Contemporary Urban Issues (CUI)
URST-3000 (4 Credits / 60 class hours)
International Honors Program (IHP) Cities in the 21st Century

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus is representative of a typical term. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester. In addition, considerations of student safety may change some course content.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
 Humanity faces tremendous social and ecological challenges. For the first time ever, more than half the world’s population lives in cities and urban areas—creating tremendous challenges as well as opportunities. Contemporary Urban Issues (CUI) brings together the diverse perspectives of the faculty courses with your extensive first-hand experiences in cities on four continents. This course will provide you the tools to identify and analyze challenges common to cities across continents and societies, and to distinguish such challenges from others that are rooted in particular histories and human geographies. It will also allow you to develop the ability to make meaningful comparisons, particularly concerning configurations of political, economic, and social power as they manifest in urban and peri-urban spaces. Contemporary urban problems require a holistic approach, which means that you will learn to combine methods from different disciplines in the act of signaling relevant comparisons. In addition to engaging in site and neighborhood visits, guest lectures and doing the assigned readings, students will conduct original field research and complete a comparative research project on an urban issue or theme of your choice. In short, the purpose of this course is to provide you with the tools to teach yourself how to learn: how to develop and refine a research question? How to collect and analyze information that will allow you to answer that question? How you plan to separate the ‘interesting’ from the ‘important pieces of information that will allow you to persuasively answer your question? How to formulate an argument that will improve/challenge our understanding on the ways cities work, what are the forces shaping them and how people make sense and organize practices in the process of building the city they/we want?

You will begin addressing these questions in New York City and will reconsider them in Buenos Aires, Hanoi and Cape Town. In the final week of the semester in Cape Town, you will engage in a Semester Synthesis that addresses these questions comparatively and you will also present your individual Comparative Analysis (CA) project.

COURSE METHODOLOGY
 The objective of CUI is to learn to engage with the unique local resources, knowledge, and expertise that students encounter in the four cities of the IHP Cities program. The course thus focuses on fieldwork methods, practice, and ethics. CUI will introduce you to the rules of “informed consent” (ethics of research), in which ‘informants’ are acknowledged and informed regarding their participation in research, and become co-creators of knowledge. In CUI, the city is the classroom for learning, as this is a research course. The readings are designed to give you the methodological tools that will aid you to think about and implement a successful comparative research project. These tools will include exercises on framing the research question and strategies for collecting information/data in an unfamiliar context. These strategies will rely on active observation and consistent/detailed note taking. The information collected will directly inform the final CA project in which you will present a single argument supported by the information/data collected and complemented with secondary sources.

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The course includes lectures and seminar discussions, individual and group research, case studies, neighborhood days, and homestays. Unlike a more conventional research methods course, the classroom is stretched to encompass a variety of learning activities throughout the *entire* semester. The first session in each country will be the ‘here we are’ session. This student-lead session will present some basic background information about the city/country based on readings and basic research. Student-led presentations and syntheses are thus key components of CUI. CUI presents the best opportunity to make the program a transformative experience, because it brings together the multiple strands running through coursework, class discussions, site visits, neighborhood days, and guest lectures. CUI is where you, individually and collectively, have the chance to put academic concepts and methods to the test of empirical research in the city, and thereby realize the potential of the program as a whole. More than any other course, CUI will be what you make of it and you will get out of this course what you put into it.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**Faculty workshops and debriefings**
- To gain basic methodological and practical tools with which to read any given city through observation and investigation guided by concepts derived from several academic disciplines (anthropology, politics, sociology, urban planning and design, architecture, and development studies).
- To develop a shared understanding of, and commitment to, ethical research practices, which we implement individually, and as a group, in constant reflection and discussion as new situations arise.
- To connect class discussion/readings (P+D, C+S and UP+SE) with on-the-ground experiences.
- To engage in continued critical reflection about our own positionality and how it frames the way we “read” a particular situation and understand the “other” with different life experiences and opportunities.

**Neighborhood days, site visits, guest lectures**
- To examine current urban issues in terms of commonality and uniqueness; and in terms of differential access to, and control over, power, political representation, and resources both human and natural.
- To build analytical skills in terms of power, politics, economics, ecology, and the everyday life of human groups.
- To engage with the ethics of research and develop a strong set of ethical practices to guide experiential learning, fieldwork, and professional practice.
- To challenge ourselves and question our assumptions about the inequalities within and between cities and our preconceptions about what a city should do or be like.

