

## Contemporary Urban Issues (CUI) URST 3000 (4 credits)

### International Honors Program (IHP) IHP Cities in the 21st Century: People, Planning, Politics

*This syllabus is representative of a typical 3-country program. Note that program locations may change due to Covid-19 precautions. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.*

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

More than half the world's population lives in cities and urban areas—creating tremendous challenges as well as opportunities to uphold the promise of the city (UN-HABITAT, 2014). *Contemporary Urban Issues (CUI)* is a research methods and ethics course, designed to provide you with tools that to gather and analyze data, develop arguments and participate in debates about the city we want. The foundation of this course is your own research: your Comparative Analysis Project. The readings and activities in this course will provide you with the research skills and tools needed to identify and analyze challenges common to cities, and to distinguish common urban challenges from others that are rooted in particular histories and social geographies. Moreover, the course will allow you to develop strategies to make meaningful comparisons, particularly concerning configurations of political, economic, and social power as they manifest in urban and peri-urban spaces. We will accomplish this with a combination of class discussions based on readings and practical exercises (workshops) that weave experiential learning with more formal academic activities. All these activities are aimed to nurture your final Comparative Analysis (CA) research project.

The research process demands **systematic work, patience, consistency, persistence, curiosity, and creativity**. Answers to your question or argument that frames your final CA paper do not come easily. During the course of the semester, you will develop the habit and refine the craft of careful observation and detailed notetaking. This will be the foundation for your semester long CA research project. In short, the purpose of this course is to foster a sense of curiosity and 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 do 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/or how people make sense and organize practices in the process of building the city they/we want?

You will consider these questions in São Paulo, Barcelona 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 purpose of CUI is to learn to engage with the unique local resources, knowledge, and expertise that students encounter in the cities of the IHP Cities program. The course thus focuses on fieldwork methods,

practice, and ethics. It 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 CA research project. These tools will include exercises on framing the research question, strategies for collecting information/data in an unfamiliar context and developing categories and arguments. These strategies will rely on **active observation** and **consistent/detailed notetaking**. 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.

The course includes workshops and seminar discussions, individual and group research, and neighborhood day debriefings. 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, debriefing, and syntheses are thus key components of CUI. In many ways, CUI presents the best opportunity to make the program a transformative experience, because it brings together 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 real world, 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 lectures, 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 sharpen observation and note-taking skills.
- To build analytical skills in terms of power, politics, economics, and the everyday life in different urban contexts.
- 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 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.
- Learn to use observation-based data to develop analytical categories and an argument.
- Write an original research paper with a clear argument that is sustained by data.
- Identify and incorporate relevant literature.

### 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, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 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.

### SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS

#### Final grade breakdown

Overall component	Break down
Comparative Analysis Project (points)	Pre-departure paper (literature review and proposal) <i>revision</i> (5 points) Portfolio review – São Paulo (5 points) Mid-semester presentation – Barcelona (15 points) Final oral presentation – Cape Town (15 points) Final paper – Cape Town (30 points)
CUI Activities (30 points)	Participation (20 points) Synthesis session (5 points - country group) “Here we are!” presentation (5 points)

## Work due in each city

Introduction	São Paolo	Barcelona	Cape Town
1. Pre-departure assignment (proposal + literature)	1. Here We Are-Brazil Country Group 2. Revised pre-departure assignment (proposal + literature review) 3. CA Portfolio Review 4. Synthesis session - Brazil Country Group	1. Here We Are-Spain Country Group 2. CA Mid-semester Oral/poster Presentation 3. Synthesis session - Spain Country Group	1. Here We Are-South Africa Country Group 2. CA Final Oral Presentation 3. CA Final essay 4. Synthesis session - South Africa Country Group

## 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.

### *Introduction*

#### 1. Introduction and practice session

*Traveling faculty present background readings guidance for the methodology of the class using examples from New York, USA*

- Burrows, Edwin and Mike Wallace. 1999. *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898*. Oxford University Press. Pp.118-137.
- Busà, Alessandro. 2017. “The producers and consumers of New York City”. In *The Creative Destruction of New York City: Engineering the City for the Elite*. Oxford University Press. Pp. 63- 89.
- Angotti, Tom. 2017. “Zoned-out in the city: New York City’s tale of race and displacement”. *Poverty and Race*. Vol. 26, No. 1, Pp. 11-15.

