion will be reflected in the class participation grade.

### ***Weekly reflection papers***

Following each of the class sessions with assigned readings, class members write a short paper reflecting on what they learned from the in-class discussion. The paper should include the student's "discussion points" from the readings, a summary of concepts from the class discussion and professor's presentations that the student found interesting, and thoughts about what was learned, such as why the concepts covered are important, useful, connect with events reported in the media, and so on.

Only students who were present during an entire weekly class session may submit reflection papers, unless an arrangement has been made in advance to submit an alternative assignment or in case of emergency (illness, etc.). Contact the professor as soon as possible to make arrangements for an alternative assignment.

Reflection papers will be one to two single-space pages in length divided into sections with headings and into paragraphs as appropriate. (Avoid writing papers with lists, multiple or lengthy quotations, or few paragraph separations.) Citations for source materials with page numbers will be given in APA format (reference list entries are only needed when referring to works other than those assigned for the week).

Papers will be emailed to the professor as an attached Word file by 11 p.m. on the Sunday following the class session. The electronic title of the emailed Word file should begin with the student's last name, and the text of the file should include the student's name and the date. Papers will be returned with comments and grade before the class session in the following week.

### ***Issue presentations***

Each class member will make an issue presentation showing an urban politics issue from several perspectives (see the class schedule for topics). The presentation may include websites, short videos, concepts from scholarly articles or organizational reports, PowerPoint slides, photos, and so on. The goal is to give class members a concise but well-rounded view of the characteristics and importance of an issue, so they have a deeper understanding as they encounter it in the media. The presentation may discuss related history, trends, politics, operational characteristics, impacts and implications, and alternatives. Class members should choose issue topics with which they are not especially familiar.

Presentations will be given during the second half of a class session and should be 20-30 minutes in length, depending in part on whether they include videos. Presenters will include a summary of their presentation in the weekly reflection paper and class members should discuss them in their reflection papers.

### ***Team issue presentations***

The class will be divided into teams to study three complex urban issues related to perceived differences between people and security and safety: urban terrorism, police violence, and immigration. Team research should address historical, cultural, and political factors related to the urban issues, along with current actions being taken to address them.

The format and content of the team presentations will be much like that of the issue presentations described above. Team members should divide the issue into parts (for example, organized around books, videos, pro and con arguments, etc.) and create a presentation 30-40 minutes in length. The teams will present during the same class session. The team presentations should support a lively class discussion of the issues and participation will be reflected in the individual class participation grade. Each team member should email a list of materials used in their portion of the presentation to the professor the day of the presentation. There is no reflection paper connected with the team presentations.

### ***City research project***

Class members will conduct research on a chosen North American city, presenting their findings to the class and writing a final paper on the research project. The goal is to describe historical, physical, cultural, political, and economic characteristics of the chosen city, along with current issues, challenges, and initiatives. The analysis should use specific concepts from course readings and discussion. Cities studied should have a population in excess of 100,000 and class members should not be especially familiar with the city they choose.

Findings from the project will be shared with the class in a PowerPoint presentation no more than 20 minutes in length (approximately 15 slides); it will be emailed to the professor the day of the presentation. There is no reflection paper connected with the presentation.

A city research paper 5-7 single-space pages in text length (exclusive of tables, photos, lists, quotation, and so on) will be submitted at the end of the semester that presents fully developed findings and specific, cited connections with course concepts. A well-developed paper may include sources such as scholarly books and articles, reports from agencies and organizations, and websites. Parenthetical citations are given for discussion, paraphrasing, or quotation of each concept or quotation, and directly reproduced material is shown in quotation marks or in block quotation format. A reference list is provided in correct APA style. The city research paper will be emailed to the professor in a single Word file by 11 p.m. on the due date shown in the class schedule.

## **Grading**

### ***Points***

There will be 750 points possible in the course, with percentage grade ranges and points as follows: A, 92-100 (690-750 points); A-, 90-91 (675-689 points); B+, 88-89 (660-674 points); B, 82-87 (615-659 points); B-, 80-81 (600-614 points); C+, 78-79 (585-599 points); C, 72-77 (540-584 points); C-, 70-71 (525-539 points); D, 60-69 (450-524 points); F, 0-59 (0-449 points).

Assignments are returned with comments and grades. The course grade is the final cumulative total of assignment grades applied to the ranges given above. Individual course grades may, at the professor's discretion, be adjusted based on improvement or decline over the semester. Course grades of "incomplete" are discouraged and are given only when a specific part of the required course work from the later part of the course remains unfinished due to emergency or unforeseen circumstances. Available points by assignment are given below.

- Nine reflection papers, 50 points/week, total 450 points.
- Issue presentation, 50 points
- Issue team presentation, 50 points
- City research presentation, 50 points

- City research paper, 100 points
- Class participation, 50 points

### ***Rubric***

*Exceeds expectations* (45-50 points each for reflection paper and discussion, issue presentation, team issue presentation, city research presentation, and class discussion; 90-100 points for the city research paper (“A” range)):

- Thoroughly addresses required elements of the assignment
- Demonstrates thorough preparation
- Clear, logical organization of written work or presentation
- Largely error-free writing
- Appropriate length of written work or presentations
- Citations and references provided where appropriate, in correct APA format
- Contributions to class discussion are frequent, thoughtful, and considerate of others

*Meets expectations* (40-44 points each for reflection paper and discussion, issue presentation, team issue presentation, city research presentation, and class discussion; 80-89 points for the city research paper (“B” range)):

- Addresses required elements of the assignment; some items may not be well developed
- Shows some evidence of preparation or research
- Organization of written work or presentation is adequate to follow the meaning
- Some errors in writing
- Written work or presentations may be somewhat long or short
- Some citations or reference list entries missing and/or not quite in APA format
- Contributions to class discussion are sporadic, repetitive, or dominate class time