**Comparative Analysis project**
- Develop and implement an independent research project.
- Write an original research paper with a clear argument that is sustained by data.
- Learn to use observation-based data to develop an argument.
- Refine and practice research methods.
- Write an original research paper with a clear argument that is sustained by data.

**SESSIONS AND READINGS**

Class sessions of CUI focus on particular methods that will be useful in neighborhood days, case studies, and conducting the CA project. Introductory readings are also provided for each country; students should take advantage of travel time to familiarize themselves with the history and current events of each country we visit.

### NEW YORK CITY, U.S.A.

*New York City, here we are!*

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Traveling faculty lead a discussion on readings and on students’ impressions as compared to expectations of New York City. Subsequent sessions of ‘here we come and ‘here we are’ will be led by student country groups.


Further Reading:

1. Workshop: Observation and note-taking
   Our first CUI session will be a structured exercise to begin practicing the methods to be used toward the Comparative Analysis project, as well as assignments in other courses. Your comparative analysis (CA) project will rely mostly on participant observation as a source of data. This means that you will need to take careful notes on your observations during your individual research projects, but also during site visits and neighborhood days. This will be crucial when you write your final paper in Cape Town. We will introduce an exercise that will get you into a rhythm of constant note-taking and reflection.

Reading (required):

Additional Reading:

2. Workshop: The Comparative Analysis (CA) project in context
   The CA project is a long and complex journey that will inform much of your semester experience. In this session you will start to explore potential ideas for your independent research project, hear from IHP Cities alumni about their own research, and develop a panoramic view of the process so you have a sense of what to expect during the semester.

3. Workshop: Research ethics and positionality
   We have ethical responsibilities in the process of learning, particularly in the settings we will be visiting. In this session we will discuss some of the ethical considerations and sensitivities we will maintain throughout the course and in our research. Similarly, some of these ethical considerations require reflection about our own positionality: the way we look at and read a situation is informed by our structural position (class, race, gender) and world view.

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• Kascak, Lauren. 2014. “#intragrammingafrica: the narcissism of global voluntourism” The Society Pages. (accessed August 19th, 2016. Refer to the copy in your Program Manual. Also see the satirical pdf of Reductress and The Onion on your flashdrive)

• AAA Ethics code
• ASnA code of ethics
• Listen to radio lab.org podcast ‘Yellow Rain’

Buenos Aires, here we come!
The Argentina country group presents general information (e.g. weather, currency, basic phrases, etc), current events, and other highlights that you think the rest of the group should know before arriving. Also, the country group leads and all students contribute on expectations of the city —what each person anticipates the city to be like.

NEW YORK ASSIGNMENTS
• Pre-departure Essays (participation)
• CA Topic Selection (5%)

BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

Buenos Aires, here we are!
Country group leads a discussion on students’ first impressions as compared to expectations from the preceding “here we come”. Country group is also responsible for leading the discussion on the required readings below, including framing guiding questions.


Maps and photographs can also be an important source of data. In this session we will discuss the uses, potentials and limitation of these visual resources as sources of data for your comparative analysis project.

• Becker, H.S. Visual sociology, documentary photography, and photojournalism: it’s (almost) all a matter of context originally published in Visual Sociology 10 (1-2), 5-14.

5. Workshop: Having a conversation
Conversations—both those you purposely seek out and those that occur amid the routines of daily life—are important sources of information. We will discuss strategies for engaging in conversations in ways that respect others while allowing you to obtain information.


6. Workshop: Mapping exercise
Our mapping exercise will be based upon our lecture we receive on disability and negotiating the city. Pay particular attention to the differences (and potentially similarities) in your maps as they will differ from student to student.


Hanoi, here we come!
The Vietnam country group presents general information (e.g. weather, currency, basic phrases, etc), current events, and other highlights that you think the rest of the group should know before arriving. Also, the country group leads and all students contribute on expectations of the city —what each person anticipates the city to be like.

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HANOI, VIETNAM

Hanoi, here we are!

Country group leads a discussion on students’ first impressions as compared to expectations from the preceding “here we come”. Country group is also responsible for leading the discussion on the required readings below, including framing guiding questions.


7. Workshop: Reflection and analysis

Your portfolio will be your main source of data/evidence. It is from this notebook that you will craft your final paper. In this session we will collectively address questions about the connection between data/evidence and argument. The objective of this session is to think about the data that you have collected thus far.

