FOCUS

This course explores the context in which city government operates, the politics and policy-making processes of urban metropolitan areas, and delivery of city service issues that confront urban areas. The first section of the class will focus on the specifics of urban governments in terms of their history and their operations. In the second section, we will turn our focus to a comparison of what is known as the “Rustbelt”, with the “Sunbelt”. Why did one area develop so radically different from the other, etc? We will conclude the semester with a discussion regarding the future of urban American and, we will also spend time discussing local politics and implications for the future of the city of Houston.

TEXTS

Required:


Recommended:


There will be additional readings handed out during the course of the semester.

REQUIREMENTS

Midterm Examination 20%
2015 Houston Politics Project 20%
Research Paper/Service Project 20%
Final Examination 20%
Class Citizenship 20%

CLASS POLICIES

1) Students are responsible for all materials covered in the lectures and assigned readings. You must read the relevant chapters before the lecture pertaining to those readings.

2) Failure to attend class tardiness and failure to participate in class discussion will cause those who are on the borderline between two grades to receive the lower of the two. (class citizenship portion of the course grade).

3) Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and will be punished to the fullest extent allowable by the Academic Committee at the University of St. Thomas. (See Below)

4) Other than in exceptional cases of personal or family emergencies, no make-up exams will be given for students missing any of the regularly scheduled assignments during the semester. Every calendar late that an assignment is will result in a reduction of a full letter grade.

5) A grade of “I” (Incomplete) will not be given in this course except in the most extraordinary of circumstances.

PLAGIARISM

The following are some dictionary definitions of plagiarism:

- “The action of copying someone else’s idea or work or pretending that you thought of it or created it” (Collins).

- “To take words, ideas, etc., from someone else’s work and use them in one’s own work without admitting one has done so” (Longman).

- “To steal or pass off as one’s own the ideas or words of another” (Webster).

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Plagiarism also includes:\(^2\):

- “**Double-dipping** - This is submitting a paper or other assignment which had previously earned credit from another course.”

- “**Text recycling** - Reusing in a new assignment large portions of a previously submitted paper(s) or other written assignment (computer code, speech, etc.) without acknowledging their former use.”

Common student misconceptions on plagiarism:\(^3\):

- “Many students believe that as long as a citation is included, they can simply appropriate portions of text from another source and use that text as their own writing.”

- “Many are also confused as to what constitutes common knowledge believing that anything on the internet is common knowledge.”

Some General Tips to Students:\(^4\):

- **Citation Guidelines**

  - Common Knowledge: Did you look up the information? If so, then a citation is needed

  - An emphasis should be placed on proper paraphrasing

- **Student assignments should always be crafted and turned in with the understanding that the professor will be operating under the assumption that:**

  - unless otherwise properly noted in the assignment, the assignment submitted is the student’s own.

  - the representation of their own or others’ work is accurate (e.g., data fabrication).

  - that the assignment turned in/presented is exclusive to that course.

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\(^2\) Dr. Miguel Roig (University of St. Thomas Spring 2004 Faculty Study Day Speaker, January 12, 2004.

\(^3\) Dr. Miguel Roig (University of St. Thomas Spring 2004 Faculty Study Day Speaker, January 12, 2004.

\(^4\) Dr. Miguel Roig (University of St. Thomas Spring 2004 Faculty Study Day Speaker, January 12, 2004.)
SCHEDULE OF READINGS, LECTURES, AND EXAMS

August 24 - Introduction to the course.

