

## **Seminar: Devolution, Privatization, and the New Urban Public Management**

CRP 4120/6120, AEM 4330/6330

Fall 2017, 4 credit hours

For Fall 2017 this course will co-meet with **CRP 5074 Economic Development Workshop**

As part of Cornell's new **Foreign Language Across the Curriculum Initiative**, there will be a special 1 credit discussion group, in Spanish, associated with this class. Pilar Delpino Marimon will be the discussion leader. Sign up for **SPAN 3020**. We will select a one hour meeting time at the convenience of interested students.

Class meeting location: 208 W. Sibley Hall, Wednesday/Friday 10:10 am – 11:50 am

Professor: Mildred Warner, 215 W. Sibley Hall, 5-6816, mew15@cornell.edu

Office hours: Wednesday 2:30 – 4:30 and Friday 2:00 – 4:00 or by appointment

Class Website: <http://blackboard.cornell.edu>

Restructuring Local Government Website: <http://www.mildredwarner.org/gov-restructuring>

Upstate New York Fiscal Stress website <http://www.mildredwarner.org/restructuring/fiscal-stress>

### **Course Description**

Devolution, decentralization and privatization of government services are international trends. This seminar will review these trends in a national and international context and focus on the local public sector response. Concerns for efficiency as well as changing notions of the appropriate role for the public sector drive these shifts. Privatization and public private partnerships are perhaps the most controversial form of restructuring. Special attention will be given to the implications of these shifts for citizenship and urban governance, especially under austerity.

Decentralization and devolution reflect efforts to promote government responsiveness to citizens – by bringing decisions closer to the community, and to promote economic competitiveness by encouraging developmental over redistributive investments. While decentralization of service delivery is presented as a means to enhance citizen access and involvement, it also helps justify the shrinking of the social welfare state, especially in times of fiscal crisis. Current policies promote network governance involving coalitions of government, private and non profit and citizen actors. Planners are often key architects of these initiatives and need to be aware of their potential and their limitations. Many cities face deteriorating infrastructure and fiscal stress, and as commitment to social welfare erodes, cities are left with increasing responsibilities. New solutions will be critical for planners to help cities address the challenge of linking investments in infrastructure, economic and human development with more participatory forms of governance.

## Learning Goals

**1. Students will develop an understanding of urban governance and service delivery in a comparative global context that gives attention to emerging trends in infrastructure finance and provision.** Measure: Students will read, discuss and summarize relevant literature.

URS Goals: Historical and Global Comprehension/World Citizenship

MRP Goals: The Future (Emerging Trends)/ Growth and Development/Global Dimensions of Planning

**2. Students will refine their critical thinking and writing skills to address critical topics in urban governance, service delivery and finance.** Measure: Written Papers and Group Projects.

URS: Writing, Critical Thinking/Complex Problem Solving

MRP: Critical Thinking, Research, Written, Oral and Graphic Communication

## Assignments

As a discussion based seminar, class participation is essential. Students will have read materials prior to class and be prepared to discuss them.

Reading Summaries – Students will be expected to prepare short written summaries (1-2 single spaced pages) of readings several times during the semester. **These must be posted to File Exchange (under Group “Entire Class”) on Blackboard 24 hours before class or students will be docked a letter grade.** Some of these summaries may be selected for editing and posting to the Restructuring Local Government Website. Discussion between classes may occur on the class website discussion board. Students will be evaluated on the basis of their participation (both questions raised and insights offered).

All students will write **four** papers for the course and several shorter article summaries. This gives you a chance to practice various types of writing: summative, synthesis, professional, academic research. Students are welcome to rewrite assignments to improve their writing skills (and raise their grade) if they choose. The goal is to help you become a better writer.

Theory Paper– Select a theoretical issue and discuss its implications based on the theoretical readings in the course. This is essentially an exam where you choose the question that helps you integrate across the readings in the course and shows me your ability to write a critical synthesis demonstrating knowledge of the material. You must use at least 5 sources. (5 double spaced pages – bibliography can be one extra page). Due as hard copy in class on Oct 11.

