

GLOBAL URBAN DEVELOPMENTS

Fall 2024

Thursday 1:30 – 4:00 pm

Professor: Kristin Skrabut (kristin.skrabut@tufts.edu)

Office Hours: Monday 1:30-2:30pm; Thursday 4:00-5:00pm



COURSE OVERVIEW

This seminar invites students to develop a global perspective on urban development by exploring the evolution of cities around the world as well as how different world cities are coping with problems that are global in nature, such as, climate change, population displacement, and real estate speculation. Drawing on critical urban and anthropological theory and cutting-edge ethnographic case studies from myriad sites, we investigate topics including informal housing, spatial segregation and inequality, water and energy infrastructure, transportation solutions, coping with climate change, migrant and refugee relocations, and emerging forms of governance and social mobilization. As we explore these topics, we will ask: what exactly do we mean by a "global" city and what might constitute a "global urban development"? What issues do city-dwellers have in common across sites, in what important ways might they diverge, and how do we account for these similarities and differences? Finally, what do we learn about urban development, social life, and confronting social, political, and environmental challenges by getting past our presumptions of what cities "should" be and looking instead at the realities and emergent possibilities of everyday life in less-celebrated urban spaces? This course is designed for graduate or advanced undergraduate students pursuing research and careers outside the US, and for those eager to learn new paradigms we might use to resolve problems at home.

CORE TEXTS: The primary readings for this course will be drawn from the following texts.

- ❖ Li Zhang. 2001. *Strangers in the City: Reconfigurations of Space, Power, and Social Networks within China's Floating Population*
- ❖ Austin Zeiderman. 2016. *Endangered City: The Politics of Security and Risk in Bogota*
- ❖ Sarah Vaughn. 2022. *Engineering Vulnerability: In Pursuit of Climate Adaptation*
- ❖ Ben Rawlence. 2016. *City of Thorns: Nine Lives in the World's Largest Refugee Camp*

*Other required readings will be available on the course Canvas website

COURSE STRUCTURE & REQUIREMENTS

This is a discussion-based seminar that requires students to complete weekly readings, write short papers responding to those readings, contribute novel information to class discussions based on individual area-study research, and produce a 20-page final paper that engages with research from cities outside the U.S. in some way.

Weekly Work

Class Participation

Student participation is essential to the structure and success of this course, and students are expected to contribute actively and productively to every class discussion. Please note that “active participation” involves more than just the consistent saying of brilliant things. It requires coming to every class prepared to discuss the week’s readings (writing your response papers should help with this, as will reading over your peers’ response posts), listening respectfully to others, disagreeing without being disagreeable, and asking questions that are thoughtful and clearly relevant to the course material. **Attendance is required at ALL class meetings.** If emergency or extenuating circumstances force you to miss class, let the professor know as soon as possible so we can develop a plan for how you will make up any missed work and ensure your absence is not detrimental to the class’s progress. Absence from 2 or more classes will reduce your participation grade. Absence from more than 3 classes will result in an NC in the course.

Weekly Readings

Course readings will consist of a combination of academic articles and *ethnographies* (books that provide grounded, thick descriptions of particular places and issues). Make sure you allot sufficient time to complete and intellectually process the weekly readings. This means reflecting on the author’s central arguments, *how* the author makes their arguments, whether you are convinced by the evidence or argumentation they put forward, and the implications of their arguments for policy, planning, or your own personal and professional goals/interests.

Response Papers

To help students purposefully engage weekly readings, recall insights for discussion, develop good reading and research habits, and begin building a personalized annotated bibliography that can be used for their own work, students will write a 1–2-page (250-500 word) paper that responds to each week’s readings. This response paper should include:

- (1) a discussion of the author(s) framework (i.e., what they are arguing, how they argue it.) If we are reading multiple articles that week, briefly describe each article's major point and its contribution to the broader scholarly conversation developing across the different readings that week.
- (2) your well-considered intellectual response to the piece(s). Among other things, this might include critical evaluations of the text(s), things you are confused by, broader questions it raises for you, comparisons to other texts, or a discussion of its political or ideological implications.