#### Further reading:

- Maccelbergh, Marianne. 2012. “Mobilizing to stay put: housing struggles in New York City”. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*. Vol. 36, No. 4, Pp. 655-673.
- Teresa, Benjamin. 2016. “Managing fictitious capital: The legal geography of investment and political struggle in rental housing in New York City”. *Environment and Planning A*. Vol. 48, No. 3, Pp. 465–484.
- Thompson, Carolyn. 2011. “Discourses of community contestation: the fight over the Atlantic Yards in Brooklyn, New York”. *Urban Geography*. Vol. 32, No. 8, Pp. 1189-1207.

## 2 The Comparative Analysis (CA) project in context + double entry notetaking

*The CA project is a long, intense and complex journey that in many ways will inform your semester experience. In this session you will start to explore potential ideas for your independent research project and develop a panoramic view of the process so you have a sense of what to expect during the semester. The CA project will rely mostly on observation as the main 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, homestays, and personal explorations of the city. This will be crucial when you write your final paper in Cape Town.*

- Vogt Eric, Juanita Brown, and David Isaacs. 2003. *The Art of Powerful Questions: Catalyzing Insight, Innovation, and Action*. Pp. 1-14.
- Sunstein, Bonnie and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater. 2007. "Double-entry notes". In *Fieldworking: Reading and Writing Research*. St. Martin Press. Pp. 101-108.

### Further reading:

- Wolfinger, Nicholas. 2002. "On writing fieldnotes: collection strategies and background expectancies". *Qualitative Research*. Vol. 2, No. 1, Pp. 85-95.
- Tjora, Akselh. 2006. "Writing small discoveries: an exploration of fresh observers' observations". *Qualitative Research*. Vol. 6, No. 4, Pp. 429-451.
- Ward, Kevin. 2010. "Towards a relational comparative approach to the study of cities". *Progress in Human Geography*. Vol. 34, No. 4, Pp. 471-487.
- Robinson, Jennifer. 2011. "Cities in a world of cities: The comparative gesture". *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*. Vol. 35, No. 1, Pp. 1-23.

## 3 Research ethics and positionality

*Do we have any ethical responsibilities in the process of learning, particularly in the setting we will be visiting? YES, we do. In this session we will discuss some of the ethical consideration we need to keep in mind as we interpret and reflect about a particular situation and/or a group of people. Similarly, part of these ethical considerations imply reflection about our own positionality or situated knowledge: the way you look at and read a situation is informed by your personal history and your (class, race, gender) structural position. The source of information for this session (in addition to the reading) will be based on your observations and notes you took during a site visit.*

- Smith Rotabi, Karen, Denise Gammonley and Dorothy N. Gamble. 2006. "Ethical guidelines for study abroad: Can we transform ugly Americans into engaged global citizens?". *British Journal of Social Work*. Vol. 36, No. 3, Pp. 451-465.

### Further readings:

- Ali, Rabia. 2015. Rethinking representation: negotiating positionality, power and space in the field". *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*. Vol. 22, No. 6, Pp. 783-800.
- Illich, Ivan. 1968. "To hell with good intentions"
- Rose, Gillian. 1997. "Situating knowledges: positionality, reflexivities and other tactics". *Progress in Human Geography*. Vol. 21, No. 3, Pp. 305-320.

## 4 Academic Synthesis – Pre-departure assignment review at Orientation

*This will be an opportunity to explore the readings, ask questions about this class, and practice some of the components. The goal is to define the main learning outcomes.*

## **5 São Paulo, here we come!**

*In this short session -lead by the Brazil country group- you will go over the English language current news resources and discuss the main issues in Brazil and define collective learning goals.*

### **Recommended readings**

- <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/internacional/en/>
- <http://riotimesonline.com/brazil-news/tag/sao-paulo/>
- <http://www.brasilwire.com/>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/world/brazil>

### **Pre-departure ASSIGNMENTS**

- Pre-departure assignment (proposal + literature review)

## ***SAO PAULO, BRAZIL***

## **6 São Paulo, here we are!**

*Country group leads the discussion on the required readings below, including framing guiding questions. The point of this session is not simply to summarize each of the readings, but to introduce to the group the city in ways that will allow us to begin to ask questions about São Paulo and reflect about each of your CA projects.*

