

Instructor: Barbara Adams
Urban Sociology: 7224 LSOC 2850 A
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Eugene Lang: Spring 2013, 65 West 11th Street, Room 050
Tuesday and Thursday, 8:00 to 9:40 am
Office Hours: by appointment

URBAN SOCIOLOGY

Course Description. This course examines core texts from the discipline of urban sociology in combination with work from other fields. We will explore theoretical texts, literature, film, performance and visual art as ongoing dialogue that attempts to understand and represent cities as sites rich with potential and exuberance while also rife with inequalities and struggle. Cities will be understood as densities of diverse stories, desires, and experiences and we will consider how urban social formations mark, situate, and inscribe particular actors in disparate ways. Topics covered in the course include the urban imagination, the design and production of space, and key theoretical paradigms that have shaped our understanding of cities. As the course proceeds we will look at the effectiveness of urban sociology as a form of inquiry that might help us negotiate our current conditions and predicaments.

Learning Outcomes. Through their work in this course, students will develop their ability to:

- Identify and articulate sociological problems and phenomena in the context of the city. Students will pose theoretical questions and engage with current debates in the field of urban sociology.
- Critically evaluate material and information about urban environments and cities from a variety of media including, but not limited to, scholarly texts, film, news outlets, and fiction. In doing so, students will cultivate “the sociological imagination”—the ability to situate individual biographies and troubles in the context of larger historical processes and structural issues.
- Organize, develop and present a final research project that builds on course themes. Students will propose an idea for research, formulate sociological research questions, locate scholarly sources to address these questions, and determine the best methodological approach and format for presentation.

Assignments and Grading.

Participation and Attendance (25%). Participation is essential to the course. This is a discussion-based seminar, and as such, participation in class discussions is an important part of the course. Come prepared with questions and comments about the assigned reading. Students will take turns starting discussions. Two or more unexcused absences will negatively impact your grade and excessive absences may result in failure of the course.

Written Assignments (40%). There will be two five-page papers that explore themes from the course. The first paper will be due in week 4; the second will be due in week 8. These assignments will be discussed in detail in class and you will receive a written description of each assignment.

Final Project (35%) This project includes a series of steps that will provide a foundation for the final research presentation and paper: a research proposal; an outline and thesis statement; an annotated list of sources; a final paper and presentation. The details of each step will be explained in class and students will receive a written description for each portion of the assignment.

Required Texts.

Course readings can be found at the following link: <http://langurbansociology.wordpress.com/readings/>

Be sure to check this blog regularly for announcements, assignments, policies and other updates.

***Print all assigned readings and bring these to class with you.

There are two required books for the course. These are available at the Barnes & Noble/New School Bookstore, 105 Fifth Avenue (at 18th Street):

1. Jana Leo (2011) *Rape New York*. New York: Feminist Press/CUNY, ISBN: 1558616810.
2. Samuel Delany (1999) *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue*. New York: NYU, ISBN: 081471920