

GEOGRAPHY AND PLANNING

GPHY 227- Cities: Geography, Planning, and Urban Life (Online)



Course Instructor	Paul Sylvestre	Email: paul.sylvestre@queensu.ca
Office	N/A	
Contact Time	As needed	
Format	Online	
Class Assessment	Quizzes (x6); midterm; group discussion; city profile assignment; Final exam	

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is designed as an elective course for students from various backgrounds at all levels of post-secondary education. It is also recommended as a foundation course for students pursuing a career in geography, urban geography, or urban planning. The course focuses on cities as the spaces and places in which most people in the world now live and work. The unique feature of this course lies in its multi-disciplinary approach to understanding the city. By the end of the course students will be able to understand the city from a variety of perspectives within the geographical and planning tradition. This multi-perspective approach is valuable because it is only when we adopt a complex and textured reading of cities that we may begin to address contemporary and pressing issues facing cities today.

The course is divided into four main parts. The first part explores the inter-urban context of cities including the origins and growth of cities, forces shaping contemporary urbanization, and global, national, and regional perspectives on urban systems. In this part of the course we will also review various theoretical approaches to urban geography; we continue to visit these approaches throughout the remainder of the course as we examine different urban issues. The second part of the course examines urban structures and land use in the city, including urban planning, housing, and transportation issues. The third part of the course examines how people live within the city, including different social, economic, and cultural experiences and expressions. The final part of the course examines governing approaches, including concepts of power, politics, and sustainable futures. While offering global context and comparative international perspectives, the primary focus is on the North American city.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Articulate the rationale for the development of several approaches to urban geography and how it is possible to gain urban insights from each.
- Assess the origins and growth of cities to determine what makes a place “urban”.
- Describe the economic, social, and political forces shaping contemporary urbanization, with a focus on post WWII North American urban contexts.
- Compare various approaches to land use, planning, housing, and transportation issues.
- Demonstrate the integral role that space plays in shaping how urban residents express their social and cultural values.
- Analyze how cities are governed and how they could be more sustainable in the future.
- Demonstrate active listening skills, consider peers’ perspectives, and communicate effectively with peers on a range of urban issues.

COURSE TOPICS

The city from a geographical and planning perspective. Topics include origins of urbanism; mega; migrant, and global cities; urban competitiveness; land use planning and design; suburbanization and sprawl; new urban identities and culture; retailing transport; public space; private and temporary cities; urban poverty; politics and governance; sustainable urban futures.

COURSE READINGS

ASO reserves the right to make changes to the required material list as received by the instructor before the course starts. Please refer to the Campus Bookstore website at <http://www.campusbookstore.com/Textbooks/Search-Engine>(link is external) to obtain the most up-to-date list of required materials for this course before purchasing them.

Required Texts

Jonas, A. E. G., McCann, E., Thomas, M. (2015). *Urban Geography: A critical introduction*. Wiley-Blackwell Publishing.

Filion, P., Moos, M., Vinodrai, T., Walker, R. (2015). *Canadian cities in transition: Perspectives for an urban age*. Oxford University Press.

****Subject to Change****