This course utilizes theoretical literature, case studies, and guest practitioners to explore the relationship between community development, planning, and politics. The course is organized into two parts: Context; and Select Issues and Debates. The sessions provide an introduction and overview of community development-related issues in different cities; historical factors that are important for understanding urban spaces today; examination of federal policies that mold community development; and ongoing debates about strategies for local economic development and neighborhood revitalization. Although the literature provides discussions of cities and neighborhoods across the nation, much of the focus is on developments in Boston and Massachusetts. The course has three objectives:

• to provide a contextual overview of relationships between community development, planning, and politics (including race and class) in U.S. cities;

• to provide an opportunity for exploration of specific neighborhood issues or organizations involved with community development; and,

• to introduce students to guest practitioners involved with community development; guests will visit the class at various times in order to help connect course literature/discussions to specific community development issues; they will share their own insights about community development.

In addition to providing students with opportunities to gain knowledge about specific policy areas related to community development, the course reflects a number of competencies deemed important by UEP: roles of government, and governance; history, theory, processes of policymaking and implementation; and administrative, legal, and political aspects of policy.

Course requirements include:

1) class participation and presentations, and small group discussions, based on assigned readings;

2) completion of two book reviews focusing on some aspect of community development as covered in the course (total pages required is 18-20);

3) one class session will be devoted to a field or special assignment - details to follow;

4) please note that since this is an ‘interactive-oriented’ course, and utilizes guest practitioners, the use of notebooks is not permitted in class.

Some of the required readings are provided in the course reading packet; other selections can be accessed online via Tisch Library. I will also email some of the required selections (marked with an ‘*’).
Session 1 (1/24): Introduction

Review of course objectives and requirements.
What is community development? What are key issues or themes associated with community development and planning?

W. Peterman, Neighborhoods, Communities, Community Development, and Neighborhood Planning (Sage Publications, 2000) (packet)

Part One: Context

Sessions 2 (1/31): Demographic and Economic Contexts for Understanding Community Development

What are major demographic and socio-economic developments molding neighborhood issues and community development? What is neighborhood distress?

Read: W. Freyu, et al., Getting Current: Recent Demographic Trends in Metropolitan America, (Washington DC: Metropolitan Policy Program and Brookings Institute, 2009) *
Borges-Mendez, et al., Immigrant Entrepreneurs and Neighborhood Revitalization (can be accessed at the Immigrant Learning Center: www.ilctr.org
J. Jennings, Community-based Nonprofits and Neighborhood Distress, Research Report (February 2009)*

Session 3 (2/7): The Foreclosure Crisis and Community Development

How is the current foreclosure crisis impacting neighborhoods? And what kinds of strategies should be utilized to respond to this continuing social, economic, and housing crisis?

D.K. Levy, et al., In the Face of Gentrification: Case Studies of Local Efforts to Mitigate Displacement (Washington DC: Urban Institute, 2006) *

Session 4 (2/14): Federal Context for Community Development

How have various national administrations approached community development and urban revitalization? What are some of the major characteristics of federal / state policy and strategies in this area?


Session 5 (2/28): Emergence of “Inner Cities” in U.S. Society

What kinds of historical factors led to residential and economic patterns evident in contemporary urban places? What was the role of race in determining what neighborhoods and cities look like today? How did communities of color attain current institutional or economic configurations? How did these same communities challenge social, economic, and spatial inequality? Is this history relevant in the contemporary period in terms of community development and planning?


Session 6 (3/7): Politics and the Role of Community Development Corporations

What are community development corporations and what is their role in responding to neighborhood distress? What are challenges facing CDCs and other nonprofits in urban neighborhoods? How should the work and impact of these sectors be evaluated, or assessed? How does race, ethnicity, and class issues mix with local politics to mold or limit the work of community development corporations?

Read: Shaw and Spence, “Race and Representation in Detroit’s Community Development Coalitions” in J. Jennings, *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 594 (July 2004) *


Session 7 (3/14): Community Organizing as Tool for Neighborhood Revitalization

What is community organizing, and how can it be utilized as a tool for community development? Is this a viable tool in the face of globalization and increasing concentration of wealth, and inequality? Are there success stories about residents enhancing local living conditions?
Read: Fraser, et al., “Construction of Local and Limits of Contemporary Community Building…” *Urban Affairs Review* Vol. 38, No. 3 (January 2003) * 

**Part Two: Select Issues and Debates**

**Session 8 (3/28): Smart Growth, New Urbanism, and Social Capital as Community Development**

Smart growth, new urbanism, and social capital are ideas proposed for revitalizing neighborhoods: what are some concerns?

Read:  
J. Grant; J. Hurley; and J. Smith in *Planners Network*, No. 152 (Spring 2002) (packet)  

**Session 9 (4/4): The Visioning of Urban Space**

Much of urban politics and governance associated with community development is about the utilization of urban land; and how such is related to broader visions for the city. How are these decisions made, and who participates in decision-making? How do visions for the city pre-determine urban revitalization strategies?

Read:  

**Session 10 (4/11): Responding to Spatial Inequality**

What kinds of strategies are needed to respond to spatial inequality and poverty? Should mobility and voucher strategies, or ‘new population-attraction’ initiatives, or ideas like the deconcentration of poverty or mixed-income housing be prioritized over other ideas for neighborhood revitalization?

Read:  
O. Fiss, “What Should be Done for Those Left Behind” *Boston Review* (Summer 200) (packet)


**Session 11(4/18): HOPE VI and Public Housing**

What are national strategies aimed at neighborhood revitalization? What are the key characteristics of Hope VI and Low Income Housing Tax Credit? What are critiques of these major programs? What are alternative strategies and approaches?


**Session 12 (4/25): Neighborhood Investment Strategies: Demonstration Disposition Program in Boston and Empowerment Zones**


**Session 13 (5/2): Assessing Urban Economic Development…Who Decides, Who Benefits?**

What kinds of economic development strategies should be pursued by cities to help neighborhoods? How are the expected benefits, and beneficiaries, determined? What is the role of public participation in such discourses?
