

**PSCI 465 – City Politics – Spring 2018**  
**Bert Johnson**

bnjohnso@middlebury.edu  
Office: x5399; Home/Cell: 989-1469  
Office Hours, Munroe 208  
Wednesdays 2:00-4:00pm  
Thursdays 3:00-4:00pm  
Fridays 11:00am-12:00noon  
and by appointment

**Course Description**

Around 82 percent of the U.S. population lives in urban areas. Cities are fundamental to our day-to-day lives. And yet political science has paid too little attention to cities in recent years. There are several reasons for this omission. Some scholars are skeptical that “city politics” exist, claiming, along with New York Mayor Fiorello La Guardia, that “there’s no Democratic or Republican way to fill a pothole.” Others simply believe they have found greener research pastures elsewhere.

But many unresolved questions remain. How is power distributed in cities? Which groups exercise the most authority in urban politics? Can fair representation occur at the local level, and if so, how? How do cities relate to their economic and political environments? Does the structure of urban institutions make a difference? Can we draw general conclusions about politics based on a study of politics in cities? We will consider these general debates as we read major works on U.S. urban politics and policy.

**Evaluation**

There are 1000 total possible points that students can earn in this class. An “A-minus” is 900 points; a “B-minus” is 800 points, and so on. There are two ‘tracks’ on which students can choose to be evaluated. Please notify me by the end of the second week of classes (Friday, February 23), which track you prefer. Thereafter, you incur a penalty for switching tracks. Below I break the evaluation down into aspects of the course that are required of all students, followed by Track 1 (three-paper option) and Track 2 (research paper option).

**Required of All Students**

*Regular participation (20%)*

This is a seminar course, which places more responsibility than most courses on the preparation and participation of students. It is *essential* that all students complete the reading and come to class prepared to discuss it. Twenty percent of the final grade will be based on regular participation in class discussions. I expect all students to come to class prepared to discuss the material, to speak up frequently, and to listen thoughtfully to others and engage classmates in constructive dialogue.

*Class presentation:* Most social science research is in some sense collaborative. Good papers grow into great ones through critiques by colleagues, scrutiny by the wider academic community, and repeated rewriting. To allow you to profit from your colleagues’ input, I have reserved most of two days (May 8 and May 10) for each student to make a brief presentation on his or her final paper (either the research paper or the policy proposal, described below), and to lead a short discussion about how to develop and refine it. This brief presentation counts as a component of the overall participation grade.

### *Discussion Leadership (5%)*

As 5 percent of the grade, students must help lead class in discussion in one class. Successful discussion leaders will pose interesting and provocative questions about the readings at hand, raise related points from previous readings, and engage the whole class in vigorous and productive debate.

### *Response papers (15%)*

As 15 percent of the final grade, students must write three very short (2-page) response papers during the course of the term (at least one must be completed by the last class before spring break, March 22). These response papers should be written with reference to a reading or readings for a particular day, and are due at class time. I will not accept late papers. Do not attempt to summarize – or even, necessarily, to refer to – *all* aspects of the readings for a given day in a response paper. Instead, a response paper should be structured around a brief original argument about a reading or readings, and should make reference to evidence from the readings only where necessary to develop this argument.

### *Literature Review (20%)*

Choose a subject area, do some outside research, and assess the existing academic literature about your subject. (For those choosing Track 2, focus on the subject of your research paper.) A five-page literature review, due in class on April 19, is worth 20 percent of the final grade. A good literature review is **not** a bland summary of everything you have read (or everything you know) about your research topic. Instead, it should strive to provide a fair reading of the state of current research, while at the same time outlining a carefully crafted argument about how previous research is incomplete.

### **Track 1 requirements**

Students who choose Track 1 will write two additional papers, each of which should be approximately 5-6 pages.

### *Argumentative essay (20%)*

Think of this essay like a longer response paper. Make an argument about a set of readings that we encountered in the first half of the course. You are not required to do any outside research for this paper – merely make a creative, original, and well-supported argument about the course materials. Due April 3.

### *Policy Proposal (20%)*

Given what you know about cities and city politics, make a proposal for a specific policy and explain why this policy would be beneficial. Back your claims up with references to political science and policy sources. Due May 18, 5pm.

### **Track 2 requirements**

#### *Research Paper*

Students who choose Track 2 should complete a research paper of approximately 20 pages. In addition to the literature review, which will be incorporated in the research paper in revised form, there are two components of this project.

*Topic Statement (5%)*

A one-page topic statement, due at class time, April 5, will be worth 5 percent of the final grade. In the topic statement, describe your research question and make a brief argument about *why* the question is interesting and *how* you expect to address it.

*Paper (35%)*

The final paper, worth 35 percent of the final grade, is due on May 18 at 5pm. This paper should incorporate the (revised) literature review, should clearly pose your research question, should develop several potential answers to this question, and should use empirical evidence to test which answer is most likely to be correct.

To summarize, evaluation will be as follows:

	<b>Track 1 – short papers option</b>	<b>Track 2 – research paper option</b>
Response papers (3)	15%	15%
Discussion leadership	5%	5%
Regular participation	20%	20%
Argumentative essay	20%	--
Literature review	20%	20%
Policy proposal	20%	--
Topic statement	--	5%
Research paper	--	35%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Readings and Schedule**

All readings will be available on the course website at nb.mit.edu (invitation forthcoming).

February 13 – Introduction

**Power**

February 15

- Floyd Hunter, *Community Power Structure: A Study of Decision Makers* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1953), pp. 1-7; 61-82; 228-233.

