

Syllabus for SOCI 425 201: Urban Sociology

Department/Program:	Sociology
Year:	2022-2023 (Term II)
Course Title:	Urban Sociology
Course Schedule:	MW, 2-3.30 pm
Location(s):	ANSO 205
Instructor:	Nathanael Lauster
Office Location:	ANSO 1325
Office Hours:	TBA and by appointment
E-mail address:	nathan.lauster@ubc.ca

Course Description: *(Calendar Version) Demographic, behavioural, and organizational aspects of urban structures and of urbanization in different societies and periods.* This iteration of the course will provide a quick and broad sketch of urban sociology as a field. Then it will focus on developing a nuanced understanding of the city as a heavily regulated and varied space. Though cities elsewhere will be explored, discussion of urban regulatory experiences will be rooted in a North America, with special attention provided to the case studies of New York, Toronto, and Vancouver. Through coursework, students will be expected to develop close familiarity with an urban dataset of their choosing. They will curate the data for the class and analyze data for a short paper.

Course Goals: 1) provide a sketch of the field of urban sociology, 2) provide a detailed examination of how urban regulation works and matters, and 3) provide hands-on experience working with one or more urban datasets and building an archive for urban research.

Public Health:

Course adjustments (and individual adjustments) will remain under discussion throughout the semester, responding to circumstance & public health guidelines. Unless otherwise directed, we will maintain in-person instruction, but please do not attend classes if sick! We will collaboratively catch people up as needed. Contact me with any particular concerns.

Required Reading:

Mitchell Duneier (1999) *Sidewalk*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

Mariana Valverde (2012) *Everyday Law on the Street: City Governance in an Age of Diversity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Selected Other Readings (See Schedule & on-line)

Course Organization:

The course will be organized mostly around intensive discussion of readings, partially in readings groups, and partially in full class discussion format. During the second week, students will be organized into reading & discussion groups of approximately 6-8 people each. These groups will meet during most following classes. Within discussion groups, two students will be assigned roles leading the discussion for each reading set. They will each come independently prepared with a brief summary and set of questions to guide discussion (to be distributed to group members during class). During the course of discussion, they will be assigned by their groups into writing a majority report and minority report on the readings discussed during the day (see below for details). I may sit in on group discussions. On most days, the discussion of readings will move from the full room to groups to the full room again.

In addition to readings, students will be asked through the course to find and familiarize themselves with a dataset dealing with urban issues of interest to them. They will build on their familiarity in order to write up and present a description of the data, curating it for the class. By the end of the course, students will be asked to analyze an urban dataset to answer (or provide some insight) into a research question of interest to them. They will present their analysis to the class.

Two fieldtrips will be planned for the class, respectively touring parts of downtown and the neighbourhood surrounding City Hall. While students are encouraged to attend in person, alternatives will also be available by which students can receive credit for participating in fieldtrips virtually.

Means of Evaluation:

Quick Quiz Tally (15%)

A series of very short quizzes on readings will be employed to motivate everyone to keep up with the course material, and come to class prepared to discuss the readings. Performance on these quizzes will be tallied at the end of the year, accounting for 15% of student grades.

Majority/Minority Reports (25%)

Reports on readings and the discussions they generate will provide an important basis for evaluation. Reports will be compiled and provided to me no more than one week after the discussion. Reports will follow a format, divided into the majority report and the minority report. The majority report will provide a) a short, one paragraph summary of the readings, b) a short (one page) description of the group discussion, and c) a short (one page) developed analysis of the reading and group discussion. The minority report will provide a critical review of the majority report as written, highlighting dissent in sections a, b, and c (max. two pages). Students will be expected to write a total of **three** majority and/or minority reports (as assigned by the group), with each assigned @ 8% of the student's total grade. The majority report writer needs to send their report to the minority report writer within three days of the class discussion, so the minority report writer has time to respond by the next class, when the assignment is due. Grades will be assigned independently for majority and minority reports.

