CRP 3850/5850  Living in the Slum
SPRING 2017 Monday and Wednesday; 08:40 am - 09:55pm; 211 Sibley Hall

Instructor
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Course description
The course, Living in the Slum\(^1\), gives an alternative reading of slum life. Rather than portraying 'slum' as place for criminals and people of poisons or problem waiting to be solved, this class tries to define slum as a place for opportunity, creativity, a way of living and, importantly, a place of contestation. This definition requires us to understand slum in relation to the many external interests that are very much a part of the creation of slum life and its maintenance. We will try to understand these 'slum politics' approaching this issue from a number of critical vantage points including: new urbanism, flexible accumulation, post-Fordist modes of production, the new urban geography, the theories of globalization, city competitiveness and the right to the city initiatives. We will also try to frame slum life and its contestation with other interests considering issues like 'talk about crimes', 'politics of recognition', 'legal discourse' and 'language application'. This course is not about the physical designing of informal settlements as a solution, rather we are interested to understand the social, political and identity politics that condition slum life (and its relations with non-slum life) in place and time.

A major part of the course will deal with the institutions and practices that guide negotiations and organization within informal settlements and their relations with outside worlds. Understanding these negotiations, institutions and practices that constantly (re)define slum life in specific and urban life in general will be useful to make urban planning more grounded in the contextual realities and complexities. Acknowledging the fact that professional practices tend to rely on a simplified version of the reality, one of the main objectives of the course is to appraise the complexities and diversity of slum life that need to be understood properly and become part of professional intervention for a world livable for all.

Guiding Questions
1. How are slum lives organized, negotiated and participated in different geography and time? What are their specificities and commonalities?
2. How are slum lives conditioned by the contestation of various interests? What are these interests and how do these affect slum life?
3. How can we explain the relationship of slum life with state institutions and administration and how have these relations changed over time?
4. How have the forces of globalization transformed the systems of organization, negotiation, and relationship in urban environment and what are the implications of these transformations for slum life?

Learning objectives
At the end of this course, participants will have:
1. a broad understanding of slum life in place and time, especially in terms of its (changing) relations with various interests including the state
2. an ability to analyze, synthesis and interpret academic texts, develop own arguments and present to public
3. the capacity to explain the international development planning challenges related to poverty, deprivation, and social injustice

\(^1\) We are aware of the danger associated with the using of words like 'slum' and do acknowledge that words need to be employed carefully.
Course format
This course is designed for both undergraduate and graduate students. It uses a seminar format where each session will start with a short input/introduction by the lecturer followed by students’ presentations and intensive discussion. It is necessary to read assigned literature before the class and be informed about current discussions on the topic, for example, reading relevant newspaper articles. This preparation will help students to participate in the discussion actively. Some of the classes will include video clips and guest lectures.

The course consists of four broad topics (see the course content). At the beginning of each part, a set of guiding questions will be presented which will give a framework for the later classes and also help students prepare their take-home reports. Further details of the take-home reports will be delivered in the class.

The course includes mini-conference. In the mini conference, each students will be assigned to present a colleague’s paper during the class. The presentation will give a concise summary and an appraisal of the paper. Further details about the conference will be given in the “Assignment, evaluation, and grade’ section.

Conduct
Attend class regularly, engage materials, share ideas and experiences, and ask questions. Show respect to classmates and the instructor, and expect the same in return. Do NOT use mobile telephone and internet in the class time, unless it is asked to do so.

Note To Students With Disabilities
If you have a disability-related need for reasonable academic adjustments in this course, please provide the instructor with an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Students are expected to give two weeks notice of the need for accommodations. If you need immediate accommodations, please arrange to meet with your instructor within the first two class meetings.

Plagiarism and Turnitin Notice
Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site. Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity (See http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html). Course materials developed in this class or posted on Blackboard are intellectual property belonging to the author. Students are not permitted to buy or sell any course materials without the express permission of the instructor. Such unauthorized behavior constitutes academic misconduct.

