There are so many stakeholders in the area of housing policy, ranging from the people who live in the housing to those who develop, design, build, finance, and maintain the housing. And, yet, there are even more stakeholders. There are the neighbors, the tax assessor, the real estate agent, the policy analyst at the local, state, and federal levels. There’s also all the scholars who study housing from a range of fields including law, economics, public policy, urban planning, community development, architecture, urban design, sociology, history, social work, and even education and health. And, there are activists with interests in housing affordability, accessibility, sustainability, and segregation by race, ethnicity, and class. And in listing all of these interested parties and actors I am certain I have left some out.

Given this breadth of interests, we cannot possibly cover all of the terrain in the area of housing policy in one semester. We will be looking at housing from the perspective of: Why do we have the “housing landscape” that we do? What are the implications of this landscape? What different landscape do you want to see? Where are the effective points of intervention in this landscape for you to pursue in order to contribute to the change that you’d like to see? And, even though it is at the end of this paragraph, in the US context race and racial struggles are at the center of understanding this housing landscape.

I take the position that the normal functioning of urban land markets plays an important role (perhaps driving role) in creating the housing landscape that we have. Institutions also play a role (perhaps a secondary or reinforcing role.) I would call this perspective a political economy perspective. These political economic forces occur in an historical and cultural context; in order to understand US housing policy, we’ll have to look at the US historical and cultural context. My project for this class is to put US housing policy within this framework.

Yet, I want to do so within the context of your own practice. Some of you are in this class because you intend to be working as a professional in a planning, policy, development, activist, or advocate role. For these students when I speak about practice it is in reference to your own professional practice and the commitments you are making within that practice. By commitments I mean your personal commitments with respect to what you are dedicating your practice to. For those students who are not thinking about working in planning or policy, it will be helpful to think about practice in the context of your own civic practice and your role as an engaged community member.

By the end of the semester you will have a better understanding of the way that urban land markets sort us across the metropolitan landscape into neighborhoods that are relatively homogenous by race, class, and ethnicity. You will also have an understanding of how institutions in the US have supported this process. This sorting seems to me to be a defining characteristic of the US and a central element of current socio-economic and political conditions in the 21st Century. Urban planners, community activists, and those engaged in their communities should all find our work of interest.

This is my fifth year teaching this class and I find that each year, the combination of teaching the class and the current social, economic, and political conditions come together to change my
thinking and approach to the class. I currently see housing policy through the lens of my understanding of my definition of the important moral issues of our time. My current perspective is based on both social justice and its connection to the health of our democracy. That is, I believe that in order to increase the odds of the long-term sustainability of our democracy, we must be more successful and perhaps more audacious in our attempts to address social and economic exclusion. We will be looking at housing through the lens of how the systems and institutions that have created the current housing landscape have contributed to social and economic exclusion and inclusion. I want you to consider what you’d like your role to be in addressing this condition.

This class requires your active engagement at each class meeting. That means I expect you to do the reading each week and come prepared to support your own learning and the learning of the community we will create in the class.

Your grade will be based on the following:
1) Class participation and leadership in discussions (33.3%)
2) Weekly reading responses (33.3%)
3) Project and presentation (33.4%)

Required texts


Course Requirements and Grading
Students are expected to actively engage in all aspects of the class including discussions and presentations. While some students have more direct experience than others in the issues related to the course, all have much to offer through personal perspectives, thoughtful reflection, and the curiosity each brings to the material. Our experience as a class, and each student’s individual experience in this class, will be considerably richer if everyone participates.

Reading response and leadership in discussions
Read the material before class. Give yourself enough time engage in the material. You must write a response to the reading and turn it in electronically before class. This is the rule. This is part of the grade. That means giving yourself enough time to read the material beforehand and to write a thoughtful response to the reading. This serves three purposes. First, your retention of the reading will be greater and second, our discussions will be better. As a consequence our collective learning as a community will expand. This exercise will both serve you and your learning and it will serve the learning community we will create in the class. And, finally, it will be useful record for your intellectual growth across the term and it will be a useful reference when you work on your project.

What goes into a reading response? First, you will need to summarize the key points in the assigned readings. Second, you will need to think critically. What was strong or weak in the
reading? What was connected to either other readings in this class or another class? What was connected to your professional experience (in work or internships or volunteering) or issues that you’ve read about in the news or issues that you’ve experienced in your life? What seemed to contradict other readings or your experiences or observations? How do you stand vis-à-vis this reading and why? And, what further questions are raised for you by these readings? Has the reading caused you to change your thinking or does it lead you to want to revisit prior information or a conversation or argument you had with someone? This reading response is where you challenge yourself and demonstrate to me that you are engaging with the material.

People will want to slip on this requirement. You will want to postpone the reading and then you won’t have time to do the writing and you’ll jot down a couple of questions so you can participate in class and ask me if you can turn the writing in after class. But, no, that doesn’t work. So, please, don’t slip. This is a serious requirement. Having said that, each student will get one pass on this weekly assignment during the semester.

Each week one of you will be assigned to lead the discussion. We will sign up on the first day of class. Leading the discussion supports both academic and professional learning objectives. As the discussion leader it will give you the opportunity to practice identifying essential questions (an intellectual skill) and posing these to your colleagues in order to motivate their own learning (a professional skill). Furthermore, those of us who are participants in the discussion will get the opportunity to practice working in an environment characterized by participatory leadership. In my own management practice, this is my go-to leadership style. I believe it helps to create and support the environment that many of us like to work in and which many of us thrive. However, it makes demands on the team members, and one of those demands is supporting the team and the leader. In this case the demonstration of that support is to do the reading and intellectual engagement beforehand and come to class prepared to enhance your own learning and that of your colleagues. This exercise will give us the opportunity to share the leadership burden in the class and in the process create a learning community.