Second Paper: Group Paper Due November 8 (topic and work plan due Oct 3) – Practical policy analysis. Work in groups (minimum 4 people) and develop a 15-30 double spaced page report suitable for a professional practitioner audience on the web (maximum 8000 words with bibliography, appendices and case studies can be in addition to the word limit). Topics can look at new forms of providing or financing public services, or how cities are responding to fiscal stress. Identify the key issues and discuss them in depth. Bring in practical case material. Conduct original research (secondary and primary sources). Develop a presentation for the class (presentations Nov 1). Revise based on group feedback and turn in full report on Nov 8. As a

web document it can have hotlinks, appendices, etc. Alternative to the Final Paper Some students will opt to edit and improve their group paper in lieu of completing the final paper for the course. This could involve creating a shorter, desktop published issue brief for the web. If you would like to do this, discuss with me, as it depends on the quality of your original group report.

Book Review – Read and summarize a new book. Work in groups. Some groups will split up with 1-2 page summaries of each chapter and then a summary of the entire book. Others will write their summaries in the format of a professional book review (less than 1200 words), suitable for publication in a journal. Select Book and Team Sept 22. Present to class Oct 18-20.

Final Paper (for Undergraduates): Synthesis Paper– Write synthesis paper on austerity drawing from the readings, the workshop papers and the local government conferences on Sept 29 and Dec 1. (5 double spaced pages with 1 page bibliography). Due Dec. 12.

Final Paper (for Graduates): Original Research Paper– Graduate students will write a research paper on a topic of their own choosing. Maximum 15 double spaced pages including bibliography. Concept paper, outline and initial bibliography Due Nov 20. Full paper due Dec 12.

## **Grading**

### All Students

Class Participation 25%

Theory Paper 20% Due Oct 11

Group Paper 25%\* Form Team Sept 22, Plan of work due Oct 3, Presentation Nov 1, Full Report Nov 8

Book Review 10% Form team and select book Sept 22, Present Oct 18-20

Final Paper 20% Due Dec 12

\*For the group project paper, peer grading will form half of the group paper grade. Each member will submit via paper or email a list with each team member's name, what they contributed, and a letter grade.

### Ethics

Collaborative learning is the goal of this class. Group projects and class discussion depend on full participation of all students. Failure to deliver your component of the work on time undermines the learning experience of others and therefore constitutes an ethics violation of the class code (and will result in a grade reduction). *If you find that you cannot complete an assignment for which you volunteered, then post a request to switch with someone to the class list and most likely someone will pick up for you. If not, you are still responsible.* Grades for class participation and peer grading for the group project reflect this collaborative learning framework.

Academic Integrity: Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student's own work. Citation of sources is fundamental to the academy – when in

doubt, cite. Use your own words. If you use a direct quote from an author, cite the author including page number. *Students caught plagiarizing will be given an F.* The professor reserves the right to use Turn It In to check student work for plagiarism. 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>

**Academic Accommodation:** In compliance with the Cornell University policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for students with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first three weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances, so arrangements can be made.

**Ownership and Posting of Course Materials** – Lectures and other 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. *No taping of lectures is allowed unless permission is explicitly granted by the instructor. Such permission is only for the student's own study purposes. No additional posting of course materials is allowed without the express permission of the instructor.* Such unauthorized behavior constitutes academic misconduct. Some materials developed by the class will be published to my website, but only after they have been thoroughly vetted and approved by me.

#### **Computer/Phone /Tablet Use in Class**

Computers, tablets and smart phones can be disruptive to class discussion and cause students to not be fully present. Thus, computers, tablets and smart phones may be used in this class *only* if they are used to take notes (quietly) or to enhance class discussion. Violators will be called out. Students may be asked to submit notes for review to ensure that computer use in class is limited to class related activities.

#### **Readings**

Most of the readings for class are articles available on line through the Cornell Library System – or on reserve in the Fine Arts Library, or linked via Blackboard.

Books listed for the ‘book fest’ part of the course will be read by only a few members of the class. Wait to purchase (or borrow) until the class has divided into groups and the book for each group is selected. All book fest books will be on reserve in the Fine Arts Library.

A full reading list will be distributed in class.