

GEOG 9115B – Urban Social Cultural Geography Course Outline: Winter 2025

1. Course Information

Class Time: Thursdays from 9.30-11.30am, starting on Thursday, January 9, 2025.

Contact Information:

Instructor: Roza Tchoukaleyska

Email: rtchouka@uwo.ca

2. Calendar Description

An examination of classical and contemporary literature on the social and cultural processes and practices underlying the forms, designs and social practices of urban built environments.

Enrollment in this course is restricted to graduate students in Geography, as well as any student that has obtained special permission to enroll in this course from the course instructor as well as the Graduate Chair (or equivalent) from the student's home program.

3. Readings

All assigned readings will be made available via the GEOG 9115 OWL site.

4. Course Objectives

This course introduces students to current debates in urban social and cultural geography, with a consideration of the theoretical foundations of the discipline and several weeks dedicated to key topics and current debates. The course will help students strengthen their critical writing and presentation skills, and provide opportunities to reflect on the nuances of geography debates in relation to each student's chosen research topic.

5. Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Critically evaluate current research in urban social and cultural geography;
- Trace the history and development of debates within the discipline;
- Contrast different methodologies and approaches to designing research projects;
- Articulate academic arguments, and further develop writing and presentation skills.

6. Evaluation

Students will be evaluated based on the following assignments:

Evaluation Components	Percentage of Course Grade	Assignment Schedule
Student led seminars	15%	To be assigned
Seminar participation	15%	Weekly class participation
Assignment 1	30%	Thursday, February 13 th
Assignment 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal • Essay 	5% 35%	At the latest by Monday, April 21 st

All written assignments should be submitted to OWL by the end of the day on the due date. The description and marking grid for each assignment is available on OWL.

Students are responsible for material covered in the lectures as well as the assigned chapters/sections in the text. Students are **REQUIRED TO COMPLETE ALL COMPONENTS** of this course. There are no exceptions to this. Extra assignments to improve grades **will NOT** be accepted.

Grades will not be adjusted on the basis of need. It is important to monitor your performance in the course. Remember: *You* are responsible for your grades in this course.

7. University Policy Regarding Illness

Accessible Education Western (AEW)

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program.

Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with Accessible Education Western (AEW), a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both AEW and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction.

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

If you miss a class due to minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or exam. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow the missed seminar notes from a classmate. If you expect to be away from campus for an extended amount of time, please make prior arrangements with your course instructors and/or supervisor.

[School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies information on Leave of Absence](#)

[Western's policy on graduate registration, including medical and compassionate leave of absence](#)

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

8. University Policies

Scholastic Discipline for Graduate Students

Members of the University Community accept a commitment to maintain and uphold the purposes of the University and, in particular, its standards of scholarship. It follows, therefore, that acts of a nature that prejudice the academic standards of the University are offences subject to discipline. Any form of academic dishonesty that undermines the evaluation process also undermines the integrity of the University's degrees. The University will take all appropriate measures to promote academic integrity and deal appropriately with scholastic offences.

For the complete policy and regulations

see: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

Academic Appeals for Graduate Students

Students may appeal an academic decision or ruling in accordance with the appeal procedures set out below. Students have a right to appeal to their graduate programs and, if unsuccessful, to the Vice-Provost (Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies). Some decisions may be appealed further to the Senate Review Board Academic. The Vice-Provost's rulings in academic matters are final unless overturned or modified on appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA).

For the complete policy and regulations see:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/appealsgrad.pdf

9. Support Services

Health/Wellness Services

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources here at Western to assist you. Please visit Western's [Health and Wellness website](#) for more information on mental health resources.

Support Services

Student Support Services can be reached at: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Services can be reached at: <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Short Absences

If you miss a class due to minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or exam. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow the missed lecture notes from a classmate.

Extended Absences

If you expect to be away from campus for an extended amount of time, please make prior arrangements with your course instructors and/or supervisor.

For the complete policy on registration visit the [Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies](#) website.

Academic Concerns

If you are in academic difficulty, it is strongly recommended that you see your Graduate Program Administrator, Supervisor, or SGPS

10. Important Dates

Week of January 6: Courses begin

February 17: Family day (No classes, Department Office closed)

February 17-21: Spring reading week (No classes; Department Office open)

April 4: Classes end (graduate and undergraduate)

11. Course Content

Week 1: January 9, Course introduction

No assigned readings

Week 2: January 16, Situating urban social and cultural geography

Derickson, K.D. (2015). Urban geography I: Locating urban theory in the 'urban age'. *Progress in Human Geography*, 39(5), 647-657.

Ho, E.L.-E. (2022). Social geography II: Space and sociality. *Progress in Human Geography*, 46(5), 1252-1260.

Jazeel, T. (2021). The 'city' as text. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 45(4), 658-662.

Week 3: January 23, Tracing urban processes: comparative urbanism, policy mobility, and assemblage theory (Student-led seminar)

Barnett, C. (2020). The strange case of urban theory. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 13(3), 443-459.