- Your portfolio

8. Workshop: Developing the research question and data gathering: hearing about your project exercise

By now you should have a very good idea about your research question, the data required to answer your question, and the places where you can obtain data. This will be a collective ‘check-in’ time to make sure you understand what you need to do.

- Presenting your CA project (thus far) to your peers.

9. Workshop: Making an argument and supporting it with data + visual display of information

In preparation for your mid-semester presentation we will spend some time discussing some of the key elements of the presentation. How will you effectively and efficiently convey your ideas to your audience? By this stage the link between a research question – data/evidence – and central argument should be clear or begin to take shape.

- http://www.informationisbeautiful.net/
- http://www.visualisingdata.com/
- http://datavisualization.ch/

Cape Town, here we come!

The South Africa country group presents general information (e.g. weather, currency, basic phrases, etc), current events, and other highlights that you think the rest of the group should know before arriving. Also, the country group leads and all students contribute on expectations of the city –what each person anticipates the city to be like.

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BUENOS AIRES ASSIGNMENTS

- CA Portfolio Review (10%)
- Critical Reflection Paper (partial 5%)

HANOI ASSIGNMENTS

- CA Portfolio Review (10%)
- CA Mid-Semester Presentation (15%)
- Critical Reflection Paper (partial 5%)

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Cape Town, here we are!
Country group leads a discussion on students’ first impressions as compared to expectations from the preceding “here we come”. Country group is also responsible for leading the discussion on the required readings below, including framing guiding questions.


Additional Reading:

10. Workshop: Writing and presenting research
*This session is a class exercise wherein we will learn as a group how to write an abstract. We will review the fundamental structure of an abstract and you will adjust and shape your abstract accordingly. The task may seem a bit intimidating the first time, but we hope facilitation in this manner will ease any anxieties and make for a productive session.*

11. Workshop: Final questions before presentation and final CA paper

**CAPE TOWN ASSIGNMENTS**
- CA Final Presentation (15%)  
- CA Final Paper (30%)  
- Critical Reflection Paper (partial 5%)
DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Summary:

<table>
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<th>Overall component</th>
<th>Break down</th>
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<tr>
<td>Comparative Analysis Project (85 points)</td>
<td>• Topic selection (5 points)</td>
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<td>• Portfolio review – Buenos Aires (10 points)</td>
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<td>• Portfolio review – Hanoi (10 points)</td>
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<td>• Final oral presentation – Cape Town (15 points)</td>
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<td>• Final paper – Cape Town (30 points)</td>
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<td>CUI Activities (15 points)</td>
<td>• Participation (10 points total)</td>
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<td>• Critical reflection papers (5 points total)</td>
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I. Comparative Analysis (CA) project (85 points total)

This independent research project requires you to learn directly from primary sources (i.e., observations, conversations and interviews that you conduct) in multiple cities, and to integrate that research with frameworks and material from faculty courses and independent reading. Select a topic that inspires or intrigues you because you will explore it in each city we visit.

The topic must be feasible given time in the field and duration of stay in the country. Some questions to help guide your topic selection: Is it observable? Are my observation sites accessible by public transportation or walking? Have I considered language barriers and how to overcome them? Attention to feasibility will ensure that your project is realistic and achievable within the constraints of the semester’s schedule. The program’s activities and resources present multiple opportunities that you can and should utilize to collect data for your project. Consult closely with country coordinators and faculty to insure feasibility.

Each student’s CA project is developed during the semester in stages, with consultation and input from the faculty at each point via conversations, meetings and Office Hours and will be graded as follows:

a) Topic Selection, New York (written feedback, no grade) Students will explore ideas and select a topic for their CA project. Potential topics are everywhere: look at the syllabi of the other three courses. Feel free to discuss your ideas with faculty and coordinators. Topic selections will be reviewed by the faculty and must be approved by faculty advisors.