February 20

- Robert A. Dahl, *Who Governs?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), pp. 1-24; 32-51; 85-86; 223-228.
- Peter Bachrach & Morton S. Baratz, “Two Faces of Power,” *American Political Science Review*, 56:4 (December 1962), pp. 947-952.

February 22

- Zoltan J. Hajnal, *America’s Uneven Democracy: Race, Turnout, and Representation in City Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), Chapters 3 and 7, pp. 48-69; 175-191.

## Context

### February 27

- William L. Riordon, *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1963 [1905]), pp. vii-xxv; pp. 3-20.
- Jessica Trounstein, *Political Monopolies in American Cities: The Rise and Fall of Bosses and Reformers* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), Chapters 1-2, pp. 21-61.

### March 1

- Paul E. Peterson, *City Limits* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), Chapters 1-2.
- Todd Swanstrom, "Semisovereign Cities: The Politics of Urban Development," *Polity* 21:1 (Autumn 1988), pp. 83-110.

### March 6

- Lynne B. Sagalyn, *Power at Ground Zero: Politics, Money, and the Remaking of Manhattan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), Chapter 3: "Commanding Political Opportunities," pp. 75-96.
- Lisa L. Miller, "The Representational Bias of Federalism: Scope and Bias in the Political Process, Revisited," *Perspectives on Politics* 5:2 (June 2007), pp. 305-321.

## Regimes

### March 8

- Clarence Stone, *Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta 1946-1988* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1989), Chapters 1, 3, & 8, pp. 3-12; 25-50; 160-177.

### March 13

- Mark Pendergrast, *City on the Verge: Atlanta and the Fight for America's Future* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), Chapters 1 & 5, pp. 13-30; 85-104.

### March 15

- Douglas W. Rae, *City: Urbanism and its End* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), Chapter 10, "Extraordinary Politics: Dick Lee, Urban Renewal, and the End of Urbanism" pp. 312-360.

## Coalitions and Local Political Organization

### March 20

- Rufus P. Browning, Dale Rogers Marshall & David H. Tabb, *Racial Politics in American Cities, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition* (New York: Longman, 2002). Chapter 1, pp. 17-48.
- Ellen Shiau, "Coalition Building in Los Angeles," in Marion Orr & Domingo Morel, eds. *Latino Mayors: Political Change in the Postindustrial City* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2018), pp. 130-164.

March 22 – Write at least one response paper by today (Tracks 1 & 2)

- Paru Shah, “Racial Change, Racial Threat, and Minority Representation in Cities” *Urban Affairs Review* (online: November 5, 2017).
- Justin Vogt, “A Time Against Race,” *Washington Monthly* 43 1-2 (January-February 2011), p. 25.

## **SPRING BREAK**

April 3 – Argumentative essay due (Track 1)

- Costas Spirou & Dennis R. Judd, *Building the City of Spectacle: Mayor Richard M. Daley and the Remaking of Chicago* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016), Chapter 4, pp. 120-148.
- Natalie Y. Moore, *The South Side: A Portrait of Chicago and American Segregation* (New York: Picador, 2016) Chapter 8, pp. 183-206.

## **Planning and Urban Change**

April 5 – Topic statement due (Track 2)

- Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Vintage Books 1992 [1961]), Chapters 1-2, 22, pp. 3-54; 428-448.

April 10

- Alan Ehrenhalt, *The Great Inversion and the Future of the American City* (New York: Knopf, 2012), Chapter 3: “Re-Creation in New York,” pp. 65-88.

April 12

- Peter Moskowitz, *How to Kill a City: Gentrification, Inequality, and the Fight for the Neighborhood*, (New York: Nation Books, 2017), Chapter 1 – “Hanging On”; Chapter 2 – “How Gentrification Works”; Chapter 3 – “Destroy to Rebuild,” pp. 15-68.

April 17

- Peter Dreier, John Mollenkopf, & Todd Swanstrom, *Place Matters: Metropolitcs for the Twenty-First Century*, Third Edition, Revised (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2014), Chapters 1-2, pp. 1-58.
- James DeFillipis, “Place Matters, but Maybe Not in the Ways They Think it Does,” *Urban Affairs Review* 53:1 (2017), pp. 189-196.
- J. Phillip Thompson, “Place Matters, and So Does Race,” *Urban Affairs Review* 53:1 (2017), pp. 210-218.

April 19 – Literature review due (Tracks 1 & 2)

- Xi Huang and Cathy Lang Liu, “Welcoming Cities: Immigration Policy at the Local Government Level,” *Urban Affairs Review* 54:1 (2018), pp. 3-32.

## The Future

### April 24

- Saskia Sassen *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*, Second Edition (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001) Preface to the new edition, and Chapter One, pp. xvii-xxiii; pp. 3-15.

### April 26

- Steven P. Erie, *Globalizing L.A.: Trade, Infrastructure, and Regional Development* Chapter 1 – “Gateway for the Pacific Rim” & Chapter 2 – “Regional Trade Catalysts,” pp. 3-41.

### May 1

- Richard Florida, *The New Urban Crisis* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), Chapters 1, 5, 10, pp. 1-12; 79-95; 185-216.

### May 3

- Edward Glaeser, *Triumph of the City: How Our Greatest Invention Makes Us Richer, Smarter, Healthier, and Happier* (New York: Penguin Press, 2011) Introduction & Conclusion, pp.1-15; 247-270.

*Student presentations (Tracks 1 & 2)*

May 8

May 10

May 18, 5pm: *Policy proposal due (Track 1); Research paper due (Track 2)*