McCann, E., & Ward, K. (2012). Assembling urbanism: Following policies and 'studying through' the sites and situations of policy making. *Environment and Planning A*, 44, 42-51.

Robinson, J. (2016). Thinking cities through elsewhere: Comparative tactics for a more global urban study. *Progress in Human Geography*, 40(1), 3-29.

Week 4: January 30, Public space I: Constituting 'publics'

Attoh, K.A. (2011). What *kind* of right is the right to the city? *Progress in Human Geography*, 35(5), 669-685.

Mitchell, D. (2017). People's Park again: On the end and ends of public space. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 49(3), 503-518.

Ye, J. (2019). Re-orienting geographies of urban diversity and coexistence: Analyzing inclusion and difference in public space. *Progress in Human Geography*, 43(3), 478-495.

Week 5: February 6, Public space II: Use, protest, action, and creativity

Blomley, N. (2007). How to turn a beggar into a bus stop: Law, traffic, and the 'function of the place'. *Urban Studies*, 44(9), 1697-1712.

Koch, R. and Lantham, A. (2012). Rethinking urban public space: Accounts from a junction in West London. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 37(4), 515-529.

Summers, B.T. (2022). Black insurgent aesthetics and the public imaginary. *Urban Geography*, 43(6), 837-847.

Week 6: February 13, Social infrastructure(s)

Kallianos, Y. (2018). Infrastructural disorder: The politics of disruption, contingency, and normalcy in waste infrastructure in Athens. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 36(4), 758-775.

Lantham, A., and Layton, J. (2019). Social infrastructure and the public life of cities: Studying urban sociality and public spaces. *Geography Compass*, 13(7), e12444.

Middleton, J., and Samanani, F. (2022). Whose city? Which sociality? *Urban Geography*, 43(5), 777-783.

[Spring reading break February 17-21, no classes held]

Week 7: February 27, Mobility, movement, and walking

Mathuria, S. (2024). Walking, storytelling and melancholy survivals: Memorialization of the 'Troubles' in Belfast's City Centre. *Cultural Geographies*, 31(2), 213-230.

Middleton, J. (2018). The socialities of everyday urban walking and the 'right to the city'. *Urban Studies*, 55(2), 296-315.

Wood, A. (2020). Tracing the absence of bike-share in Johannesburg: A case of policy mobilities and non-adoption. *Journal of Transport Geography*, 83, e102659.

Week 8: March 6, Digital geographies

Ash, J., Kitchin, R., and Leszczynski, A. (2018). Digital turn, digital geographies? *Progress in Human Geography*, 42(1), 25-43.

Filion, P., Moos, M., and Sands, G. (2023). Urban neoliberalism, smart city, and Big Tech: The aborted Sidewalk Labs Toronto experiment. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 45(9), 1625-1643.

Tufekci, Z., and Wilson, C. (2012). Social media and the decision to participate in political protest: Observations from Tahrir Square. *Journal of Communications*, 62, 363-379.

Week 9: March 13, Urban food cultures

Caramaschi, S. (2024). Ingredients for displacement: An exploration of the role of street food advocates in San Francisco's changing environment. *Urban Geography*, 45(3), 390-410.

Everts, J., Jackson, P., and Juraschek, K.A. (2021). The socio-material practices of the transformation of urban food markets. *Area*, 53(2), 389-397.

McClintock, N., Miewald, C., and McCann, E. (2021). Governing urban agriculture: Formalization, resistance and re-visioning in two 'green' cities. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 45(3), 498-518.

Week 10: March 20, Haunting, ruination, and gentrification

Edensor, T. (2008). Mundane hauntings: Commuting through the phantasmagoric working-class spaces of Manchester, England. *Cultural Geographies*, 15(3), 313-333.

Gandy, M. (2022). Ghosts and monsters: Reconstructing nature on the site of the Berlin Wall. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 47(4), 1120-1136.

Kern, L. (2016). Rhythms of gentrification: Eventfulness and slow violence in a happening neighbourhood. *Cultural Geographies*, 23(3), 441-457.

Week 11: March 27, Urban case study I: Detroit

Fraser, E. (2018). Unbecoming place: Urban imaginaries in transition in Detroit. *Cultural Geographies*, 25(3), 441-458.

Pohl, L. (2021). The sublime object of Detroit. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 22(8), 1063-1079.

Safransky, S. (2014). Greening the urban frontier: Race, property, and resettlement in Detroit. *Geoforum*, 56, 237-248.

Week 12: April 3, Urban case study II: Paris

Baril, E. (2024). Citizen-*rentier*-ship: Delivering the undocumented to labour platforms in Paris. *Antipode*, 56(4), 1132-1151.

Dikeç, M. (2007). Revolting geographies: Urban unrest in France. *Geography Compass*, 1(5), 1190-1206.

Tinsley, M. (2024). Contested urban assemblages: Ruination and restoration of postcolonial sites of memory. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 1-20. Available at:

<https://doi.org/10.1080/14649365.2024.2380270>