3 paragraphs that address the following:

• Topic selection and research focus: What is the topic? Is there written material on the topic? What is/are the preliminary research question(s) that you will investigate over the semester? Think about the type of answer your question demands. What urban issue(s) are you addressing through the comparative analysis project?
• Type / place of observations: In every city, you will need to do sustained observations of the topic you have chosen. What type of event/activity/interaction do you want to observe? Where will you observe this topic in every city? (NB. your notes on these observations should be in the portfolio.)
• Conversations/Interviews: In every city, you will need to have at least three conversations with people about the topic. Who will you speak with? Suggest some questions you might ask. Think about how these questions connect with your overarching focus. (NB your notes on these conversations should be in the portfolio.)
• Other research methods: Different topics may require different research methods and tools. What additional methods or tools will you use (if any)?
• Your own interest – your link with your topic: Why are you interested in investigating this topic? Why is it important? Explain your relationship/connection (if any) to your probable CA topic and the reasons for your

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Once your topic has been approved as a viable project, you will be assigned to a faculty member who will supervise your CA work over the semester. Your advisor will meet with you individually, guide you in the development of your research and will grade your CA project. The reason why you have traveling faculty is for you to use us as a resource. Do not procrastinate or wait until we ask you for a meeting. Pro-activity in this regard is vital!

b) CA Portfolio Review: Buenos Aires (10 points) and Hanoi (10 points) The CA Portfolio is an important part of the overall experiential learning process as well as the Comparative Analysis project. Your portfolio is the primary place to document your research process and progress and includes collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing your experiences in the field. Your CA portfolio will include artifacts, images and observations, reflections on newspaper and/or academic articles, site visits, lectures, and records of conversations pertaining to your CA project. Do not assume you will remember an observation; it is a fallacy to think you will remember everything and write it down later. The experience in each city is extremely intense and you may forget these instances by the time we arrive in the next city. Your portfolio will be the bridge between you and your advisor and will ensure that you have all the data needed to complete your CA project. (See appendix for more detailed information about the portfolio.) The portfolio review sessions will be organized with your advisor and on a rolling deadline basis. This means that as the course progresses, the deadlines will reflect both the timing of the course and the progress of your research. We envisage portfolio feedback sessions as conversations with students; an opportunity to engage in ways that may be limited in a written evaluation format. An oral feedback session is an opportunity to ask questions, discuss challenges, quality and types of data gathered etc. In our experience, oral feedback has proved to be an effective and personal mechanism for evaluation, development and improvement on CA projects.

Portfolio will be due with your faculty mentor, Kate or Rick, on a rolling basis. Your portfolio must be prepared for submission by September 26th (though the date you will submit will be worked out together with your faculty mentor).

Basis for portfolio assessment:
In each country:
COLLECTION
• Observations: Observe your topic for at least 8 hours. Record: a) a description of your observation(s), b) an interpretation of what you observed, and c) a reflection about the implications of these observations on your topic/question. Also note the date, time and place of the observation(s). You may want to complement your observations with artifacts (such as photos, drawings, maps, etc.) that illustrate your topic and interests.
• Conversations: Have at least three conversations about your CA topic. For each conversation: a) position the people with whom you conversed; b) record your questions, notes from the conversations, direct quotations, if possible, and c) your reflections on the conversations.

SELECTION
• Reflection: Reflect on your topic/question in context by relating it to readings/guest lectures/site visits/faculty sessions. This means that you include notes from these activities and thought about how they relate to your topic.
• Analysis: Begin analyzing what you have learned about your topic through observation, conversation, comparison, and contextualization. Include at the end of the portfolio a preliminary list of the main themes and categories according to which you are organizing the information gathered in your portfolio. Include what you learned from your data, where your project is heading, and the type of things you will need to do in the next city.

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The content & processes described above will be assessed in Buenos Aires and Hanoi (and should be utilized & reviewed throughout the semester in each country).

b) **CA Mid-Term Presentation, Hanoi (15 points).** The mid-term presentation provides an opportunity to present your findings and analysis to date and receive feedback from faculty and your peers. The presentation is an excellent opportunity to practice your presentation skills. You can present your research in a format and style of your choosing, but you will have **only three minutes** (strictly timed), to make your presentation. Include experience, evidence, and analysis from Buenos Aires and Hanoi (and New York if relevant).

c) **Comparative Analysis Project Conclusion, Cape Town (30 points).** Using all the materials you have gathered towards your CA, prepare a final essay and presentation during the last weeks of the program.

**CA Oral Presentation (15 points)**

In addition to the essay, students will also present their findings and analysis to fellow students, faculty, and other members of the learning community. Your presentation—which may be, but need not be, accompanied by drawings, photographs, or even video clips—will be (strictly) limited to eight minutes and should present your main argument and findings, and describe and explain the research process through which you arrived at your conclusions. You should also discuss your research questions and how these were modified in the course of your research. You will want to practice your presentation to ensure that you can deliver it within the allotted time limit and that it is tightly organized with a coherent flow. This will also help guarantee a solid final draft of your research essay.

