

Culture and Society of World Cities (C&S) **ANTH 3500 (4 Credits)** **International Honors Program (IHP)** **Cities in the 21st Century: People, Planning, and Politics**

This syllabus is representative of a typical semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Course Description

This course examines the many ways people make urban life meaningful. What are the historical, political-economic, and socio-cultural contexts that frame the opportunities, constraints, and uncertainties of urban life? How, in those contexts, do people create a sense of place? Our study of social and cultural urban processes emphasizes the relationship of space to identity and power. The course examines aspects of identity, including race and ethnicity, gender, class, family, community, and citizenship. In each city, we will grapple with conflicts, struggles, and celebrations that are embedded in and emerge from specific historical, socio-economic, and political contexts. We will examine cities as physical and imagined spaces, exploring how spatial and social life are mutually shaped, and how the meanings of cities are multiple and contested by different groups and actors with often incompatible agendas.

Within cities, identities and differences are historically created and reified through a series of cumulative interactions and interpretations, historical and political phenomena and events. This course tracks the various manifestations of urban identities through the lenses of some key systems of categorization and difference: race, gender, class. We will explore each of these as systems of exclusion, and how they manifest differently in our diverse sites.

The purpose of this course is twofold: a) to introduce students to analytical and methodological tools for studying cultural and social dimensions of urban life, and b) to explore articulations of politics, socio-economics, identity and culture that are ethnographically located in particular urban contexts, yet resonate theoretically toward a comparative understanding of cities and urban life.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to

- Describe spatial expressions of social, political, and economic processes
- Discuss cultural processes of identity formation within the analytical frame of historical colonial / global processes.
- Compare and contrast social configurations of class, race and gender in different urban contexts;
- Apply qualitative research tools to undertake ethnographic research in intercultural settings and engage with local peoples and institutions in reflexive and substantive ways.

Instructional Methods

Through readings, oral presentations, and class discussions we will explore how, over time, anthropologists and other social scientists have adapted research methods and theoretical perspectives to understand local, regional, national, transnational, and global processes that converge (and diverge) in cities. Acknowledging cultural diversity and the various perspectives and assumptions about the world and its inhabitants is a crucial dimension of the anthropological lens. Students will be strongly encouraged to recognise their own cultural assumptions and to take distance from them in order to make space for different ways of being in and imagining the world.

Through written assignments students will be introduced to qualitative research methods, including ethnography or participant observation, which offer important tools for a comparative study of urban life. How do we learn from everyday life, careful observations of urban expressions and social interactions in specific urban spaces, and the stories people tell about themselves and their city? An ethnographic lens allows us to study detailed, local accounts of city life, while a comparative lens enables us to understand urban processes from a diversity of perspectives and experiences that characterize urbanism.

Materials

Required readings, compiled in individual course folders, will be loaded onto your flash drive. Thematic readings, to be posted on Dropbox, are provided for further reference and to understand an issue in more depth. Students are expected to complete required readings before C & S faculty sessions and to use readings for reference in discussions as well as in assignments. In addition, students are encouraged to make use of thematic readings and IHP in-country libraries and to investigate local resources, including news media. Reading newspapers regularly in each city offers a valuable resource for understanding current issues and debates. Students are also encouraged to use individual initiative to find supplementary resources. Please keep in mind that the reading assignments may be updated during the semester.

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

1. Participation (20% of grade)

- Participation means completing all assigned readings before each faculty session, engaging in discussion in class, asking questions in class.
- Always come to class with 1- 2 critical questions about that week's readings. Prepared questions will be collected during classes.
- Be prepared to speak for several minutes about what you found most interesting, important, or challenging about the reading assignment and how it does or does not connect to field activities and other IHP program activities.

2. Assignments (80% of grade)

- Jackson. Case study. (20%)
- Johannesburg. Individual essay. (30%)
- Cape Town. Exam. (30%)

Assignment instructions are at the end of the syllabus. More detailed instructions may be handed out in class nearer the assignment deadline.

Course Policies

Attendance and Participation

- All students are expected to be present at every program session, with the only exceptions 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.
- Please inform the instructor if tardiness is anticipated.
- All students are expected to come to class on time.