These response papers are due on Canvas by **9:00 am on Thursday before class**. They will be assessed based on a four-point scale:

- Exemplary (4) – Great insights grounded in thorough engagement with the text!
- Effective (3) – Competent work
- Minimal (2) – Acceptable but reflecting rather superficial engagement with the reading
- Unsatisfactory (1) – Does not reflect engagement with the assigned texts

Students will have 3 free passes for these papers, meaning you must complete a total of 9 papers throughout the semester. Note that everyone must submit a paper for the 2nd week of class. Use these free passes wisely to help ensure the papers you do submit reflect careful engagement with course material. If you choose to do more than 9 papers, at the end of the course, your lowest response paper grades will be dropped. A more comprehensive explanation and rubric for these response papers can be found on the course Canvas website.

Area Study Write-Ups and Presentations

Each student will pick a city, country, or world region to specialize in throughout the class. Two times during the semester, students will explore how the topic we cover that week is playing out in their study area, drawing on *at least* one academic source (e.g. an article from an anthropology, geography, or urban studies journal) and one popular media source (e.g. local language news site, area/issue oriented facebook group or twitter conversation). Students will submit a 2-3 paragraph write-up that describes their findings from the article and popular media sources and put these insights in conversation with the week's readings. Students will also present their comparative insights to the class. To ensure an even distribution of area study presentations throughout the semester, students will sign up for presentation weeks during the second week of class. This assignment will support the class in developing a broader awareness of how the issues we cover play out in different spaces, allow each student to develop special expertise in a geographic area of interest, and potentially facilitate students' progress on their final papers.

Final Paper

The final assignment for this course is an opportunity for students to think and write about urban issues drawing on perspectives that originate outside the of the United State. Students may pick one of the following options:

- (1) *Case Study*: An essay that examines a particular issue in a single city outside the US and analyzes it by drawing on some of the literature, themes and theories discussed in the class. (For example: activism in Luanda public housing communities; accommodations for labor migrants in Tijuana, Mexico).
- (2) *Research Proposal*: A detailed proposal for research in or on a city outside the U.S. This will involve a discussion of the topic and questions to be explored, a comprehensive review of the existing literature on that topic and how the proposed research will engage it, and an explanation of the methods that will be used to answer the question.

- (3) *Comparative Analysis*: A paper that analyzes a particular policy issue in the US drawing on theoretical and conceptual tools generated by research on places outside the U.S.; or that compares and contrasts a US policy issue with a corollary issue in another country. Examples might include: a comparison of ride share services like UBER with research on informal transportation in a country like Kenya, Peru, or Thailand; an analysis of the issues surrounding lead content in US water supplies with theories of the politics of infrastructure that emerge from research in India and South Africa; a comparative discussion of US approaches to “tent cities” in relation to how Latin American countries have dealt with squatter settlements; an analysis of how “micro-credit” in India compares to payday loans or subprime mortgages in the U.S., etc.
- (4) *Policy Brief*: A policy brief that describes the state of research and knowledge on a particular issue in a city outside the U.S. and makes a recommendation for whether and how either the US or an international NGO should engage this issue.
- (5) *Policy Commentary*: Students may write a paper that critically reflects on and engages with a particular policy statement or proposal (e.g. the Quito Papers) by drawing on the texts we have read in class in addition to other related readings.
- (6) *Choose your own Adventure*: Students may, in consultation with the professor, choose to write a different kind of paper that serves their own research or professional agenda. Students must discuss their idea and get approval from the professor to proceed no later than **Friday, October 18th**.

In all cases, these papers will be approximately 20 pages double spaced. Students must **meet with the instructor by Friday, October 18th** to discuss their paper idea, and will submit a 1-page proposal for their paper along with an annotated bibliography that describes 5-10 quality academic resources they will rely on for this paper on **Monday, October 30th**. The final paper is due on **Monday, December 16th**.

**For information regarding how to use this course to meet requirements for specific majors and minors, please speak with the instructor directly early in the semester.*

GRADE BREAKDOWN

In-Class Participation – 15%
 Weekly Response Papers – 25%
 Ongoing Area Study – 20%
 Final Paper Proposal – 10%
 Final Paper – 30%

GRADE SCALE

A+ 97-100	C+ 77-79
A 93-96	C 73-76
A- 90-92	C- 70-72
B+ 87-89	D+ 67-69
B 83-86	D 65-66
B- 80-82	F <65

COURSE POLICIES

Contacting the Professor

My office is located at Bromfield Pearson, room 115. Students are encouraged to make appointments and meet with me in person whenever possible. I will check and respond to my Tufts email at least once a day Monday thru Friday. Please be aware that this means *it may take up to 24 hours* for you to receive a response to your email query. Emails sent over the weekend may not receive a response until the following Monday.

