CRP 1109: Cities and Regions: Housing and the American City

Semester: Spring 2017
Location: TBA
Time: Tuesday & Thursday—10:10-11:25AM

Instructor: Daniel Kuhmann, PhD Candidate, Department of City and Regional Planning
Email: dok23@cornell.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:30PM-3:30PM (or by appointment)

“And think ye that building shall endure, Which shelters the noble and crushes the poor?” –James Russel Lowell

Course Description:

Housing affordability, quality, and access are some of the most pressing issues facing urban policymakers. In some areas, costs have risen rapidly, while in others an excess of housing has led to widespread blight and abandonment. On top of this, the recent housing crisis shows quite starkly the important role housing plays in the US economy. This course examines the functioning of housing markets, the public policies that regulate them, and the impact of this system on neighborhoods and their residents. Students will read widely on housing topics from academic journals to historical accounts to newspaper articles. In addition to readings and in-class discussions, students will practice a range of writing styles through the completion of reading responses, essays, and policy briefs.

Course Overview:

Assignments and Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Attendance, in-class writing exercises, and participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Response (1)</td>
<td>Summary and response to readings and leading a class discussion</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing Assignments (4)</td>
<td>Four short essays on topics including: poverty; comparing arguments, Op-Ed, policy brief</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>Proposal, introduction, outline, final draft, and final presentation</td>
<td>30%</td>
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Required Text:


All other readings are available either through the hyperlinks provided below or posted on the course Blackboard site (blackboard.cornell.edu).

Academic Integrity:
All participants in this course are expected to understand and abide the Cornell’s Code of Academic Integrity (http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/aic.cfm). All writing submitted for this course will be of the student’s own production and will cite source materials when used. It is always wise to err on the side of over-citing when producing academic material. Any student caught plagiarizing or otherwise violating the Code of Academic Integrity will receive an F in the course and will be reported to the disciplinary Hearing Board. In short, don’t cheat.

Class Rules and Other Miscellany:

This is a discussion-based class. It only works when students participate. I expect all students to come to class having read and digested the assigned materials. Some of the topics we cover in this class can be challenging. Because of this, it is one my primary goals as the instructor to ensure that everyone feels comfortable sharing their opinions and grappling with difficult issues. I expect that participants in this class will be respectful of one another’s ideas and opinions and handle disagreements—philosophical, political, or otherwise—in a respectful and adult manner. In this class, as in life—be opinionated, but don’t be a jerk.

Writing is hard. Improvement is incremental, frustrating, and only achieved with diligent practice. Because of this sad fact, I expect students to put aside ample time to work on their essays and assignments for this course. An essay, or any piece of writing, should never be completed in one shot. My expectations of your writing for this course is no different. All work submitted to me should be outline, drafted, read aloud, re-written, and diligently edited. Trust me, I can tell if you quickly wrote your essay the night before it is due and will mark it accordingly.

I, like all of you, spend way too much time checking Instagram, Snapchat, etc. During class meetings, I will delay commenting on my friend’s Instagram picture of their really good sandwich and expect that you will do the same. Computer use in this course is fine, as long you are only using it for class (notes, readings, etc.). If I notice you using an electronic device for a non-class purpose, I will note it and dock you 1 point (out of 10 total) on your participation grade.

Syllabus:

**Week 1: Introduction and overview (1.31 & 2.2)**


**Week 2: Housing and the importance of place: (2.7 & 2.9)**


Executive Summary (pgs. 2-4), Introduction (pgs. 4-8), and Conclusions and Recommendations (pgs. 29-31) in Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. (July 2012) “Place Matters for Health in Cook County”


Week 3: Poverty and Housing in America: (2.14 & 2.16)


Week 4: The State of American Housing: (2.21 [no class] & 2.23)

Chapter 1, Executive Summary (pgs. 1-6); Chapter 6, Housing Challenges (pgs. 31-36) The State of the Nation’s Housing | Joint Center for Housing Studies, Harvard University. (2016.). Accessed from http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/research/state_nations_housing.


Week 5: Slums and Tenements: (2.28 & 3.2)


Watch the short video, “How the Other Half Lives” at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=87SCTEsIuFY

Week 6: The era of public housing: (3.7-3.9)


**Week 7: Suburbanization: (3.14-3.16)**


**“Does Sprawl Matter for Social Mobility” The Washington Post accessed from:**

**Week 8: The foreclosure crisis: (3.21-3.23)**


Listen to the This American Life episode: *The Giant Pool of Money*:

**Week 9: The question of place: (3.28-3.30)**

Briggs, Xavier de Souza, Kadija S. Ferryman, Susan J. Popkin, and Maria Rendon (2008) *Why Did the Moving to Opportunities Experiment Not Get Young People into Better Schools?* *Housing Policy Debate* 19(1)


Spring Break, No Class: (4.4-4.6)

Week 10: Other public interventions: (4.11-4.13)


Week 11: Gentrification: (4.18-4.21)


Movie Screening: Flag Wars

Week 12: Housing affordability: (4.25-4.27)

Introduction (you can skip the “Plan for This Book” Section) and Chapter 3, from Glaeser, E. L., & Gyourko, J. E. (2008). Rethinking Federal Housing Policy: How to Make Housing Plentiful and Affordable. AEI Press.

“Why We Must Build” Shelterforce, accessed from:
http://www.shelterforce.org/article/4408/why_we_must_build/

Week 13: Looking forward: (5.2-5.4)


Week 14: Final wrap-up and presentations: (5.9)