Dataset Curation (25%) (5/20 presentation/write-up for website)

Students will be asked to curate a dataset dealing with urban issues and/or data. Curation will include preparing a brief presentation and a write-up describing the data. In addition, students should be ready to answer questions about the data posed by classmates or their instructors. Write-up descriptions should include both a brief abstract (paragraph length), and a detailed description. Descriptions should detail what's in the data, how the data were compiled, and how to use the data. Along the way, they should discuss the promise in the data (e.g., what kind of research questions could this help answer?) and problems associated with it. Dataset examples might include: a set of municipal by-laws; google traffic data; city engineering traffic data; police report data; social networking data; historical photographic data; ethnographic data; survey data; combinations of existing datasets, etc. Students may work on this project jointly or separately, with those working on curating the same dataset are encouraged to work together. But all students should submit curations separately via Canvas. Detailed descriptions should run approximately 2,000-2,500 words per student.

Final Paper (25%) (5/20 presentation/write-up for website)

Students will be asked to use a dataset dealing with urban issues and/or data to address a research question of interest to them. Research questions should relate in some way to the topics discussed during the course. Addressing the research question should take the form of a brief presentation and a written report, ready to be appended to a website description of data. Written reports should include the research question of interest, a methods statement linking the research question to the dataset at hand, an analysis that draws some information from the dataset that addresses or partially answers the research question, a statement of limitations, and a discussion of implications. Students may work on this project jointly or separately. But all students should submit curations separately via Canvas. Written reports should run approximately 2,500-3,000 words per student.

Participation (10%)

Students will be evaluated by their peers and by their instructor. Evaluations will come in the form of brief reflections by students of their own and others' contributions to group discussions. These evaluations will be joined to my own evaluations of their contribution to class discussions. Because of the importance of student contributions to discussion, missing classes will be counted against participation marks. Note: good participation in class means showing up prepared and on time, having read the readings under discussion for the day, staying engaged, asking questions, providing insight, and actively avoiding introducing any distractions to the classroom. It also means being respectful of peers and guest speakers, and fostering an inclusive discourse.

Note: all written work should consist of your own thoughts, interpretations, and words. Do not copy or cut & paste the prose of another. Plagiarism is often relatively easy to detect, and I will send cases on to the university administration if I encounter them. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, see the University calendar: <http://students.ubc.ca/calendar/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959>

COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change!)

DAY	TOPIC	READS	TASKS
Jan.9	Intro	In Class	
Jan.11	Classics	Simmel, Burgess, & DuBois	
Jan.16	Ancients	Khaldun, Cooper	Tent. Groups
Jan.18	Political Economics	Molotch, Ley & Dobson	Groups
Jan.23	Community	Jacobs, Wellman	DISCUSS
Jan.25	Subculture	Florida, Zukin	DISCUSS
Jan.30	Justice	Young, Ross	DISCUSS
Feb.1	(Field Trip)		
Feb.6	Sidewalk	Duneier 1	
Feb.8	Sidewalk	Duneier 2	DISCUSS
Feb.13	Sidewalk	Duneier 3	DISCUSS
Feb.15	Sidewalk	Duneier 4	DISCUSS
	HOLIDAY		
Feb.27	MOVIE		
Mar.1	WORKSHOP		Draft 1
Mar.6	Presents		
Mar.8	Presents		Paper 1
Mar.13	Everyday Law	Valverde I	DISCUSS
Mar.15	(Field Trip)		
Mar.20	Everyday Law	Valverde 2	DISCUSS
Mar.22	Everyday Law	Valverde 3	DISCUSS
Mar.27	Urban Topics I	(TBD)	
Mar.29	Urban Topics II	(TBD)	
Apr.3	WORKSHOP		Draft 2
Apr.5	Presentations		
	HOLIDAY		
Apr.12	Presentations		Paper 2

A Note on General Grading Policies: Please note that my grading reflects an evaluation of how you have met course expectations outlined above. It does not reflect an assessment of what I think of you as a person. Students should note that I consider grades in the “B” range to be good grades, representing solid performance. Grades in the “A” range tend to be exceptional.

Percentage (%)	Grade	Percentage (%)	Grade
90-100	A+	68-71.9	B-
85-89.9	A	64-67.9	C+
80-84.9	A-	60-63.9	C
76-79.9	B+	55-59.9	C-
72-75.9	B	50-54.9	D