COURSE SYLLABUS
URPN 361-500: URBAN ISSUES
Class time: TBD
Room: TBD

INSTRUCTOR
Name: June Martin
Phone: 979-862-4620; 509-879-3831
Email: jmartin@arch.tamu.edu
All communication with me should be via e-learning. E-mail will be checked daily
Office: Langford A 340
Office Hours: TBD

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION
The world is becoming increasingly urban. In the United States 3 out of 4 people live in urban areas, and in the rest of the world numbers are increasing. How did cities emerge? What makes cities grow? How cities work? Are they sustainable? These are introductory themes that we expect to answer in this class: the evolution and development of cities; the socio-economic, cultural and physical development of urban areas; and their contemporary problems such as, unemployment and poverty, crime, public health, racial tension, and other quality of life issues.

2. COURSE PREREQUISITES:
None

3. COURSE OBJECTIVES
When you finish this course, my hope is that you will:

1. Describe the historical development of urban communities
2. Explain the different theories and perspectives pertaining to urban development and urban life
3. Explain the factors and processes by which individuals interact with and impact their communities
4. Describe the problems associated with urban communities
5. Further develop your writing skills and your capacity for critical thinking, research and analysis.

4. TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS
In addition to class meetings, this course utilizes the e-learning system. Please check eLearning (http://elearning.tamu.edu) regularly for the syllabus, additional readings, lecture power points, assignments, announcements, quizzes, tests, and grades. Also, E MAIL COMMUNICATION WITH ME SHOULD BE VIA eCAMPUS (to ensure that I receive it). Use your NetID and password for your eLearning login. The following technology is recommended: Internet connection — high speed recommended (not dial-up) and word processor. Additionally, our campus is optimize to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (7.0, 8.0 or 9.0). Your courses will also work with Macintosh OS X along with a recent version of Safari 3.2 or better. Along with Internet Explorer and Safari, e-learning also supports the Firefox browser (3.6 or newer) on both Windows and Mac operating systems.
5. MATERIALS


Additional readings will be handed out in class or made available on eCampus

The textbook is available at area bookstores as well as from on-line book vendors.

Students are responsible to have read the assigned readings for the topics prior to attending class. The required readings for that topic are noted on the course schedule on this syllabus.

6. FORMAT AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There are four parts to the course: (1) Reading and documentary assignments; (2) lectures and discussions; (3) writing assignments; (4) Quizzes and Tests.

1) Reading and Documentary Assignments

Readings: Students are responsible to have read the assigned readings for the topics prior to attending class. The required readings for that topic are noted on the course schedule on this syllabus.

Short Documentaries: In addition to the readings, several short documentaries (approximately one-hour in length) have been assigned that highlight various topics covered in the readings such as: the development of cities; problems of urban growth; how cities are responding to improve urban life; social structure in American communities.

2) Lectures/Discussions

The lectures are intended to complement the required readings and to help synthesize the many topics covered in class. Students will be responsible for having read the assigned readings, attending class regularly and participating in class discussions.

Class attendance: In addition to participating in class discussion, attendance is very important for coursework information, references, and keeping up with adjustments to assignments. Therefore attendance will account for 5% of your grade. See attendance and absence policy for more details on what this entails.

3) Assignments

1. Reflective Journals

Each student will keep a journal where they will make a minimum of seven entries (one for each topic) over the semester. These entries provide an opportunity for you to express your observations and reflections on your thoughts and feelings about issues raised in the assigned readings, lectures, films, class discussions, and research papers. The purpose of this journal to develop your writing skill as well as to analyze and reflect on what you are learning in this course. More details will provided on how to keep this journal. This assignment is worth 10% of grade.

2. Research Report & Presentation

Students in groups of 3-4 will be responsible for an in depth study of a specific urban problem from a list to be provided by the instructor. This research will entail the collection and analysis of data as well a review of the relevant literature and research as pertaining to that issue. While this is a group project, each student will be required to show evidence of their contribution towards this research effort and their participation and contribution will be evaluated by both group members and the instructor. The resulting report will be a 2,000 -2,500 word (8-10 pages) paper (double-spaced). This report will be worth 30% of your grade.
The second part of this assignment will require you to prepare a power point presentation (8-10 minutes) for the rest of the class. This presentation will be worth 5% of your grade.