Electronics Policy

Studies show that people learn better if they handwrite their notes and that using laptops and other electronic devices in class reduces student retention of the material and inhibits the learning of students sitting next to them. I **strongly encourage all students to make themselves as electronics independent as possible (i.e. procuring hard copies of readings and handwriting or printing typed notes)**. If you have important reasons for needing to use a laptop or tablet in class (e.g., difficulty handwriting; a need to access pdfs on your computer) **you must disconnect that device from the internet during class**.

Late Policy & Class Accountability

Major assignments will be downgraded by 1/3 of a letter grade for every 24 hours they are late. For example, if a paper is due at 4pm on Friday, but is submitted at 5pm on Friday, the highest grade that paper can receive is an A (rather than an A+). If the paper is submitted after 4pm on Saturday, the highest grade the paper can receive is an A-, etc. These penalties will continue to accrue for a maximum of 6 days. Response papers and any other products that influence the progress of the entire class *must be submitted on time*. If emergency circumstances force a student to be absent from class or do not permit a student to submit this work on time, the student must email the professor describing the steps they will take to ensure that neither the class nor their own personal progress suffers as a result of their absence/late submission.

Policy on Collaboration and Academic Integrity

Discussion and the exchange of ideas are essential to academic work. In this course, I encourage you to discuss readings, paper topics, and share sources with your colleagues. **HOWEVER, any written work you submit for evaluation must be the product of your own thinking, research, and writing and reflect your own ideas and approach to the topic**. This means that you are also not permitted to use Chat GPT or any other Artificial Intelligence program to think or write for you. You must use **APA, Chicago, or Harvard** citation formatting and follow it consistently, properly citing any books, articles, websites, lectures, etc. that have helped you with your work. All faculty of the School of Arts and Sciences are required to report suspected cases of academic integrity violations to the Dean of Student Affairs Office. If I suspect that you have cheated or plagiarized, I must report the situation to the dean. See Tufts' Academic Integrity Policy for more information: <https://students.tufts.edu/student-affairs/student-life-policies/academic-integrity-policy>.

Policy on sharing

I have specifically designed the syllabus, exams, handouts, and lectures for the people who are enrolled in the course this term and those may not be shared outside this course. It is against Tufts policy for anyone to share any content made available in this course including course syllabi, reading materials, problems sets, videos, handouts, exams, or class recordings with anyone outside of the course without the express permission of the instructor. This especially includes any posting or sharing of videos or other recordings on publicly accessible websites or forums. Any such sharing or posting could violate copyright law or law that protects the privacy of student educational records.

STUDENT RESOURCES

Writing & Academic Support

Clear and compelling writing is an essential tool in most professions and will be taken into account when your work for this course is assessed. To support you in developing good writing skills for this class and beyond, I encourage you to take advantage of the Student Academic Resource Center (StAAR) and the Writing Consultants. The StAAR Center offers a variety of resources to both graduate and undergraduate students and services are free to all enrolled students. Students may make an appointment to work on any writing-related project or assignment, attend subject tutoring in a variety of disciplines, or meet with an academic coach to hone fundamental academic skills like time management or overcoming procrastination. Students can make an appointment for any of these services by visiting go.tufts.edu/StAARCenter.

Accommodations for Students with Accessibility Needs

Tufts University values the diversity of our body of students, staff, and faculty and recognizes the important contribution each student makes to our unique community. Tufts is committed to providing equal access and support to all qualified students through the provision of reasonable accommodations so that each student may fully participate in the Tufts experience. If a student has a disability that requires reasonable accommodations, they should please contact the StAAR Center (formerly Student Accessibility Services) at StaarCenter@tufts.edu or 617-627-4539 to make an appointment with an accessibility representative to determine appropriate accommodations. Please be aware that accommodations cannot be enacted retroactively, making timeliness a critical aspect for their provision. <https://students.tufts.edu/staar-center>

Student Support, including Mental Health

As a student, there may be times when personal stressors or difficulties interfere with your academic performance or well-being. The [Dean of Student Affairs Office](#) offers support and care to undergraduates and graduate students who are experiencing difficulties, and can also aid faculty in their work with students. In addition, through Tufts' [Counseling and Mental Health Service](#) (CMHS) students can access mental health support 24/7, and they can provide information on additional resources. CMHS also provides confidential consultation, brief counseling, and urgent care at no cost for all Tufts undergraduates as well as for graduate students who have paid the student health fee. To make an appointment, call 617-627-3360. Please visit the CMHS website: <http://go.tufts.edu/Counseling> to learn more about their services and resources.