Late work: In keeping with IHP policy,

- Papers handed in late will drop one percentage point per day unless permission is granted otherwise.
- Course assignments are due at the beginning of the day.

Grading Scale

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+
84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
67-69%	D+
64-66%	D
below 64	F

SIT Policies and Resources

Please refer to the [SIT Study Abroad Handbook](#) and the [Policies](#) section of the SIT website for all academic and student affairs policies. Students are accountable for complying with all published policies. Of particular relevance to this course are the policies regarding: academic integrity, research and ethics in field study and internships, late assignments, academic status, academic appeals, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and misconduct, and the student code of conduct.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook and SIT website for information on important resources and services provided through our central administration in Vermont, such as [Library resources and research support](#), [Disability Services](#), [Counseling Services](#), [Title IX information](#), and [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) resources.

Course Schedule

*Please be aware that topics and site visits may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs

JACKSON

Session 1. Gender, Race, and Capitalism.

- Baptist, Edward. 2014. *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism*. New York: Basic Books.
- Haley, Sarah. 2016. *No Mercy Here: Gender, Punishment, and the Making of Jim Crow Modernity*. The University of North Carolina Press.
- Robinson, Cedric. 1983. "Racial Capitalism: The Nonobjective Character of Capitalist Development." In *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*. The University of North Carolina Press

Session 2. The Wages of Whiteness.

- Roediger, David. 1991. *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*. London; New York: Verso.
- Ahmed, Sara. 2007. "A Phenomenology of Whiteness." *Feminist Theory* Vol 8(2). SAGE Publications. Pg 149-168.

Session 3. Infrastructure and Technopolitics.

- Boyer, Dominic. 2019. "Infrastructure, Potential Energy, Revolution." *The Promise of Infrastructure*. Duke University Press.
- Larkin, Brian. 2013. "The Politics and Poetics of Infrastructure." *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 42: 327-43.

NEW YORK

Session 4. Theorizing Mobility.

- Lelièvre, Michelle A., and Maureen E. Marshall. 2015. "'Because Life It Self Is but Motion': Toward an Anthropology of Mobility." *Anthropological Theory* 15(4): 434–471.
- Rose-Redwood, Reuben. "'A Regular State of Beautiful Confusion': Governing by Numbers and the Contradictions of Calculable Space in New York City." 39.4 (2012): 624-38. Web.

Session 5. COVID-19 and "Crisis."

- Dobkin, Jake. 2020. "The Very Unequal Impact of COVID-19 on NYC Neighborhoods." *Gothamist*. Web.
- Roitman, Janet. 2015. *Anti-Crisis*. Duke University Press.

Session 6. Burials, Memorials and Memorialization.

- Bernstein, Nina. 2016. "Unearthing the Secrets of York's Mass Graves." *The New York Times*.
- Frohne, Andrea. 2015. "The African Burial Ground in New York City: Memory, Spirituality and Space." *The Journal of Pan African Studies* Vol 8 (9).

Session 7. Discipline, Punishment, and Policing.

- Browne, Simone. *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness*. 2015. Web.

- Foucault, Michel. 1995. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Vintage Books.

JOHANNESBURG

Session 8. Reproducing racial, ethnic and national differences

- Mamdani, M. 2001. Beyond Settler and Native as Political Identities: Overcoming the Political Legacy of Colonialism in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 43, No. 4 (Oct), 651-664
- Ramutsindela, M. 1997. National identity in South Africa: The search for harmony. *GeoJournal*, 43(1), 99-110.

CAPE TOWN

Session 9. Building walls, identities, and segregation.

- Teppo, Annika. 2019. "Displaced, Misplaced, Re-places: In Search of Understanding "Race" and Urban Change- Evidence from Cape Town." In *The Routledge Handbook of Anthropology and the City*. Ed. Setha Low.
- Fanon, Frantz. 1963. Concerning violence. *The wretched of the earth*, 7-35.