**Topic One:** The Urban Situation (Ross & Levine, Chp. 1)

**Topic Two:** The Evolution of Cities and Suburbs (Ross and Levine, Chp. 2)

**Topic Three:** Recent Trends: Gentrification and Globalization (Ross & Levine Chp. 3)

**Topic Four:** Who Has the Power? Decision Making, Economic Development, and Urban Regimes (Ross & Levine, Chp. 4)

**Topic Five:** Formal Structure and Leadership Style (Ross & Levine, Chp. 5)

**Topic Six:** The Machine, Reform, and Postreform City (Ross & Levine, Chp. 6)

**Topic Seven:** Citizen Participation (Ross & Levine, Chp. 7)

**Topic Eight:** Improving Urban Services (Ross & Levine, Chp. 8)

**Topic Nine:** The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Rust Belt vs. Sunbelt (Sugrue)

**Topic Ten:** Suburban Politics and Metropolitan America (Ross & Levine, Chp. 9)

**Topic Eleven:** Regional Governance in a Global Age (Ross & Levine, Chp. 10)

**Topic Twelve:** The Intergovernmental City: State and National Policy (Ross & Levine, Chp. 11)

**Topic Thirteen:** The Future of Urban America (Ross & Levine, Chp. 12)

**Important Dates:**

No Class, Monday, September 7, Labor Day

No Class, Monday, October 12, Fall Break

Midterm Examination, Monday, October 19

No Class, 2015 CSOTTE Annual Conference, October 26

No Class, Wednesday, November 25, Thanksgiving Break

Last Day of Class, Monday, December 7
2015 Houston Politics Project is due on Monday, December 7

Research papers/Service projects are due on Monday, December 7

Wednesday, December 16, Final Examination, 11:00AM-1:30PM

**PAPER REQUIREMENTS**

The paper must be 8 to 10 pages in length (graduate students, 15 to 20 pages in length). It must be typed, double-spaced, paginated, and must use an academically accepted format for footnotes, citations and reference pages. A list of possible paper topics will be handed out next week. The topic, once chosen, will have to be turned in to the instructor on **October 19**. This will have to be accompanied by a brief bibliography. Since this is a research project, 6 to 8 sources must be cited, with at least four being from recent scholarly publications. In addition, periodicals, magazines and newspapers may be used. The major scholarly journals in political science are:

*American Political Science Review*  
*American Journal of Political Science*  
*Journal of Politics*  
*Political Behavior*  
*Public Opinion Quarterly*  
*American Politics Quarterly*  
*American Politics Research*  
*Legislative Studies Quarterly*  
*Presidential Studies Quarterly*  
*American Review of Politics*  
*Political Research Quarterly*  
*Policy Studies Review*  
*Journal of Public Policy*  
*Policy Studies*  
*Southeastern Political Review*  
*Polity*  
*Social Science Quarterly*  
*State Politics and Policy Quarterly*  
*Urban Affairs Review*  
*Urban Affairs Quarterly*

Examples of other sources are periodicals such as *The Brookings Review*, and *Cato*; magazines such as *The New Republic, The Progressive*, and *The National Review*; and newspapers such as *the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Washington Times*, and *the Christian Science Monitor*. 
2015 HOUSTON POLITICS PROJECTS

Students are required to follow Houston politics over the course of the semester. Two to three journal entries a week should be made, and are to be from the Houston Chronicle or other news source. The focus of your entries can cover anything dealing with Houston politics such as local issues, public policy and this fall’s elections. However, it often helps if one has a theme such as mayoral/council relations or a focus on a particular political campaign. The journal entries must include the date and title of the article and must be typed as well. These entries should be reflective pieces as the semester unfolds and you will need a two page summation of your assessment of Houston politics over the course of this semester. I will also schedule one or two class sessions to discuss your journals.

SERVICE PROJECT GUIDELINES

If you chose this option in place of the research paper, you will be expected to spend at least 15 hours volunteering for an organization. Requirements for the Service-Learning Project include the following:

1. Choose a site of interest to you.

2. Contact the site you have chosen. Arrange a visit with the person who will be coordinating volunteer activity for this project.

3. Take the contract to the coordinator. Have him/her complete his/her portion. You, the volunteer coordinator, and I will need to sign the contract before you begin your volunteer activity.

4. You will need to be prompt and reliable once your service has begun. You will also need to be prepared to perform the duties listed on the contract. See me if you have any difficulties.

5. You should keep a log of the times and days you are volunteering and your volunteer activities.

6. After you have completed your volunteer activities, you will need to write an 8 to 10 page (approximately) reflective paper (graduate students, 15 to 20 pages). In this paper, discuss the organization, your experiences there, what you have learned about the organization/campaign while you were volunteering, what you learned about yourself, how it pertains to the course material, and what you liked most and least about the experience.

7. Turn in your log and reflective paper on December 7.

8. A total of 100 points are possible for the combined paper and log