

PS 15, Politics in the City
Professor Berry
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“Politics in the City” is a seminar that offers an overview of contemporary urban society. In a course of just 14 weeks we cannot cover city politics in a comprehensive manner but problems of central importance that we will focus on include race, poverty, demographic trends, economic development, and environmental sustainability. In this context, we’ll discuss such issues as immigration, political leadership, smart growth, business and government, gentrification, and neighborhood revitalization. We’ll also peer ahead and ask what the city of the future will look like in the near and intermediate term.

The following books are required reading for the course:

Thomas O’Connor, *Building a New Boston* (Northeastern University Press, 1993)
Matthew Desmond, *Evicted* (Crown, 2016)
Edward Glaeser, *Triumph of the City*, (Penguin, 2012)
Joan Fitzgerald, *Emerald Cities* (Oxford University Press, 2010)

Although I’ve ordered e-book versions of these titles, please know for this and your other courses, that some publishers limit borrowing of an e-book to one student at a time unless a library has purchased multiple copies. This is not a problem for articles from academic journals or online resources such as magazines and news web sites. It can be a problem for an article that is a chapter in a book of essays; this includes the articles by Mayorga-Grillo and by Barber. This can also be a problem for books where just an excerpt is assigned; this includes Gillion; Ehrenhalt; Katz and Bradley; and Shively. For these titles I strongly suggest making sure you access them days before class meets so you don’t run into any problems.

For those enrolled in the class who are majors or prospective majors in Political Science, please know that “Politics in the City” fulfills the departmental requirement for a methods focused course. The selections from the book by W. Phillips Shively will be used to guide some of our discussions concerning how social scientists do research. Discussion of other readings will include analysis of research design and research quality. Finally, you will engage in a research project that will emphasize research design of an inquiry relating to urban government, politics, or social conditions.

Please also note that because PS 15 is a sophomore-listed seminar, it does *not* fulfill the requirement for an advanced seminar for political science majors. (Those who are not sophomores require consent.)

COVID VIRTUAL VERSION OF PS 15: Let me address the unique circumstances for fall semester, 2020. I want to emphasize as strongly as I can that the educational content of the class remains largely the same as previous years. You will do the same amount of reading as you would if we were operating under normal circumstances. The research paper will be the same

basic assignment. The essays are take-home but that is the same as it was when the course was taught in person.

What's changed, of course, is that discussion will now be on Zoom. And this class is designed as a seminar so it is *all* discussion. The back-and-forth of discussion will be a little different but we will, as a class, accomplish the same goals of using discussion to identify core ideas and to debate central options of public policy.

In the past the research paper has been a joint project conducted by teams of three students each. I want to be more flexible this year and give students a choice of whether to do a joint project or to do a paper by themselves. (A joint project will be more ambitious in terms of scope and I'll lay out the differing requirements for one-person and three-person papers at our first class session and in a separate document.) I think that you'll find that a joint project is more engaging as it generates contact and intellectual interaction between you and two classmates. At the same time, you might not want to deal with the logistics of a joint project during this very unusual semester.

Despite the online nature of this year's PS 15, it is still a small class and I hope to get to know each one of you. Unfortunately, because of the dangers of COVID, I will not be holding in-person office hours this semester. I will be available, however, as we can use the phone or video chats to talk and I'm happy to do this at your convenience. We can talk at just about any time during the week except when I'm teaching. Just let me know by email that you'd like to chat and we'll set up a time. Please feel free to speak with me about the class, majoring in political science, pre-law at Tufts, Tufts-in-Washington, or about anything else I might be of assistance on. For future reference, my cell phone is (617) 407 0343.

Finally, the grading is as follows: each of the two take-home essays will count as 30 percent of your final grade and your research paper, joint or single, will constitute 40 percent. The take-home essays will require answers of 3-4 pages.

SCHEDULE:

Sept. 14: Introduction to course; some students will present their neighborhood PowerPoint tour

PART I: *ENDURING PROBLEMS OF THE CITY*

Sept. 21:

--Desmond, *Evicted*, Prologue, Chaps. 1-9, 15-18, 20, 22-23, Epilogue, and About this Project (the methods appendix)

Sept. 28: No class (Yom Kippur)

Oct. 5:

--Raj Chetty et al., "Is the United States Still a Land of Opportunity?" (Canvas)

--Janie Buschma and Ronald Brownstein, "The Concentration of Poverty in American Schools" (Canvas)

--Sarah Mayorga-Gallo, "People Were Not as Friendly as I Had Hoped," in Candis Watts Smith and Christina M. Greer, eds., *Black Politics in Transition* (on reserve)

Oct. 12:

--Daniel Gillion, *The Loud Minority*, Chap. 5, "Voter Turnout: Does Protest Lead to Voter Support or Backlash? The Case of Black Lives Matter" (on reserve)

--Frank Baumgartner et al., "Ten Years of Study and the Protestors are Right: Traffic Stops Tell Us About Racial Bias in Police" (Canvas)

--Benjamin Barber, *If Mayors Ruled the World*, Chap. 1, "If Mayors Ruled the World: Why They Should and How They Already Do" (on reserve)

PART II: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Oct. 19:

--Research groups will meet with Professor Berry at appointed time within class period

--First essay posted on Canvas. Due no later than 5:00 pm on Oct. 25th

Oct. 26:

--Shively, chap. 6 from *The Craft of Political Research*

--O'Connor, *Building a New Boston*, Chaps 1-3

Nov. 2:

--O'Connor, *Building a New Boston*, Chaps 4-9 and Conclusion

--Alan Ehrenhalt, *The Great Inversion*, Chap. 1 (on reserve)

--Briefly review census data on city of Boston; go to data.census.gov

--Brief student reports on Boston neighborhoods

Nov. 9:

--Glaeser, *Triumph of the City*, Chaps. 1-8

--Shively, *The Craft of Political Research*, chaps. 2 and 4

PART III CITIES FACE THE FUTURE

Nov. 16:

--Glaeser, *Triumph of the City*, Chap. 9 and Conclusion

--Bruce Katz and Jennifer Bradley, *The Metropolitan Revolution*, Chapter 6, "The Rise of Innovation Districts" (on reserve)

--How much do You Need to Make to Buy a Condo at Millennium Towers?

--[All students read] Robert Campbell, "On Close Inspection, The Millennium Tower Stands Out" (Canvas)

--[All students Google] "Millennium Tower Boston." Peruse the real estate sites at top of the first page for various units in this building

--[For those students not presenting this policy brief] Peruse real estate ads for rental units in the Allston-Brighton section of Boston. How much would you need to earn to rent a one-bedroom apartment there? You can substitute a neighborhood of your choosing in your hometown instead of Allston-Brighton.

--Second essay posted on Canvas; due no later than 5:00 pm on Nov. 22nd.

Nov. 23:

--Casey Ross, “Transit-Oriented Development Provides Spark to Transform Dorchester” (Canvas)

--“Taming the Autonomous Vehicle,” Chap. 4 (Canvas)

--Laura Bliss, “Ride Hailing Apps are Clogging New York’s Streets” (Canvas)

--Alex Wittenberg, “How to Design a Post-Pandemic City” (Canvas)

--Eduardo Porter, “Coronavirus Threatens the Luster of Superstar Cities” (Canvas)

Nov. 30:

--Fitzgerald, *Emerald Cities*

--Concept: each student will present a description of the basic concept for a new app for cities that they’ve thought up

Dec. 7

--Reports from students on research papers

[Papers due Dec. 14th by 5:00 pm.]