Session 10. Claiming land and indigeneity

- Adhikari, Mohamed. 2006. Hope, Fear, Shame, Frustration: Continuity and Change in the Expression of Coloured Identity in White Supremacist South Africa, 1910-1994. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 32, no. 3, 467-87.
- Sato, Chizuko. 2018. Khoisan revivalism and the land question in Post-Apartheid South Africa in G. Mkodzongi & F. Brandt, *Land Reform Revisited: Democracy, State Making and Agrarian Transformation in Post-Apartheid South Africa*. Brill, Leiden, 199-221

Session 11. Performing Africa

- Bruner, E. 2001. The Maasai and the Lion King: Authenticity, Nationalism, and Globalization in African Tourism. *American Ethnologist*, 28(4), 881-908.
- L. Baxter. 2001. Continuity and Change in Cape Town's Coon Carnival: The 1960s and 1970s, *African Studies*, 60:1, 87-105.

ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of the assignments is to develop your ethnographic skills through careful observation and critical, analytical thinking.

1. Jackson. Re/Building the city through road infrastructure (Case Study) *A comprehensive prompt will be provided upon arrival*

The case study grade in Jackson counts as the C&S group presentation grade for Jackson and contributes to the participation grade in CUI. Students will receive feedback from all faculty and the country coordinator, but the grade for this case study is the responsibility of the C&S instructor.

- You will be assigned one of two themes
- The city team might facilitate meetings with relevant players.

- You will spend a few hours observing/participating and taking notes on your surroundings. If you cannot take notes during the activity, you should do so immediately after.
- The output of this exercise will be a group presentation for which you are expected to include the following components:
 - A brief description locating and defining the places in the city where you did your interviews, and a brief description of how you gathered your information
 - A brief description introducing and positioning the people you interviewed.
 - A basic description about the current situation and related issues associated to your themes.
 - Presentation and analysis of the different views obtained
 - A clearly stated argument and a clear connection between argument and evidence (how does the evidence presented support your argument?)
- You will be evaluated as a group on
 - Communication / Presentation structure: The clarity of how you address each of these above mentioned points
 - Connections to Program content: the extent to which you are able to integrate information and/or concepts learned from faculty or guest lectures, site visits, assigned readings, etc.
 - Research / data collected: The quality of the research (quality and relevance of the information collected / evidence presented) and the quality of the research process (initiative to look for information, variety of sources, division of labor or data collection, etc.)
 - Argument and Analysis of / evidence: the coherence of the analysis, and the clarity of the argument (clear explanation of how the evidence presented is connected to the argument, - the specific way in which the evidence supports the argument)

2. New York: Looking for sites of memory in New York (Essay)

- The essay will be based on the observation on one site of memory in New York. Your observation will be no shorter than 1 hour and no longer than 2 hours, in one or two seating (s).
- The essay will be divided into a descriptive and an analytic part. Your description of the space and interactions will be matter of fact and your analysis will be inductive, refraining from extrapolation, deduction and unfounded interpretations.
- Your paper will be limited to 1000 words.

3. CAPE TOWN (Final Exam)

Sample of possible exam questions will be provided upon arrival in Cape Town.

This exam is an OPEN BOOK and OPEN NOTE exam. This means that the more notes you make throughout the semester, during site visits, guest lectures and faculty lectures, and on your readings, the easier your exam will be for you. You will be given the topic on a Friday at noon, and submit your final exam answers on Monday 9am.

You will be given 9 exam questions and asked to answer 3 of them. In order to help you prepare for this exam we will provide you with sample exam questions. The best way to prepare for this exam is to start collecting notes from readings, class and site visits on these topics. Here are some important things to help you prepare for this exam:

1. Do not leave your preparation to the exam weekend. Although you have more than 48 hours to answer your exam questions, if you have not made good notes, done your readings and considered your answers to the sample questions, you will not be able to produce quality answers in that time frame.
2. From day one, use your notebooks to document as much as possible. When writing down quotes from speakers, ensure that you note their names, where they are from, what organization they represent etc.
3. Get into the habit of making good notes on your readings. These will help you enormously when writing the exam.
4. In the lead up to the exam, practice writing answers to some of the sample questions. This will help you shortcut building solid arguments and locating evidence in your final papers.

An excellent exam essay has the following:

1. An introduction, which states your position and argument, a body of evidence that supports your argument (see sources below) and a conclusion.
2. A strongly developed argument, that uses detailed evidence from:
 - C&S sessions
 - Readings from throughout the semester
 - Site visits
 - Guest lectures
 - Your own observations (from your portfolio)
3. Proper referencing, including for guest lecturers and site visits (full names of people and organizations)