Religious Accommodations

Tufts University faculty, staff, and administration highly value and acknowledge the religious diversity of its student body. Students seeking religious accommodations related to their holy days are encouraged to collaborate with faculty to make arrangements during the first week of each semester. Consult the [Multifaith Calendar](#) for upcoming holidays, links to the University Religious Accommodations Policy, and members of the University Chaplaincy who are available to respond to questions on religious observances.

Provisional Schedule of Readings

PART I. INTRODUCING URBANISMS

Week 1 (September 5): An Introduction to Urbanism Otherwise

- ❖ Syllabus overview
- ❖ Lecture on Global Cities vs. Urbanism Elsewhere
- ❖ Films and discussion: The New Urban Agenda & Welcome to Lagos

Week 2 (September 12): Geographies of Theory

- ❖ Jennifer Robinson. 2002. Global and World Cities: A View from Off the Map. *International journal of urban and regional research*, 26(3), pp.531-554.
- ❖ Ananya Roy. 2009. The 21st Century Metropolis: New Geographies of Theory. *Regional Studies*. Volume 43.6. pg 819-830
- ❖ Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff. 2013. Writing Theory from the South. *World Financial Review*.
- ❖ Teresa Caldeira. 2017. Peripheral urbanization: Autoconstruction, transversal logics, and politics in cities of the global south. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 35(1), 3-20

Suggested further reading:

- ❖ Brenner, Neil, and Nik Theodore. 2002. "Cities and the geographies of "actually existing neoliberalism"." *Antipode* 34, no. 3: 349-379.
- ❖ Mike Davis. 2004. Planet of Slums. *New Left Review*. Pg. 5-34
- ❖ Brodwyn Fischer. 2014. A Century in the Present Tense: Crisis, Politics, and the Intellectual History of Brazil's Informal Cities. IN *Cities from Scratch: Poverty and Informality in Urban Latin America*. Pg. 9-50
- ❖ Greenspan, E., 2016. Top-down, bottom-up Urban Design. The New Yorker.

PART II. BUILDING CITIES

Week 3 (September 19): Developing Peripheries

- ❖ James Scott. 2006. "Cities, People, Language." *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*. Blackwell.
- ❖ Li Zhang. 2001. Strangers in the City: Reconfigurations of Space, Power, and Social Networks within China's Floating Population. (Introduction, chapter 1, 3, 4, 5)

Week 4 (September 26): Autoconstruction Across Generations

- ❖ William Mangin and John C. Turner. 1968. The Barriada Movement. *Progressive Architecture* 49(5):154-162.
- ❖ Hernando De Soto. 2009. Film: *The Power of the Poor* (selected clips)
- ❖ Kristin Skrabut. 2014. "Recognizing (Dis)Order: Topographies of Power and Property in Lima's Periphery." Chapter in *The Housing Question: Tensions, Continuities and Contingencies in the Modern City*. Edward Murphy and Najib Hourani, editors. Ashgate. Pg 183-198
- ❖ Miguel Pérez. 2018. "Toward a life with dignity: Housing struggles and new political horizons in urban Chile." *American ethnologist* 45, no. 4: 508-520.

Suggested further reading:

- ❖ Kristin Skrabut. 2018. Housing the contingent life course: domestic aspiration and extreme poverty in Peruvian shantytowns. *City & Society*, 30(2), 263-288.

Week 5 (October 3): Segregation and Spatializing Class

- ❖ Teresa Caldeira. 1996. "Fortified Enclaves: The New Urban Segregation." *Public Culture* 8(2): 303-328.
- ❖ Mariana Cavalcanti. 2014. "Threshold Markets: The Production of Real-Estate Value between the "Favela" and the "Pavement"" IN *Cities from Scratch*. Pg 208-237
- ❖ Li Zhang. 2008. Private homes, distinct lifestyles: Performing a new middle class. *Privatizing China: socialism from afar*, pp. 23-40.
- ❖ Kallin and Slater. 2014. "Activating territorial stigma: gentrifying marginality on Edinburgh's periphery." *Environment and Planning A*. v46. pg. 1351 – 1368

Suggested:

FILM: *Janice Perlman on Territorial Stigma*

PART III: EVERYDAY OPERATIONS

Week 6 (October 10): Urban Citizenships

- ❖ Arjun Appadurai and James Holston. 1996. "Cities and citizenship." *Public Culture* 8, no. 2: 187-204.
- ❖ James Holston. 2009. Insurgent citizenship in an era of global urban peripheries. *City & Society*, 21(2), 245-267.
- ❖ Arjun Appadurai. 2001. Deep democracy: urban governmentality and the horizon of politics. *Environment and Urbanization*, 13(2), 23-43.
- ❖ Asef Bayat. 2011. "The Quiet Encroachment of the Ordinary." IN *Life as Politics*

Week 7 (October 17): Interpreting Infrastructures

- ❖ Antina Von Schnitzler. 2008. "Citizenship prepaid: Water, calculability, and techno-politics in South Africa." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 34, no. 4: 899-917.
- ❖ Nikhil Anand. 2011. PRESSURE: The PoliTechnics of water supply in Mumbai. *Cultural Anthropology* 26(4): 542-64
- ❖ Abdoumalig Simons. 2004. "People as Infrastructure." *Public Culture*. 16(3), 407-429

Meet with Professor by Friday, October 18th to discuss plans for final paper

Week 8 (October 24): Managing Mobilities

- ❖ Allen Hai Xiao. 2019. "Oyinbo, Wole!": Urban Rhythms and Mobile Encounters in the Lagos Transport Systems. *Urban Forum*. 30:133-151.
- ❖ Jacob Rasmusen. 2012. "Inside the System, Outside the Law: Operating in the Matatu Sector in Nairobi." *Urban Forum*. 23:415-432.
- ❖ Jacqueline Klopp and Clemence Cavoli. 2019. "Mapping Minibuses in Maputo and Nairobi: Engaging Paratransit in Transportation Planning in African Cities." *Transport Reviews*. 39:5. Pg 657-676

Suggested Further Reading

Daniel E Agbiboa. 2022. *They Eat Our Sweat*. (Selections)

Final Paper Proposal Due 8pm, Monday, October 30th

PART IV: NEW URBAN ECOLOGIES

Week 9 (October 31): Urban Natures

- ❖ Kristian Karlo Saguin. 2016. "States of hazard: Aquaculture and narratives of typhoons and floods in Laguna de Bay." *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 64, no. 3-4: 527-554.
- ❖ Kristian Karlo Saguin. 2022. "Urban gardens on the edge of city-making in Metro Manila." *The Geographical Journal*. 1-14.
- ❖ Bettina Stoetzer. 2018. "Ruderal Ecologies: Rethinking Nature, Migration, and the Urban Landscape in Berlin." *Cultural Anthropology*. Vol 33. no 2. 295-323

Week 10 (November 7): Endangered Cities

- ❖ Austin Zeiderman. 2016. *Endangered City: The Politics of Security and Risk in Bogota* (Introduction, Chapters 2, 4, 5, Conclusion, Coda)

Week 11 (November 14): Adaptive Examples

- ❖ Sarah Vaughn. 2022. *Engineering Vulnerability: In Pursuit of Climate Adaptation* (Introduction, Chapters 2, 3, 4, 7, Conclusion)

PART V: DREAMS AND DISPLACEMENTS

Week 12 (November 21): Dreaming World, Smart, and Sustainable Cities (Virtual Class Meeting)

- ❖ Asher Ghertner. 2011. "Rule by Aesthetics: World Class City Making in Dehli" IN *Worlding cities: Asian experiments and the art of being global*, 279-306
- ❖ Liza Weinstein. 2017. "Insecurity as Confinement: the Entrenched Politics of Staying Put in Dehli and Mumbai." *International Sociology*. Vol 32(4): 512-531.
- ❖ Federico Cugurullo. 2018. "Exposing smart cities and eco-cities: Frankenstein urbanism and the sustainability challenges of the experimental city." *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 50, no. 1: 73-92.
- ❖ Ignacio Farias and Claudia Mendes. 2019. "Acknowledging the Idiot in the Smart City: experimentation and citizenship in the making of a low-carbon district in Santiago de Chile." *Inside Smart Cities: Place, Politics, and Urban Innovation*. pgs 182-196. eds. Andrew Darvonen, Federeico Cugurullo and Federico Caprotti. Routledge: London and New York.

Week 13 (November 28): THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 14 (December 5): Existing Global Urbanisms

- ❖ Ben Rawlence. 2016. *City of Thorns*. (Prologue, chapters 1-7, 9-10, 13, 15-17, 21, 25, 27-29, 33, 37, 40, Epilogue)

Final Papers Due Monday, December 16th, 8pm