*Does not meet expectations* (39 or fewer points each for reflection paper and discussion, issue presentation, team issue presentation, city research presentation, and class participation; 79 or fewer points for the city research paper (“C” range or below)):

- Addresses required elements of the assignment in a fragmentary, inadequate manner
- Shows inadequate preparation or research
- Logic or organization is difficult to follow
- Significant errors in writing
- Length is too short or too long
- Citations and/or reference list entries largely missing or not in APA format
- Little contribution to class discussion or contributions that are inappropriate

## **Process and Standards**

### ***Class conduct***

In class discussion, it is not necessary to raise hands or use a formal order of discussion. However, please do not dominate the discussion, instead allowing others to make contributions. Make a comment in a clear and succinct manner, recognizing that time is limited and that other class members do not want to listen to one person’s extended dialogue.

Except to look for a fact related to discussion, leave cell phone screens off and laptops closed during class sessions.

### ***Attribution and plagiarism***

When writing about, paraphrasing, or quoting the work of others, students must give proper attribution in the form of parenthetical citations and reference lists and quotation marks around directly quoted phrases or sentences, using the “author-date” parenthetical citation and reference list format of the most recent edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) style guide. Every concept from a source that is discussed or quoted is given a citation for the author(s)—not book editors, authors—and a corresponding reference list entry for the source. Quotations must be reproduced accurately and can never be fabricated.

Failure to give correct attribution is plagiarism. Plagiarism is not allowed in academic work and penalties can be severe.

In reflection papers, citations with page numbers should be given to indicate locations in source materials. Reference list entries and full parenthetical citations are only needed when referring to works other than those assigned for the week.

### ***Writing***

The standard for writing in this course is that of the professional workplace and a graduate degree program. Writing must be clear, straightforward, and correct in punctuation and use of language. Difficulties with writing that are noted by the professor should not appear in later written work—this is a criterion for grading in the course.

Except as otherwise indicated, written material will be in Times New Roman 12 point font, single space (not 1.15 space, the Word default). Papers should include student name, date, and heading or title and should have numbered pages. The electronic title of attached files should begin with the student’s last name.

### ***Work standards***

Success in the course depends on timely participation and maintaining work standards. A failing course grade will be assigned should a class member:

- Fail to complete reflection papers during two or more weeks without making other arrangements;
- Fail to complete any of the primary assignments; or
- Fail to write in a manner appropriate to a graduate program.

### ***Due dates/deadlines***

Assignments are due by 11:00 p.m. on the day specified. If you may have difficulty submitting material on time or you have an emergency that prevents you from coming to class, please contact the professor as soon as possible. Alternate arrangements can be made to accept work outside the course schedule. Assignments that are submitted late in the absence of prior arrangement with the professor or unanticipated emergency are not read or graded for credit. When work outside the course schedule is accepted, there may be a point deduction.

### ***Changes in syllabus***

Though it should be a rare occurrence, the professor reserves the right to modify the syllabus during the term. Changes will be communicated in advance to class members.

## **Course Schedule**

CP = *City Politics*

TU = *Theories of Urban Politics*

CMP = Class member presentation

Numbers are for chapters

### January 7

Introduction to the course

### January 14

CP1 “City Politics in America: An Introduction”

CP2 “The Enduring Legacy”

CP3 “Party Machines and the Immigrants”

CP4 “The Reform Crusades”

Professor presentation: Structures and leadership roles in local government

Discussion on additional reading sent by email, Blessett and Box, “Sharecropper Finance”

### January 21

CP5 “Urban Voters and the Rise of a National Democratic Majority”

TU “Introduction”

TU1 “Why Study Urban Politics”

TU2 “The History of Community Power”

TU3 “Urban Regime Analysis”

CMP Corruption in local government

### January 28

CP6 “The City/Suburban Divide”

CP7 “National Policy and the City/Suburban Divide”

CP8 “Federal Programs and the Divisive Politics of Race”

CMP Gentrification and racial displacement

### February 4

TU4 “Marxism and Urban Politics”

TU5 “‘Posty’ Urban Political Theory”

TU6 “New Institutionalism and Urban Politics”

TU7 “Regionalism and Urban Politics”

CMP “Food deserts” and minority populations

### February 11

TU8 “Urban Political Leadership”

TU9 “Governance and the Urban Bureaucracy”

TU10 “Globalization and Urban Issues in the non-Western World”

CMP Neighborhoods and citizen involvement

February 18

CP9 “The Rise of the Sunbelt”

CP10 “The Rise of the Fragmented Metropolis”

CP11 “Governing the Fragmented Metropolis”

CMP The economics of sports stadiums and convention centers

February 25

TU11 “Poverty, Inequality, and Social Exclusion”

TU12 “Race and Urban Political Theory”

TU13 “Gender and Sexuality”

CMP Failing public schools in central cities

March 10

Team issue presentations on social differences and security:

1. Urban terrorism
2. Police violence
3. Immigration

March 17

CP12 “The Metropolitan Battleground”

CP13 “The Renaissance of the Metropolitan Center”

TU14 “Social Capital”

CMP Richard Florida’s theory of the creative class

March 24

CP14 “Governing the Divided City”

CP15 “City and Metropolis in the Global Era”

TU15 “Urban Social Movements”

TU16 “Who is Governed? Local Citizens and the Political Order of Cities”

CMP Smart Growth, New Urbanism, and urban sprawl

March 31

City paper presentations

April 7

City paper presentations

April 14

City paper presentations

Summary of term learning

April 22

City papers due