

**Political Science 266**

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**Urban Political Economy**

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The study of political economy emphasizes the role of capital, including but not limited to business interests, in politics and policy making. Urban political economy focuses specifically on the relationship between the "local state" (urban and suburban governments) and capital, both local and global. However, this relationship does not exist in a local vacuum; the behavior of cities, states, and other nations as well as the actions of national and international capital have profound impacts on this relationship.

Many important questions will emerge during this term, particularly since this course is a survey of a broad subfield. One pair of questions provide an overarching framework for this course, however: Who governs, and whose interests are advanced? We are particularly concerned with whether capital dominates the local state and wields undue influence in agenda setting and policy making. Are elected officials pawns of capital or segments of capital, or is the relationship more nuanced? Do the public's desires for patterns of residential development, work locales, and entertainment preferences set the agenda for capital in a democratic, "invisible-hand" manner? Keeping in mind a desire for clarity and parsimony, how else might we describe the relationship between capital and the local state? Think about the importance of this question for democracy and democratic theory. In addition, questions are often listed on the syllabus accompanying particular readings. Every student should come to class prepared to answer these questions; quizzes may be given when the instructor deems them necessary.

**Readings:** The books for this course are:

Bryan Jones and Lynn Bachelor, *The Sustaining Hand* (2nd ed.)

Rich DeLeon, *Left Coast City*

Myron Orfield, *Metropolitcs*

In addition there are many articles in the library on reserve for this course.

**Grading:** There will be a midterm take home paper (40%) of 10-12 pages. Students will have the option of a take-home final examination or a research prospectus which demonstrates a mastery of extant literature on a topic, understanding of theoretical significance, and a detailed plan for future research (40%). Class attendance, participation and quiz grades will also be an integral part of the course; failure to participate will be penalized (20%). The instructor reserves the right to require "talking points" about the readings if class participation does not meet desired levels.

**Format:** My teaching philosophy stresses the value of proffering ideas, including many ideas that do not survive scrutiny. I seek to stimulate discussion and argument but never combat. Coming to class with a list of ideas from our readings that you feel merit discussion -- because they are significant, because they are incorrect or overdrawn, because they reshaped the way you think about something else (which you will discuss), because they redound back to earlier discussions or an earlier text and because you want to nominate them as agenda items for our discussion -- is an excellent idea. If you wish to share these with me, you can send me e-mail and I will do my best to respond to all issues raised.

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3/30: Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, chs. 11-12.

(Recommended only: Checkoway, "Large Builders ... and Postwar suburbanization)

Why would the federal government create a set of policies that would have such an impact on the cities? In thinking about this, recall that big cities were central to Franklin Roosevelt's electoral coalitions. This would be a great paper topic for any student interested in reading historical accounts of the FDR administrations.

4/4: Royko, *Boss*, brief selection.

Guskind, "Games Cities Play."

Mahtesian, "Romancing the Smokestack."

Tabak, "Wild about Convention Centers."

Perlman, "The Gambling Glut."

Eisinger, "The Politics of Bread and Circuses"

(recommended only: Keating, "Sports Pork;" Sidlow and Henschen, Major League Baseball and Public Policy;" Noll and Zimbalist, "Sports, Jobs and Taxes;" Euchner, *Playing the Field: Why Sports Teams Move & Cities Fight to Keep them*, chs. 1, 3, 5, 7; and entire issue of *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 21:4 (1999)).

"Who does what to whom, how and why" is a famous question that many believe captures the essence of the political science approach. Who are the actors (public, private, institutional) that are proactive and who is reactive? Are there coalitions pitted against each other (zero-sum) or are the developmental activities that take place in the city organized and orchestrated by some (e.g., political or civic leaders, business leaders) for the good of all residents/interests, i.e., an overarching city interest that acts rationally?

4/6: Peterson, *City Limits*, chs. 2-3

Molotch, "City as a Growth Machine."

(Recommended only: Whitt, "The Arts Coalition" for those interested in the arts as part of a development strategy; Devereux, "Boosters in the Newsroom," for those interested in the role that newspapers play in promoting urban development).

These two readings frame a debate. Be prepared to summarize the two views and highlight the differences.

4/11: Baade, "Professional Sports as Catalysts."

Barlett and Steele, "Corporate Welfare."

Vogel and Swanson, "Growth Machine versus the Antigrowth Coalition."

Lets go back to the questions from 4/4.

4/13: Flores, "Selectivity of the Capitalist State."

Shepard, et al., "Examining Environmental Equality in Hennepin County."

Waljasper, "Urban Ecology" includes environmental racism readings.

4/18: Book Project! Choose one of the two books (DeLeon, *Left Coast City* or Jones and Bachelor, *The Sustaining Hand* and read. Your paper will (a) summarize the most relevant arguments of the book and (b) fit this book into our course. This will be the crux of the paper: Why is this book relevant to the course? How does it provide answers to questions that have been raised in earlier sections? How does it provide an alternative perspective or explanation? How does this author speak to our other authors and which specifically are being engaged in dialogue? Each of these books contains a few cases; I don't expect you to talk about each case, select the ones on which you want to focus. Seven to ten pages of text with endnotes. Formal rules of writing! Due 4/25 at the start of class; late penalty of one letter grade per day. No class assignment readings for today.

4/20: No class; take a draft to the Write Place.

4/25: We will discuss the two books.

4/27: Lacayo, "The Brawl over Sprawl"

Ehrenhalt, "The Great Wall of Portland"

Claiborne, "The Cracks in the 'Great Wall of Portland'" (handout)

von Hoffman, "Good News"

Gurwitt, "Counties Rethink Growth"

"Urban Economic Development Packet"

"Fighting the Wage War on Local Turf"

Downs, "The Devolution Revolution"

LeRoy and Slocum, "Economic Development in Minnesota"

(recommended only: Clark and Kays, "Enabling Entrepreneurship: Microenterprise")

5/2: Ong, Bonacich and Cheng, "The Political Economy of Capitalist Restructuring and the New Asian Immigration"

Nguyen, "High Tech Migrant Labor"

Bonacich, "Asians in the Los Angeles Garment Industry"

5/4: Dosh, "Federal Rollback and the Los Angeles Riots of 1992"

Ong, Park and Tong, "The Korean-Black Conflict and the State"

Sweatshops videos?

5/9: Keiser, "Changing Structure of Minority Group Political Opportunities"

Mahtesian, "Semi-Vendetta"

Stark, "America the Gated"

Stark, "Arresting Development"

(recommended only: Reich, "Secession of the Successful")

5/11: TBA

5/16: Orfield, *Metropolitcs*, chs. 1-5

5/18: Orfield, chs. 6-7

5/23: Orfield, chs. 8-9 and appendix

Johnson, "Managing Urban Growth: Met Council"

Goetz and Mardock, "Losing ground: The Livable Communities Act..."

5/25: TBA

5/30: TBA