Course Contents and Readings (subjective to regular adjustment)

I. UNDERSTANDING SLUM

Week 1
25 January - Introduction to the Course
No reading

Week 2
30 January - A overview

01 February - Learning from what we know
- Students’ presentations

Instruction: The purpose of this presentation is to map students’ understanding about social, physical, cultural and political aspects of slum life in their respective countries or in a context each knows better. You are asked to describe your existing knowledge and experience about slum life portraying aspects with photos, videos (small clips), diagrams, maps, and only few text. What important in this presentation is to visualize the livelihoods, organizations, participation and community development in informal settlements and explain them in relation to the contextual social, cultural, political and institutional environment.


*** Sign up for Critical Thinking Memo ***

Week 3
06 February - Learning from what we know
Students’ presentations (continued)


08 February
Defining terms: slum, informal settlements, informal sector, informality


*** detailed guideline for research paper by the instructor ***

II. MUNICIPAL SERVICES
Week 4
13 February
Land, housing and slum life

Potts, Deborah (2011). Shanties, Slums, breeze blocks and bricks. (Mis)understandings about informal housing demolitions in Zimbabwe. City, 15.6, 709-721.


15 February
Guest speaker 1 (13 Feb/15 Feb/22 Feb), TBA

Week 5
20 February NO CLASS
*** Submission of research proposal by 21 February, 11:59 pm ***

22 February
Land, housing and slum life (continued)

Week 6
27 February
- Discussion on research proposal -

01 March
Guest speaker 2 (Mar 1/ Mar 6/Mar 8), TBA

Week 7
06 March
Urban infrastructures and slum life

08 March
Urban infrastructure and slum life

III. RELATIONSHIPS
Week 8
13 March
'Slum' and the state
CRP 3850/5850: Living in the Slum


*** submission of research proposal outline by 13 March ***

15 March

Slum and the state


Week 9

20 March

‘Slum’, international organizations and poverty


Guest speaker 3 (Mar 22/Mar 27/Mar 29), TBA

22 March

‘Slum’ and civil society (including NGO)


*** take home exam distribution ***

Week 10

27 March

‘Slum’ and non-slum inhabitant


**29 March**

*Mapping of power: State, NGOs, International Organizations, Middle Class*


**IV. (MIS)REPRESENTATION**

**Week 11**

**03 April**


**05 April**


***Instruction to video analysis/homework by instructor***

***Submission of draft research paper by 03 April***

**Week 12**

**10 April**

*Exercise: visual interpretation (video analysis)*

**12 April: Crime and Criminalization**


Udvarhelyi, Eva T. (2014). “If we don’t push homeless people out, we will end up being pushed out by them”: The Criminalization of Homelessness as State Strategy in Hungary. *Antipode*, 46.3, 816-834.


**Guest speaker 4 (Apr 10/Apr 12/Apr 17), TBA**
Week 13
17 April
***presentation of draft research paper***

19 April
Globalization, slum and poverty

Week 14
24 April
Globalization, slum and poverty

26 April
Right to the city

*** submission of the final research paper by 26 April***

Week 15
01 May
Right to the city
(reserved for adjustment and unforeseen)
Need to identify the chapters from the following books

Guest speaker: Kristine M Stiphany, University of Texas at Austin
03 May
- Mini Conference -

Week 16
08 May
- Mini conference -
10 May
- Mini conference and unofficial feedback -
Assignments, Expectations², and Guide

There are five components of course assignments that will be used to evaluate your performance in this course. The details of assignments are as follow:

I. Participation (15%)  
Your participation in this class begins with reading the assigned materials before the class for which readings are assigned. Raising questions, reflecting on lectures and your colleagues’ discussion in class are all counted as participation. This course will be conducted mostly in interactive lecture/seminar style. There will also be group-led and group-based discussion sessions. These activities will give you many opportunities to participate during the lecture. For group-led discussion sessions, I will assign a group of students to prepare a list of questions and ideas that are related to the readings and case study prior to the class discussion session. This assigned group is responsible for leading discussion with puzzles and questions. For group-based discussion sessions, I will assign problems related to the readings to each group during the class. After discussion within each group in class, groups will be responsible for reporting to the entire class and generating discussion. To be an effective participant, you should pay attention to current day world affairs on the subject matter of this class. This requires you to read news in hard and soft media. The New York Times, the Financial Times, BBC World Services, and the Wall Street Journals are a few good sources for the world news.