Class project and presentation
This is a policy memo or program proposal to address or mitigate a housing related problem or a social problem for which housing is a (partial) solution. You need to identify the issue by September 22nd. There is an art to framing research questions and interventions (your policy or program is an intervention, but you will need to do some research about the problem and the feasibility of the intervention) and we will do that framing together in class.

Part of your research will include interviews. I want you to do at least three interviews where you interview at least one person who is an advocate, one person who is a policy maker, and one person who is involved in the problem and/or solution from the private sector. We will talk more about these three sectors and why it is important to understand the interests of each.

The policy memo or project proposal can be relatively short. However, there will be supporting documentation and data (quantitative and qualitative) in the appendix. In total we’re probably talking about a 3-5 page memo/proposal and probably about 5-7 pages of appendices (e.g., the interview schedule you used for interviews; a list of those you interviewed; data on the extent of the problem and the groups and communities affected; estimated budgets for the program; methodology for estimating impacts, etc.)
In addition, you will present your policy or program proposal to the entire class on the last night of class. These presentation should be about 10-15 minutes long. We'll discuss more during the term. Papers are due December 9, 2016.

**Grades**
This is the grade scale I will use:

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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum Score</th>
<th>Calculated Score</th>
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<td>97-100</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-96</td>
<td>4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<tr>
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<td>83-86</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
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<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
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<td>1.3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 65</td>
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**Expectations**
I expect professional standards. First, I expect you to know the University’s standards of academic integrity. There is no room for plagiarism or other forms of dishonesty in this class. Let me repeat, there is no room for plagiarism or other forms of dishonesty in this class. You are 100% responsible for your conduct in this regard. Be sure that you understand Tufts code of conduct in this regard. (See: [http://students.tufts.edu/student-affairs/student-life-policies/academic-integrity-policy](http://students.tufts.edu/student-affairs/student-life-policies/academic-integrity-policy)) I try to practice tolerance in most aspects of my life; I do not practice tolerance in this regard.

Second, all work is to represent your best effort; it is to look good, and it is to be on time. If work is late, I will reduce your grade for every calendar day it is late. I will accept late work, without penalty, only if you have a sudden personal emergency.

Please check the calendar and let me know by our second meeting if you have any conflicts due to religious observance.

Please let me know by our second meeting if you foresee any complications in completing the work of this class due to disabilities.

**Disclaimers**
This schedule, assigned readings, and other components of the syllabus may change.

**Competencies and Knowledge Areas**
- History of U.S. housing policies and programs
- How housing is connected to larger political and economic forces/policies
- Ways in which racial issues have permeated housing programs and how government has sought to address this area of concern; fair housing laws
- Cultural roots of housing tenure preferences (e.g., homeownership vs. rental)
- Roles of federal, state, and local governments in addressing housing problems
- Role of the private for-profit sector in the development of housing policies
- The banking industry and federal supports for housing
- The subprime crisis and the roles of key public and private actors and institutions
• Roles of residents in federal, local initiatives; organizing, lobbying, community development approaches to gaining political power in housing controversies
• Range of nonprofits involved with housing development and management
• Mechanisms for subsidizing housing programs and relative advantages/disadvantages; beneficiaries of federal housing subsidies; program implementation
• New models for addressing housing issues

Class 1 (Sept 8)

Introduction

Class 2 (Sept 15)

Housing as a right.
Readings
Chester Hartman. “The Case for a Right to Housing” in Bratt et al

Audio
This American Life Podcast for program 562: The problem we all live with Part one. Aired July 31, 2015 http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/562/the-problem-we-all-live-with

Class 3 (Sept 22)

Capabilities.

Readings

Audio
Class 4 (Sep 29)

Public Housing.

In-class movie (The Myth of Pruitt-Igoe)

Class 5 (Oct 6)

Invited Speaker. Bob Van Meter
Executive Director, Boston LISC

Subsidized Housing.
Schwartz Chapters 5 & 7
Bratt et al Chapters 5 & 7

Class 6 (Oct 12)

Invited Speaker. Dwan Packnett
Assistant Director Boston Home Center

Homeownership.
Schwartz Chapters 3 & 4
http://openscholarship.wustl.edu/law_journal_law_policy/vol43/iss1/12
Read pp 187-199 in Lawton.

Class 7 (Oct 20)

Vouchers.
Schwartz Chapter 8

https://www.brookings.edu/blog/social-mobility-memos/2015/05/06/sociologys-revenge-moving-to-opportunity-mto-revisited/

Nathan Hendron on PBS’s News Hour.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hmnJz_3Lwrs
Class 8 (Oct 27)

**Urban Land Markets.**

“Filtering” and “Housing Markets” in the *Encyclopedia of Housing.*


Class 9 (Nov 3)

**Mortgages, secondary mortgage market, mortgage insurance.**


Audio.

This American life Program 355: The Giant Pool of Money


Class 10 (Nov 10)

**Foreclosures**


*Invited Speaker?*


Class 11 (Nov 17)  
Alternatives  
Lawton, Julie. Rest of the article above.  
(Download at http://www.nhi.org/pdf/SharedEquityHome.pdf)

**November 24 No Class. Thanksgiving**

Class 12 (Dec 1)  
Alternatives continued.

Class 13 (Dec 8)  
Presentations of Projects