CA Oral Presentations will be evaluated on:
- Quality of oral presentation – clarity, precision, succinctness
- Organization/structure and respect for the time limit
- The logical coherence linking research question and argument using data. This means, a clear explanation of how your data helps you answer your research question and support your argument.
- Effective use of program materials and a range of observations, conversations and any other relevant research data
- Well-supported analysis and thorough and pertinent comparisons

**CA Final Essay (30 points)**

Develop an essay that presents your major findings by comparing and analyzing your topic in each city we have visited. You will also need to present an argument for your analysis that addresses your research question and is based on the insights (i.e. data) you have obtained over the semester. Include the following: cover page, introduction, research question and methodology, presentation of evidence, analysis and findings, conclusion, and references within a 3000 word limit; “brevity is the soul of wit.” Additionally, you will attach to your CA Final Essay an appendix with 1) an annotated table of content of your portfolio, and 2) a one-page analysis of the portfolio’s content (see Guidelines for Portfolio in appendix).

CA Final Essays will be evaluated on:
- Well-constructed argument and text, using clear, concise prose.
- Appropriate academic tone, language and referencing of sources.
- Clarity of the research question and effectiveness in addressing it with a clear argument.
- The logical coherence linking research question and argument using data. This means, a clear explanation of how your data helps you answer your research question and support your argument.
- Effective use of program materials, observations, conversations and any other relevant research data.

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III. CUI Activities (15 points)
Participation grading for CUI is made up of two components: a student’s overall engagement in CUI activities (10 points), and the submission of a Critical Reflection paper prior to each of the Synthesis Sessions (in Buenos Aires, Hanoi, and Cape Town – 5 points total).

a) Participation (10 points) Assessment of participation in CUI activities is based on attendance and engagement in program activities in each city, as described below. Students are encouraged to be an active part of the learning community by listening, asking questions and contributing ideas to the intellectual growth of the class. We expect that students will improve their ability to do these things over the course of the semester. Each faculty member will participate in the assessment of student engagement and contribution to group learning.

Pre-departure Assignment: An exercise on urban issues, introducing the concept of reading a city through the study of a contemporary controversy and visions for urban change. The assignment is not graded (although you will receive feedback from faculty) but it is factored into your course participation.

Readings: The majority of the readings in the course provide you with methodological tools for your CA project. Some readings will be on the ‘how to’ of collecting/using/analyzing data and will be complemented with workshop exercises. A second set of readings will be presented and discussed during the ‘here we are’ sessions. The materials will be available for online download. These readings (a) provide historical background on the city and the country, (b) cover topics of current importance in each city, and (c) serve as reference material for guest lectures. A list of city-specific readings is available in the appendix of this syllabus. They are intended to serve as a traveling reference library, used on a flexible basis to provide background on specific issues in each city.

Neighborhood Days: Neighborhood days involve trips by small groups of students to different parts of the city. In each city, students spend several hours investigating a particular neighborhood, practicing our research methods of observation and engagement with local residents. Findings and experiences are shared through group presentations. Neighborhood day presentations are not graded but are a way to receive ungraded, constructive critique on methods, research, and presentation techniques.

Academic Synthesis: Towards the end of our stay in each city, students will participate in an Academic Synthesis session, led by student facilitators in conjunction with faculty. Synthesis sessions are designed as a time for students to reflect upon and discuss the most significant issues and challenges raised through experiencing and studying any particular city. These sessions bring together material from each aspect of the learning process—readings, faculty sessions, case studies and site visits, neighborhood days, and guest lectures—through individual and group reflection, analysis, and discussion. The final synthesis session in Cape Town will be a broader reflection on the learning experience throughout the entire semester.

‘Here we come’ and ‘here we are’ sessions: These are sessions in which all students participate, led by the country group, bracketing our departure from one place and framing our arrival to the next. ‘here we come’ is usually the last session in a country and is meant to anticipate what is to come in the next country we will visit. The session has two parts: first, the country group will present general information (e.g. weather, currency, basic phrases), current events, and other highlights. Then the country group will lead and all students contribute on their expectations for the upcoming city—what each person anticipates the city to be like or what kinds of issues might be relevant for our academic study. ‘Here we are,’ which is typically the first session once we arrive to the new city, is a way of checking our anticipations against our initial impressions. While a place remains new and we have yet to adjust, what stands out? what are the culture shocks? Led by the same country group, Here We Are also has two parts: first a debriefing on our initial impressions (and how they compare to our anticipations), and second, a discussion of the readings for the city.