- São Paulo, Brazil historical timeline.
- Andrews, George. 1996. "Brazilian racial democracy, 1900-90: An american counterpoint" *Journal of Contemporary History*. Vol. 31, No. 3, Pp. 483-507.
- Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics. 1999 [1976]. "What color are you?" In R. Levine J. Crocitti (eds.) *The Brazil Reader: History, Culture, Politics*. Duke University Press. 386-390.
- Buechler, Simone. 2007. "Deciphering the local in a global neoliberal age: Three favelas in São Paulo, Brazil". In S. Sassen (ed.). *Deciphering the Global Its Scales, Spaces and Subjects*. Routledge. Pp. 97-116.
- Baiocchi, Gianpaolo & Ana Claudia Teixeira. 2017. "Brazil: Back to the streets?". In S. Alvarez, J. Rubin, M. Thayer, G. Baiocchi, & A. Laó-Montes (eds.) *Beyond Civil Society: Activism, Participation, and Protest in Latin America*. Duke University Press. Pp. 283-295.
- VIDEO □ "Brazil election 2018 - who will be president?"
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hkku111XBL0>

### Further readings:

- Silva, Gerardo and María de Lourdes Fonseca. 2013. "Sao Paulo, city-region: constitution and development dynamics of the São Paulo macrometropolis". *International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development*. Vol. 5, No. 1, Pp. 65-76.

- OXFAM. 2017. “The state of inequalities in Brazil”. In *Inequalities in Brazil: The Divide that Unite Us*. OXFAM. Pp. 15-40.
- Rollemberg Mollo, Maria de Lourdes and Alfredo Saad-Filho. 2006. “Neoliberal economic policies in Brazil (1994–2005): Cardoso, Lula and the need for a democratic alternative”. *New Political Economy*. Vol. 11, No. 1, Pp. 99-123.

## 7 WORKSHOP - Interviews and conversations

*Interviews and (seemingly random) conversations are important sources of information. We will discuss strategies for engaging in conversations in ways that respect the others and allow you to obtain information. Note that interviews and conversations should be seen as complementary sources of information, since you may not have the language skills to rely on this strategy in all the cities we will visit.*

- Spradley, James. 1979. “Asking descriptive questions”. In *The Ethnographic Interview*. Wadsworth. Pp. 44-53.

### Further reading:

- Fontana, Andrea & James Frey. “The interview : From neutral stance to political involvement”. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (eds.). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Sage. Pp. 695-728.
- Mullings, Beverley. 1999. “Insider or outsider, both or neither: some dilemmas of interviewing in a cross-cultural setting”. *GeoForum*. Vol. 30, No. 4, Pp. 337-350.

## 8 WORKSHOP – Mapping as a tool to ‘see’ data

*One of the main goals of the CA project is to ground observation in specific spaces as a means to make relevant comparisons. One important aspect of this process is to understand how getting a sense of spaces becomes a powerful tool for making sense of your observations and analysis.*

- Sunstein, Bonnie and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater. 2007. “Learning how to look: mapping space”. In *Fieldworking: Reading and Writing Research*. St. Martin Press. Pp. 194-205.

## 9 WORKSHOP - Reflection and analysis: research question and data gathering

*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.*

- Sunstein, Bonnie and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater. 2007. “The research portfolio” In *Fieldworking: Reading and Writing Research*. St. Martin Press. Pp. 57-58; 220-221; 300-302; 412- 414; 463-465.

## 10 Your portfolio Academic Synthesis - São Paulo

*This will be an opportunity to bridge your experiences in the city (site visits, neighborhood day, etc.), guest lectures, and course readings. The goal is to define the main learning outcomes of the month in São Paulo. Country group (with support of faculty) will facilitate this synthesis.*

## 11 Barcelona, here we come!

*In this short session -lead by the Spain country group- you will go over the English language current news resources and discuss the main issues in Spain and define collective learning goals.*

### **Recommended readings**

- <http://www.catalannews.com/>
- <https://elpais.com/elpais/inenglish.html>

### SAO PAULO ASSIGNMENTS

1. São Paulo, here we are! - **Brazil Country Group** (5 points)
2. Revised pre-departure assignment (proposal + literature review) (5 points)
3. CA Portfolio Review (5 points) → 11-15 February
4. Synthesis session - **Brazil Country Group** (5 points)

### BARCELONA, SPAIN

#### 12 Barcelona, here we are!

*Country group leads the discussion on the required readings below, including framing guiding questions.*

- Barcelona, Spain historical timeline
- McDonogh, Gary & Sergi Martinez-Rigol. 2018. “Barcelona, today and tomorrow (1970-)”. In *Barcelona*. Polity Press. Pp. 241-273.
- Rubio-Pueyo, Vicente. 2017. “Municipalism in Spain: From Barcelona to Madrid, and Beyond”. Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, *City Series*, #4. Pp.2-22.
- Gessen, Masha. 2018. Interview with Ada Colau: “Barcelona’s experiment with radical democracy”. *The New Yorker*. <https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/barcelonas-experiment-in-radical-democracy>
- VIDEO □ “SÍ SE PUEDE. Seven days at PAH Barcelona”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=caD17RKJfbc&t=2169s>

