Community Development, Planning, and Politics (UEP 261)
Tufts University
Spring 2012
Monday 1:30 – 4:00pm
Anderson 313
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This course utilizes theoretical literature, case studies, and guest practitioners to explore the relationship between community development, planning, and politics. Over the last several years, the course has evolved into two parts: Context; and Select Issues and Debates. In toto, the sessions provide an introduction and overview of community development-related issues in different U.S. cities: historical factors that are important for understanding how urban spaces look like, today; examination of federal policies that have molded and continue to impact neighborhoods; 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.

There are 3 course objectives:

- to provide a contextual overview of the politics of community development in U.S. cities;
- to provide an opportunity for exploration of specific neighborhood issues or the work of organizations involved with neighborhood revitalization;
- to introduce students to guest practitioners involved with community development in Boston; 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 the politics of planning and 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 an 18-20 page writing assignment (details will be discussed in class);

3) short review (1-2 pages) of 2 of 3 videos on community development and land struggles in Chicago, Philadelphia, and Brooklyn, NY (placed on library reserve);

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 "*"). Please note that since this is an ‘interactive-oriented’ course, and utilizes guest practitioners, the use of pc/mac notebooks, ipads, etc., are not permitted in class. Also note that in addition to the reading selections identified in this outline, I may periodically assign additional readings which shed light on various topics.
**Session 1 (1/23): Introduction**

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

Read:  

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

**Part One: Context**

**Sessions 2 (1/30): Demographic Context for Understanding Community Development**

What are major demographic developments molding neighborhoods and community development? How is immigration impacting local communities in urban settings?

Read:  


**Session 3 (2/6): Economic Contexts and Community Development**

What are key features of the economic context impacting local urban communities? What is neighborhood distress? How is the current foreclosure crisis impacting neighborhoods? And what kinds of strategies should be utilized to respond to this continuing crisis?

Read:  
*Our Cities: Their Role in the National Economy*, (Excerpts) National Resources Committee (June 1937) (packet)


Session 4 (2/13): 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?


J. Manning-Thomas, “Model Cities Revisited…” in Manning-Thomas and Ritzdorf, Urban Planning and the African American Community: In the Shadows (Sage, 1997) (packet)


Session 5 (2/20): TBD

Session 6 (2/27): 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?

Read: G. Osofsky, Harlem: Making of a Ghetto (Oxford University Press, 1966), 105-123; 189-201 (packet)


Sanchez, G., Becoming Mexican-American…Los Angeles 1900-1945 (Oxford University Press, 1993), 227-252 (packet)

Part Two: Select Issues and Debates

Session 7 (3/5): Local Politics and 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 8 (3/12): 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 globalizaiton 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) *


Session 9 (3/26): 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?


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

Session 10 (4/2): 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?


N. Etienne and T. Binns, “Place Marketing, Tourism, Promotion, and Community-Based Local Economic Development in Post-Apartheid South Africa: The Case of Still Bay-The "Bay of Sleeping Beauty”, *Urban Affairs Review, vol. 38, no. 2* (November 2002) *

Session 11 (4/9): 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 2000) (packet)


Session 12 (4/23): HOPE VI and Public Housing

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


Session 13 (4/30): Neighborhood Investment Strategies: Demonstration Disposition Program in Boston and Empowerment Zones

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?


J. Jennings and M. Colon, “Demonstration Disposition Program in Boston…” National Political Science Review (February 2005) (packet)