Guest Lectures and panel discussions by participants in the Cities program are critical contributors for the learning process. They include people from civil society, government, and academia who bring a range of perspectives into

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the conversation, which contribute to our understanding of place-specific urban issues. Lecturers may also be a resource for your comparative analysis project.

*CUI Workshops* are devoted to exploring different research methods and analytical tools; the focus is on the research process for the CA project and for skills used in course assignments.

**b) Critical Reflection Paper (5 points)**

Prior to the synthesis sessions students must submit a ‘Critical Reflection’ paper. This is a 1-2 page paper in which students connect key concepts and issues explored in the city with critical self-reflection. This assignment is not akin to a portfolio entry that reviews what you did and when. Instead, it is a space for you to critically explore the questions and concepts that speak to you on a personal level. Perhaps there was a conversation you had during a site visit that you can’t get out of your mind, a passage from one of the readings that moved you, a conversation with a fellow student that challenged you, or a personal revelation that kept you up at night; elaborate on it in your Critical Reflection Paper. While there is a grade for this paper, it will be based on the simple criterion of evidence that the student connected intellectual inputs (lectures, neighborhood/site visits, homestay, etc.) to the personal journey that one experiences.

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**Summary Table of Assignments for CUI**

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<tr>
<th>New York</th>
<th>Buenos Aires</th>
<th>Hanoi</th>
<th>Cape Town</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Pre-departure Assignment</td>
<td>• Pre-departure Assignment</td>
<td>• Here We Are-Vietnam Group</td>
<td>• Here We Are-South Africa Group</td>
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<td>• Comparative Analysis (CA) Topic Selection</td>
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<td>• CA Portfolio Review</td>
<td>• CA Final Oral Presentation</td>
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<td>• Here We Come-Argentina Group</td>
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<td>• Critical Reflection paper</td>
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**GRADING SCALE**

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**COURSE POLICIES**

*Attendance and Participation:* All students are expected to be present at every class session, with the only exception being illness (written note required from a non-IHP adult, e.g. homestay parent, or preferably, health care professional). Unexcused absences and habitual lateness will result in penalties reflected in your participation grade. **Students are expected to come to class on time.**

*Late work:* In keeping with IHP policy, papers handed in late will drop one point per day, unless permission is granted otherwise. Course assignments are due at the beginning of the day.

*Plagiarism:* Each student is responsible for having read the IHP statement on plagiarism, which is available in the IHP Student Handbook. Students are advised that the penalty on IHP for plagiarism may be “…expulsion from the program or such other penalty as may be recommended by the Program Director, subject to approval by the Executive Director.”

Refer to the Student Handbook for IHP policies regarding academic integrity, academic warning and probation, diversity, disability, harassment protocols, and the academic appeals process.

**GUIDELINES FOR PORTFOLIO**

The research portfolio (which you will keep as a souvenir of your Comparative Analysis - CA research process) will contain everything you collect that is relevant to your topic and your research experience, such as: rough and revised field notes, project reports, bibliographic references and reading notes; artifacts such as flyers, posters, photographs, maps, etc. While at the beginning it may seem like a random collection of materials, over time it will become a well-organized collection of materials/data according to the main themes and categories of your research. In that sense, your portfolio combines two separate, but connected, activities: 1) it is the repository for everything that pertains to the process of conducting your CA research and, 2) at the end of the course, it will represent your reflection/systematization these materials, and show your research process as a sort of the research roadmap.

In short, your portfolio will contain a selection of materials that allow us to see connections made between different steps in the process of your experiential learning / CA experience. Consistent progress is the key here. **Progress** is not simply assessed in terms of the number of hours you have put in or the activities you have engaged in (we know you will do a lot!), but more importantly on **how well you have reflected** on what you have learned at different stages of the research process. This means how clearly and coherently you present your portfolio and how it “feeds” into the final CA paper. Post-it notes may be useful here, because they can provide commentary on notes, artifacts, photos, etc. and can be moved around easily. Be creative and make it work for you!

At different moments of the semester (in Buenos Aires and Hanoi), you will present to the rest of the class your portfolio. However, we strongly encourage you to form small groups (2-4 people) and discuss what you have been including in your portfolio, ideas you are having about the material, and patterns you are discovering.