II. One critical thinking memo (15%)  
Each student is required to complete one critical thinking and analytical memo during the term. The due dates for these memos are to be self-selected on 01 February when I will have a sign-up sheet for you. The aim of these memos is to give you the opportunity to scrutinize readings and to connect theories and concepts from readings, lectures, and discussion of current world politics and its response to social inequality, exclusion, and injustice. First, it can be a thoughtful piece articulating on one idea you gained from the assigned readings. This one idea can be the one you raised in class as a part of the above “participation” component or another one you consider important. You desire to develop this idea further in written and organized format. The main goal of this format is to give you opportunity to reflect on the past readings preceding your memo for this class. Second, this memo can also be a critical review of readings that are assigned before the memo is due. For instance, if you select Sunday, 12 March as your due date for the memo, you may write a critical review of the readings assigned for 13 March. These memos should be the size of 1000 to 1200 words. It is the quality rather than quantity of words that will be counted toward your grade. The memo should be sent to the blackboard platform of the class by 6:00 pm on your selected due date. The entire class is entitled to analyze, comment, and respond to your memos in a respectful manner. I may also use your memos for illustrations and discussions in class.

III. One take-home exam (20%)  
There will be one take-home assignment. You will be given two questions. You will choose one question out of the two. Your assignment is to respond to the selected question directly and answer the question. These questions are related to the course readings, lectures, and class discussion preceding this assignment. This exam tests your understanding of readings and your ability to apply readings to real world cases of international institutions. You may write your answers in between 1500 to 2000 words (here again quality matters!). You are NOT allowed to discuss your selected question or answer with your classmates. You may consult reading materials and your class notes. While you consider readings, lectures, class discussion, and your notes as appropriate bases for your answer, what I am looking for is your own ingenuity in answering the question. This is an honor system. I expect you to be a conscientious citizen and honor this rule. You will have five days in total to answer the selected question beginning from the end of class in which the questions are distributed. If you desire, you may turn in your answer anytime within five days from the time you receive the question. The assignment will be distributed on 22 March and the answer is due on 27 March by 11:59 pm.

² formation of the expectations owes much to Prof. Tun Myint’s course syllabus on international institutions
IV. One Research Paper (35%)
Each student is required to write a research paper on a self-selected topic. This research paper should be a case study research paper applying theories and concepts we learned from the readings and discussion in class. There are four graded processes in writing this research paper. Students will write (1) a statement of topic proposal; (2) the outline of the paper; (3) the draft of paper; and (4) final paper. The statement of topic proposal is due on 21 February (5% of final class grade). The outline of paper is due on 13 March (5%). The first draft of paper is due on 03 April (10%). The final paper is due on 26 April (15%). I will provide further details about each process and expectation for each process on 8 February.

V. A Mini-Conference Presentation (15%)
At the end of the term, beginning on 03 May, we will hold Mini-Conferences where each student will be assigned to present a colleague’s paper during the class time. The presentation should include both concise summary, the appraisal of the paper and how you see this paper contributing to understand and explain the present slum life. Attendance during the Mini-Conference is mandatory. If you need to be absent, make sure you request at least two days in advance. Each student will have 15 minutes to present the entire research paper of a colleague and thus this requires your skill to present in the most succinct and effective way. You may use powerpoint slides and other visual aids. All presenters must submit their presentation notes/slides to the Course Folder in the Blackboard.

NOTE: All written assignments should be double-spaced pages with 12 point Times New Roman font and with page numbers. With the exception of critical thinking memos, your take home assignments and final group papers have to be submitted to me in hard copy in addition to pdf files. Send them to sh2339@cornell.edu.