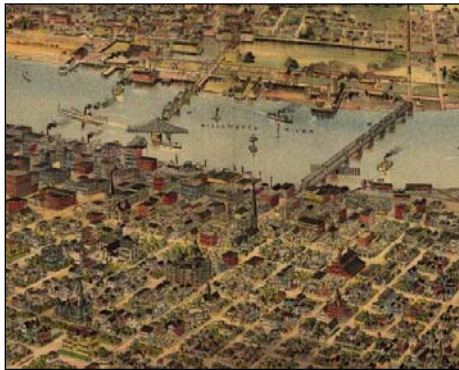




Antioch, California, 2004. © Matt Jalbert



Portland, Oregon, 1890. Panoramic map.

**URBAN GEOGRAPHY**  
GEOG 442 / 542  
FALL 2006, UNIVERSITY OF OREGON



Berlin, 2006. © Nicole Harkin

**(1) Course details**

**Time:** 12:00-1:20 pm, UH  
**Location:** 111 Lillis  
**Instructor:** Corey Johnson, [cjohns11@uoregon.edu](mailto:cjohns11@uoregon.edu)  
Office: 208 Condon  
Office Hours: UH 1:30-2:30 and by appointment  
**GTF:** Erin Machell, [emachell@uoregon.edu](mailto:emachell@uoregon.edu)

**(2) Introduction**

I think our governments will remain virtuous for many centuries; as long as they are chiefly agricultural; and this will be as long as there shall be vacant lands in any part of America. When they get piled upon one another in large cities, as in Europe, they will become corrupt as in Europe.

--Thomas Jefferson in a letter to James Madison<sup>1</sup>

Towns are like electric transformers. They increase tension, accelerate the rhythm of exchange and constantly recharge human life.

--Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism* (1981, 479)

These quotes have really little in common except that they reflect humankind's long-standing love-hate affair with cities. Cities have been the source of much fascination and affection as well as contempt and revulsion throughout history. The fact that this state university is in Eugene, and not in much larger Portland, relates to the first quote. That most of you likely will end up living in cities, relates in some small way to the second quote.

Whatever your own view of cities may be, it is true that over half of the world's population—over 90% in the U.S.—lives in urban places. Cities, towns and other urban forms are the sites of most human activity. Trying to make sense of these places through the geographer's lens requires that

---

<sup>1</sup> 20 December 1787, in *Papers of Thomas Jefferson* (1955) vol. 12.

we set aside for a bit our aversion or fondness for cities in general, or our strong preferences for a particular city over another. We will instead focus on understanding what separates cities from other types of places, what distinguishes cities from one another, and what explains the internal dynamics of individual cities. We will also look at the linkages among urban areas.

Urban geography as a discipline is nearly as sprawling and unwieldy as cities themselves. That makes the task of doing this topic justice in ten weeks difficult. This is not intended to be a survey course, but we will necessarily short shrift some topics while focusing in more depth on others. It will be a kind of greatest hits, recognizing that a few topics, in my view, are 'greater' than others. Hopefully, we will explore enough of a variety of spatial (geographical) perspectives on urban places that your interest will be piqued by something.

In the past, urban geography was preoccupied with explaining why cities were located where they were, how they developed as they did, and generalizing (i.e. building theories) about the nature of cities. Contemporary urban geography tends to take a more critical approach towards cities. In other words, such places are not simply to be viewed as "given" physical environments or as discrete dots on the map that can be explained by objective scientists looking down from above. Rather, cities are complex human systems that are re-constructed every day by our words and actions. The hallmarks of cities according to urban geographers today include power relations, race relations, class relations and global interconnections.

I believe there is much to be learned from both old and new. The following course outline reflects my wish to expose you to some of the best from classic urban geography as well as some of the really cool new ideas out there in the discipline today.

### **(3) Expectations**

Come to class. Show respect for your fellow classmates and for me, and you should expect the same in return. Read the assigned pages. Participate in class, or if speaking up makes you uncomfortable, write up your thoughts on that day's discussion and hand them in to me. Don't cheat, don't plagiarize. For more information, see <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~conduct/sai.htm> and <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/>.

### **(4) Assessment**

- Walking tour (5%)
- Movie or book review (10%)
- Term paper (35%)
- Two essay style midterms (25% each)
- Graduate Students: Research project [in place movie/book review and term paper] (45%)

### **(5) Readings**

You are required to purchase the following textbook (available in the UO Bookstore):

Knox, P. L., & McCarthy, L. (2005). *Urbanization: an introduction to urban geography* (2nd ed.). New York: Pearson Prentice Hall.

There will also be various additional readings that will be made available on Blackboard. Some readings may only be available through e-reserves at the Knight Library; I will announce if that is the case.

GRADUATE STUDENTS: Those enrolled in GEOG 542, please acquire the following book, which will help guide our discussions in weekly roundtables:

- Berry, Brian J.L. and James O. Wheeler, eds. 2005. *Urban Geography in America, 1950-2000: Paradigms and Personalities*. New York and London: Routledge.