At the end of the semester, you will turn-in as an appendix to the CA paper the following: 1) an annotated table of contents; 2) a one-page analysis of the portfolio’s content. The annotated table of content is an inventory of the kinds of materials collected organized in a systematic manner. The one-page analysis is a reflective commentary about the semester-long process of collecting, selecting, reflecting, and projecting.

Below is a list of the points that we think may be especially helpful for you to visualize the idea of the portfolio:

- A portfolio is a flexible collection of working files “for tracking your learning and documenting your work throughout the research process” (56). To keep track of your project you will move back and forth among four key activities: collecting, selecting, reflecting and projecting”

* This syllabus is representative of a typical term. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester. In addition, considerations of student safety may change some course content.
• **Collecting** materials (artifacts, photos, maps, drawings, fliers, fieldnotes, ideas, etc) *(ALWAYS DATE AND PLACE).* At the beginning it is a random collection, but over time it will become a focused collection of materials that will shape your research / field work.

• **Selecting** the material according to emerging themes and focus (as you do this begin to think in ways of organizing – classifying - indexing). Define and redefine the categories of data, think of it as folders or drawers in a filing cabinet.

• **Reflecting** on your overall data and themes. Once a week or at the beginning and at the end of each city, take the time to reflect on the data already collected. “every item that you include in the portfolio will require reflective writing on your part, from short fieldnote entries to longer memos to yourself. When you review your data alongside your thinking, you’ll find options for further focus and analysis” (58)

• **Projecting** as you look forward toward further progress and continue to form your plans. “When you look over what you’ve read, thought, said, written, and collected, you will begin to find meanings and patterns that may instruct you about where your work is headed” (58).

- Emphasis on the importance of **reflecting** through **writing** and reflecting on your writing. “To reflect is think about your own thinking, to monitor the evidence of your minds work” (112). “Stick-on notes are useful tools because their small size forces you to summarize succinctly and they’re easy to replace as your insights change over the course of your project” (112).

- “The portfolio is the site of your research reflections” (p 167). It should contain reflections on artifacts, readings, and writings. “The portfolio captures both your fieldwork and your deskwork” (167). Reflecting on the collected materials and on your fieldnotes implies constantly asking yourself (and writing your ideas about: “How does your own personal history affect what you have chosen? What does each artifact represent about a growing theme in your research? How do the artifact connect to one another?” (168).

- “Think of your portfolio as a cultural site — your personal fieldsite — and the artifacts you choose to place in your portfolio as data that teach you about your own fieldworking process. The readers of your portfolio [...] will need to know why you have collected and selected the cultural artifacts you display.” (220)

- “One of the jobs of a research portfolio is to help you synthesize what you have collected and selected. It offers you an opportunity to reflect on what you have learned and on how your research writing fits into the larger picture of your research.” (352)

- “A portfolio offers you the chance to sift through the chaos of piles of data and select representations that will enable you to see what you have more easily.” “Like a well-designed web page, it displays the items and connections (links) you’ve selected to represent the categories of your research, the data you have collected and the ways your thinking develops as you look it over, plan more research, and then perhaps re-categorize further.” (412)


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**Additional Bibliographic References**

*(most texts available upon request)*

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The following readings are recommended for a range of purposes including introduction and in-depth material on the city, the discipline, methods and/or concepts. Readings are intended to augment your observations, experiences, and learning in the cities we visit. They are good resources for clarifying concepts and deepening your understanding of what

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you are experiencing. This list, particularly readings related to Buenos Aires, Hanoi, and Cape Town, will continue to grow throughout the semester; ask the faculty for suggestions of additional readings.

**New York City**

**South Africa**

**General - Urbanization**

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Cities of the Global South

The neoliberal project
• Calhoun, Craig and Georgi Derluguian (eds) 2011. The Deepening Crisis: Governance Challenges after Neoliberalism. NYU Press.

**Urban governance / smart-global cities**


**Gated communities / gentrification**


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Housing / informality / degraded neighborhoods


Right to the city

- Lopes de Souza, Marcelo. 2015. “From the ‘right to the city’ to the right to the planet”. *City: analysis of urban trends, culture, theory, policy, action*. Vol. 19, No. 4, Pp. 408-443.

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Public spaces


Citizenship, contentious politics and social movements

- McAdam, Doug, John D. McCarthy, Mayer N. Zald (eds.) 1996. Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings. Cambridge University Press.

Urban environmental issues


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