The specific requirements for this project will be explained in detail during the semester. The power point presentations will held during the last week of classes.

4) Quizzes and Tests (48%)
Syllabus Quiz: A Syllabus Quiz worth 2% of your grade is due at the end of the first week of classes.

Tests: There will be four tests given during the semester each worth 12% of your grade. These tests will be based on lectures, readings, class presentations, class discussions and other forms of learning used in class. The dates and times for these examinations are listed on the course schedule.

7. GRADING PROCEDURE
The following procedure will be used to assign grades for this course:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>5%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus Quiz</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Journals</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Report</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests - 4 @ 12% each</td>
<td>48%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
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Extra Credit points for a maximum of 5% can be earned through volunteer work and/or attending course relevant lectures outside of class.

A = 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79; D = 60-69; F = below 60

8. CLASS POLICIES

Late or Missing Assignments and Exams
All assignments must be turned in on the scheduled date. Late work, where accepted, will result in a penalty of half a letter grade per day.

Make-ups for missed tests will only be given for university-excused absences. Please refer to Student Rules for university-excused absences (http://student-rules.tamu.edu/). When feasible, please let me know at least two days in advance of your absence.

Attendance and Absence Policy
In addition to the fact that the general academic policies of the University require your regular attendance and active participation in class, your attendance and participation is very important to your learning and that of other students in this class. As noted earlier class attendance accounts for 5% of your grade, and attendance will be taken each class period. To be considered present for the class period, you should be in your seat at the beginning of class (with a grace period of 5 minutes) and remain until the class ends. Perfect attendance will earn you the full 5% of your grade. A 4-day absence allowance however is given to be used in the event that illness or other dire circumstances keep you from class. Use the absence at your discretion, but DO NOT VIEW THIS ALLOTTED ABSENCE AS SKIP DAYS!!! For each subsequent
class a student misses, a full percentage point (1%) will be lost. If you have MAJOR extenuating circumstances requiring an extended absence from campus (e.g. an accident or illness that requires extensive hospitalization, major family issues, etc.), please see/contact me, or your student advisor, as soon as possible to explore the options the University provides for dropping, withdrawing, switching to audit, and so on.

**Classroom Conduct**

It is expected that students will maintain a professional demeanor in this class. Lateness, sleeping in class, and disruptive behaviors that interfere with my ability to teach or other students to learn such as offensive language, talking about none-class related matters, passing notes, and use of cell phones while in class will not be tolerated. Personal computers may be used to take notes during class, but computers and other devices may not be used for non-class related purposes, such as checking e-mail or Facebook pages. If I catch you using a computer or other electronic devices for non-class related purposes, I will ask you to leave class for the remainder of the class session and you will be marked as absent. Similarly, if you sleep during class, you will be marked as absent.

**Academic Integrity - The Aggie Honor Code:**

*An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal or tolerate those who do.*

All students enrolled at Texas A&M University are expected to uphold the Aggie Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor System. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the TAMU community from the requirements or the process of the Honor System. The Code forbids: Cheating, Fabrication, Falsification, Multiple Submission, Plagiarism, and Complicity. The Texas A&M University Student Rules provides the official definition of scholastic dishonesty and acts that are characterized as scholastically dishonest (please see [http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule20.htm](http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule20.htm))

As part of meeting this standard in this course, all ideas (as well as data or other information) that are not your own must be cited, otherwise your work will be construed to be plagiarism. It is also not acceptable to submit as your own work a paper (or part of a paper) that was completed for another course since would in effect be "double counting" (receiving credit twice for the same piece of work). Doing so will result in a zero grade for that assignment. If you wish to incorporate research you completed for another course into a paper for this course, the paper must be fully cited and the instructor's permission requested in advance.

If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please see the "Student Resources on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism" section on the TAMU Library website. I will also cover it when I hand out the assignments. Violations of university policies on academic integrity will be handled according to university guidelines (see rules and procedures at [http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor](http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor)).

**Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal antidiscrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Department of Student Life, Services for Students with Disabilities in Room B-118 in the Cain building, or call 845-1637. For additional information visit [http://disability.tamu.edu](http://disability.tamu.edu)

9. **IMPORTANT DATES**

Last day to add/drop with no record: ***
Last day to drop with no penalty (Q-drop): ***
University Holiday: ***
Last day of class: ***
### TEVTATIVE SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READING &amp; ASSIGNMENTS</th>
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|      | 1. Introduction / Historical Perspectives on the Creation and Evolution of Cities | 1. Macionis & Parrillo: Ch 1  
                                         |                                                                                       | 2. Review Course Introduction & Lecture                                                  |
| Class 1 | • Course Introduction  
               |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
|      | • Exploring the City                                                |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
| Class 2 | • Brief history of cities – Ancient cities to modern cities       | 1. Macionis & Parrillo: Ch 2  
                                         |                                                                                       | 2. Review Lecture 2  
                                         |                                                                                       | 3. View: Understanding Cities (53 mins)                                                  |
|      | 2: Urban Development and Trends of North American Cities           |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
| Class 3 | • Development of North American cities                             | 1. Macionis & Parrillo: Ch 3  
                                         |                                                                                       | 2. Review Lecture 3                                                                   |
| Class 4 & 5 | • Cities and Suburbs of the 21st Century                              | 1. Macionis & Parrillo: Ch 4  
                                         |                                                                                       | 2. Review Lecture 4  
                                         |                                                                                       | 3. View: Phoenix—the Urban Desert (60 min)                                               | 4. City profile sign-up                                                                |
| Class 6 | Test 1                                                               |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
|      | 3: What is a City: Disciplinary Perspectives                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
| Class 7 | 1. Urban Sociology                                                 | 1. Macionis & Parrillo: Ch 5  
                                         |                                                                                       | 2. Review Lecture 5                                                                  |
| Class 8 | 2. Geography and Spatial Perspectives                              | 1. Macionis & Parrillo: Ch 6  
                                         |                                                                                       | 2. Review Lecture 6                                                                 |
                                         |                                                                                       | 2. Review Lecture 7                                                                 |
| Class 10 | 4. Social Psychology                                               |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
| Class 11 | 5. Comparative Urbanism                                            |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
| Class 12 | Test 2                                                              |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
4: Structure of the City

Class 13-14  Social Stratification – Social Class & Poverty
1. Macionis & Parrillo: Ch 10
2. Review Lecture 10
3. View: "People like Us"

Class 14-15  Race, Ethnicity & Gender
1. Macionis & Parrillo: Ch. 11
2. Review Lecture 11

5: Urban Problems

Class 16-18  1. Housing
2. Education
3. Crime
1. Macionis & Parrillo: Ch. 12
2. Review Lectures 12, 13 & 14
3. View: “Housing America”
3. Research Paper draft due

Class 19  TEST 3

6: Urban Areas in the Developing World

Class 20-21  1. Historical legacy
2. Modern cities
1. Macionis and Parrillo; Ch. 13
2. Review Lecture 15

Topic 7: Planning for Sustainable Cities

Class 22-23  1. Urban Planning
2. Sustainability
1. Macionis and Parrillo, Ch. 14
2. Review Lecture 16
3. View: A Convenient Truth: Urban Solutions from Curitiba Brazil" (52 min)

Class 24  TEST 4

Class 25-27  RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

PPT PRESENTATIONS & PAPERS due
URSC 361
STUDENT AGREEMENT

By answering the last question on the Syllabus Quiz, you confirm that you have read and understand this syllabus. Violations of these policies are not fair to students who work hard to meet deadlines and come to class. Specifically, you acknowledge that you have read and understand the following policies and expectations:

POLICIES:

**Late work:** All assignments must be turned in on the scheduled date and time. Work that is turned in late with no prior notification will not be accepted. Late or missing assignments/exams can only be made up by documented university-approved excused absence (e.g. doctor’s note) within one week of the deadline date.

**Plagiarism and academic honesty:** All ideas (as well as data or other information) that is not your own must be cited. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please see the “Student Resources on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism” section on the TAMU Library website. Violations of university policies on academic integrity will be handled according to university guidelines. Depending on the severity of the infraction, sanctions for academic dishonesty may include:
- A failing grade for the assignment
- A failing grade for the course
- Student dismissal from the program
- Student dismissal from the university

**Exams:** Examinations will be given only on the date indicated in the syllabus. If a student misses an exam, he or she must provide a university-approved excuse in writing before a make-up exam will be given.

**Grade of Incomplete:** Incompletes will only be granted in extreme cases and only if 80% of the course-work has been completed. A documented reason why the student was unable to complete course requirements will also be required.