#### Further reading:

- Bazurli, Raffaele & Pablo Castaño Tierno. 2018. “Barcelona, a Beacon by the sea”. *Jacobin*. <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2018/07/barcelona-en-comu-spain-pedro-sanchez-indignados-podemos>
- Monclús, Francisco Javier. 2000. “Barcelona's planning strategies: from 'Paris of the South' to the 'Capital of West Mediterranean’”. *GeoJournal*. Vol. 51, No. 1/2, Pp. 57-63.
- Walker, Alex & Bernardo Porraz. 2003. “Urban Slums Reports: The case of Barcelona, Spain”. 27pp.

#### 13 WORKSHOP – Defining categories; defining argument

*In preparation for your mid-semester presentation we will spend some time discussing some of the key elements of the presentation. By this stage the link between a research question – data/evidence – and central argument should be clear or begin to take shape. One of the key challenges is how to go about developing an argument. It is in this process that the definition of analytical categories will be a crucial process in connecting data to argument.*

- Dey, Ian. 2007. “Grounding categories”. In A. Bryant & K. Charmaz (eds.). *The SAGE Handbook of Grounded Theory*. Sage. Pp. 167-189.

#### 14 MID-SEMESTER PRESENTATION

*This will be an opportunity to share your work (thus far) with your peer, get feedback on your progress and learn what everyone else is working on.*

#### 15 Academic Synthesis - Barcelona

*This will be an opportunity to bridge your experiences in the city (site visits, neighborhood day, etc.), guest lectures, and course readings. The goal is to define the main learning outcomes of the month in Barcelona. Country group (with support of faculty) will facilitate this synthesis.*

#### 16 Cape Town, here we come!

*In this short session -lead by the South Africa country group- you will go over the English language current news resources and discuss the main issues in South Africa and define collective learning goals.*

#### Recommended readings

- <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/>
- <http://www.thedailyvox.co.za/>
- <https://www.groundup.org.za/>
- <https://mg.co.za/>

#### BARCELONA ASSIGNMENTS

1. Barcelona, Here we are! - **Spain Country Group** (5 points)
2. CA Mid-semester - Oral Presentation (15 points)
3. Synthesis session - **Spain Country Group** (5 points)

#### CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

#### 17 Cape Town, here we are!

*Country group leads the discussion on the required readings below, including framing guiding questions.*

- Cape Town, South Africa historical timeline
- Biko, Steve. 1973. "Black Consciousness and the Quest for True Humanity". SASO Newsletter.
- Shepperd, Nick. 2015. "Digging deep: a hauntology of Cape Town" in J. Cherry and F. Rojas (eds.) *Archaeology for the People: Joukowsky Institute Perspectives*. Oxbow Books: Pp. 96-107
- Naidoo, Prishani. 2015. "Between old and new: Struggles in contemporary South Africa". *South Atlantic Quarterly*. Vol. 114, No. 2, Pp. 436-445.
- VIDEO □ "A Tale of Two Slums: Tackling Poverty in South Africa"  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=19VGE204Mt4> "South Africa's Born Free"  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ThnceHuA\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ThnceHuA_w)

#### Further readings:

- Brief History of Cape Town Townships <http://www.fergusmurraysculpture.com/south-africa/cape-townships-6-pages/history-of-cape-town-townships/>
- Wilson, Francis. 2011. "Historical Roots of Inequality in South Africa". *Economic History of*

*Developing Regions*. Vol. 26, No. 1: pp. 1-15.

- Western, J. 2002. "A Divided City: Cape Town". *Political Geography* 21: 711-716.
- Nash, Andrew. 1999. "Mandela's Democracy". *Monthly Review*. Vol. 50, No. 11, Pp. 18-28.

### **18 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.*

### **19 Final Presentations**

*This will be a session devote to address final questions and concerns about the oral presentation and paper.*

### **20 Academic Synthesis – Cape Town**

*This will be an opportunity to bridge your experiences in the city (site visits, neighborhood day, etc.), guest lectures, and course readings. The goal is to define the main learning outcomes of the month in Cape Town. Country group (with support of faculty) will facilitate this synthesis.*

#### **CAPE TOWN ASSIGNMENTS**

1. Cape Town, Here we are! - **South Africa Country Group** (5 points)
2. CA Final Oral Presentation (15%)
3. CA Final Essay (30%)
4. Synthesis session - **South Africa Country Group** (5 points)

## DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

### I. Comparative Analysis (CA) project (70 points)

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.