**(6) Field Trip**

We will take a field trip to Portland on Saturday of Week 7. Plan this into your calendar early! You will receive a packet with relevant information and additional readings in advance of the trip. Even if you feel that you know PDX like the back of your hand, this will be a learning experience for you. This is the fun part of geography: field work. And participation is required.

**(7) Term paper**

You will be asked to prepare a paper of 10-12 pages exploring an issue relevant to urban geography on a place or theme of your choosing. Topics are subject to approval by me, and each of you should schedule an appointment to discuss your approach to the paper. More details will be available the first week of class. Graduate students will be expected to complete a more substantial research project, to be discussed in detail at our first meeting.

**(8) Miscellany**

Course information, including readings, will be made available on Blackboard. Hard copies of readings will be available in the Knight Library reading room.

Students with disabilities: please see me if you require special accommodations.

Feel free to approach me with questions about the course. If my office hours are not convenient, make an appointment. I'm in my office a lot; don't hesitate to stop in.

**(9) Timeline**

		Lecture Topic	Reading	Due
<i>Setting the stage</i>				
<b>Week 1</b>	Sep 26	A brief introduction to urban geography Review of syllabus		Complete walking tour this week or weekend
	Sep 28	Observing the urban landscape	Knox: pp. 1-16 (Ch. 1) Jackson pp.103-137	
<i>The development of cities and urban form</i>				
<b>Week 2</b>	Oct 3	The long view: Historical views of the city	Knox: pp. 22-44	Walking tour write-up
	Oct 5	The long view (cont.): preindustrial cities	Vance 1971	
<b>Week 3</b>	Oct 10	Industrial cities	Knox: pp. 46-50, 121-136	

	Oct 12	Evolution of the American city	Knox: pp. 53-76 (Ch. 3)	
<b>Week 4</b>	Oct 17	Changing urban form: Suburbanization	Knox: pp. 139-157	
	Oct 19	Changing urban form: Postindustrial and postmodern urbanism	Knox: pp. 158-168, 263- 269; 2 NY Times articles	Book or movie review
<b>Week 5</b>	Oct 24	Global perspective Review	pp. 171-194; Davis 2004, pp. 9-15	
	Oct 26	<b>Midterm Exam</b>		
<i>Social geography of cities</i>				
<b>Week 6</b>	Oct 31	Social justice: Guest Lecture by Maylian Pak	TBA	
	Nov 2	Understanding urban development	Knox: pp. 274-292 (Ch. 11); Harris and Lewis, pp. 622-639.	
<b>Week 7</b>	Nov 7	Spatial segregation by race and class	Knox: pp. 297-337 (Ch. 12)	
	Nov 9	Gentrification (Berlin, PDX)	Knox: pp. 358-374, plus TBA	
	Nov 11	All-day fieldtrip to Portland (see description)		
<b>Week 8</b>	Nov 14	Splintering Urbanism	Marvin and Graham, pp. 249-303	
	<i>Governance and globalization</i>			
	Nov 16	Politics of urban growth	Knox: pp. 456-492	
<b>Week 9</b>	Nov 21	Global cities	Friedmann, pp. 69-83; browse web pages of GaWC	
	Nov 23	NO CLASS, Thanksgiving		
<b>Week 10</b>	Nov 28	Global cities (cont.)	Sassen, TBA	
	Nov 30	Cities and terrorism Wrap-up/review	TBA	Term paper
<b>Week 11</b>	<b>Final Exam</b> (2 <sup>nd</sup> midterm) on Friday, December 8 <sup>th</sup> at 8:00 am			

**(10) Readings**

The following is a chronological the supplemental readings for the term.

**Week 1:**

Jackson, K. T. (1985). *Crabgrass frontier: the suburbanization of the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 103-137.

**Week 2:**

Vance, J. E. (1990). *The continuing city : urban morphology in Western civilization*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 207-281.

**Week 3—no additional readings**

**Week 4:**

Lyman, R. (2006). Surge of Population in Exurbs Continues. *New York Times*, June 21, p. A10.

Bruegmann, R. (2006). Poor, Misunderstood Sprawl. *New York Times*, July 9, section 14, p 11.

**Week 5:**

Davis, M. (2004). The Urbanization of Empire: Megacities and the Laws of Chaos. *Social Text*, 22(4), pp. 9-15.

**Week 6:**

Harris, R., & Lewis, R. (1998). Constructing a fault(y) zone: misrepresentations of American cities and suburbs, 1900-1950. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 88(4), 622-639.

**Weeks 7: Additional readings TBA**

**Week 8:**

Graham, S., & Marvin, S. (2001). Splintering urbanism: networked infrastructures, technological mobilities and the urban condition. London; New York: Routledge, pp. 249-303.

**Week 9:**

Friedmann, J. (1986). The world city hypothesis. *Development & Change*, 17(1), 69-83.

Browse pages of the Globalization and World Cities Study Group & Network at <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc/>.

**Week 10: Additional readings TBA**