The specific topic stems from an interpretation of one of the five themes in the pre-departure assignment. Some questions to consider as you transform a theme into your specific topic:

- Is it observable?
- Are my observation sites accessible by public transportation or walking? Can I easily access these sites/spaces?
- 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) *Pre-departure assignment: literature review and CA proposal (5 points)*** this will be a revised version of the pre-departure assignment you submitted in NYC (revised and resubmitted in São Paulo). The goal is to ensure that you have a clear idea of the type of research project you want to do and ensure you are engaging with the existing literature on the topic.
- b) *CA Portfolio Review: São Paulo (5 points)*** The CA Portfolio is an important part of the overall experiential learning process as well as the CA 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. In addition to your observation and conversation notes, the CA portfolio will include artifacts, images and reflections on newspaper and/or academic articles, site visits, lectures, and records of conversations pertaining to your CA project. 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.) Do not assume you will remember an observation. The experience in each city will be so intense that you will probably forget by the time you get to the next city.

Basis for portfolio assessment:

### 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.

## PROJECTION

- A discussion about 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.

**The content & processes described above will be assessed in São Paulo but should be utilized and reviewed throughout the semester.**

- c) **CA Mid-Term Presentation, Barcelona (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 chance to practice your presentation skills. You will have only three minutes (strictly timed), to make your presentation. Include experience, evidence, and analysis from São Paulo and Barcelona.
- d) **Comparative Analysis Project Conclusion, Cape Town.** 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 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 (class readings, guest lectures, etc.) 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 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 (class readings, guest lectures, etc.) and a range of observations, conversations and any other relevant research data

### **III. CUI Activities (30 points)**

The Participation grade for CUI is made up of three components: a student’s overall engagement (*participation*) in CUI activities (20 points), active participation (preparation and presentation) on ‘*here we are*’ (5 points), participation in *synthesis sessions* (5 points).

**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.

Readings: The majority of the readings in the course aim to 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 class time exercise. A second set of readings will be presented and discussed during the “Here we are!” sessions. These readings (a) provide historical/contextual 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.

Neighborhood Day: 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, using a variety of formal and informal methods based on direct observation as well as engagement with local residents. Findings and experiences are shared through group presentations. Neighborhood day presentations are not graded but are factored into course participation.

Site visits: During the time to spend in each city, we will explore different themes (learning cycles). To support the experiential learning experience

Guest Lectures: All guest lectures and panel discussions by participants in the *Cities* program are critical inputs for the learning process. They will include people from civil society, government, and academia who will bring a range of perspectives into the conversation, which will contribute to your understanding of place-specific urban issues and to your comparative analysis project.

CUI Faculty Sessions: CUI faculty sessions will be devoted to: (a) exploring different research methods and analytical tools; (b) workshops focused on the research process for the CA project.

'Here we come!' sessions: in this short session the country group will lead a discussion of current issues in the upcoming city and collective learning goals.

**b) Synthesis Sessions (5 points)** Towards the end of our stay in each city, students will participate in an Academic Synthesis session, led by student facilitators (country groups). 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.

**c) 'Here We Are' Presentations (5 points)**

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, including framing guiding questions. Basically, students (country group) are responsible for the first academic session in each country.

**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. Please inform the instructor if tardiness is anticipated. **All students are expected to come to class on time.**

Late work: In keeping with SIT 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: All students are responsible for having read the SIT Student Handbook and will be held to these policies. Refer to the Student Handbook for policies regarding academic integrity, academic warning and probation, diversity, disability, harassment protocols, and the academic appeals process.

Grading Scale					
94-100%	A	Excellent	74-76%	C	Average
90-93%	A-		70-73%	C-	
87-89%	B+		67-69%	D+	
84-86%	B	Above Average	64-66%	D	Below Average
80-83%	B-		below 64	F	Fail
77-79%	C+				
<b>Note:</b> Where decimal points are used in grading, below 0.5 will be rounded down, while 0.5 and above will be rounded up. For example, 93.4 will be an A-, while 93.5 will be an A.					

## 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-its 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 São Paulo and Barcelona), 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 I 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”
- **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 field note 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 field notes 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 field site—and the artifacts you choose to place in your portfolio as data that teach you about your own field working 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)

Source: Sunstein, Bonnie Stone and Elizabeth Chiseri Strater, 2007. *Fieldworking. Reading and Writing Research*. New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s.