



# Urban Studies 101: Urban Poverty & Affluence

## Queens College | Fall 2017

Course Meetings:  
Mondays/Wednesdays  
9:15-10:30am  
Powdermaker Hall 115

Professor Kristen Hackett  
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Office Hours:  
Mondays 12-1:00pm  
and by appointment  
Powdermaker Hall  
Rm 250J

## Overview

**Course Description: Welcome to Urban Studies 101!** This course will introduce you to the field of Urban Studies. We will investigate why cities are places of economic and political opportunity for some and places of deprivation, discrimination, violence and impoverishment for others. We will explore how urban restructuring since the 1970s has increased the income gap in major metropolitan areas such as New York. We will also discuss different theories of urban poverty and inequality and examine the impact of immigration, racial segregation, suburbanization, public policies, and social movements on U.S. cities and their inhabitants. Paying particular attention to inequalities based on race, class, and gender, we will analyze proposals to reduce these inequalities.

With the intention of making this class more meaningful, this class and its assignments will be centered around the co-creation of a digital urban archive that will not only serve certain purposes in our class, but will serve as a public archive containing accessible information about urban development and urban inequality. YOU and I will be the creators and authors of this archive.

### Course Objectives:

- Learn the history of US urban restructuring from the latter half of the 20th century to the present.

- Gain familiarity with contemporary approaches to the study of poverty and inequality from a variety of social scientific perspectives and disciplines.
- Gain familiarity with basic urban research methods such as fieldwork, survey research, statistical research, and historical analysis.
- Understand the difference between different disciplinary approaches to the study of urban areas.
- Learn to read and critically analyze urban policy proposals.
- Gain familiarity with specific digital technology tools (Google drive, WordPress, etc.) and understand how they can serve the education of oneself and others.
- Gain experience writing for a public and diverse audience.
- Build on one's experience with respect to group work.

**General Education Requirements:** For new students, this course fulfills one three-credit Flexible Core – US Experience in its Diversity requirement in Pathways. For continuing students, it fulfills the “Analyzing Social Structures” Area of Knowledge and Inquiry requirement and the “United States” Context of Experience requirement for QC’s Perspectives (PLAS) curriculum.

**Time&Place:** Class meetings are scheduled for Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:15a to 10:30a in Powdermaker Hall 115.

**Office Hours:** Office hours are listed at the top of this syllabus. Should you need to meet at another time please email me with a variety of times and dates so we may schedule something.

**Accessing Course Materials & Information:** Materials for this course lives in three places, our main course site, our course blog, and our blackboard site.

- **Course site:** <http://urbanstudiesfall2017.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/>  
This course site is a Qwriting site that houses all course information including our syllabus, assignments, most\* readings, any additional resources or extra credit opportunities and more. I’ll also post any and all announcements with course updates or changes here.
- **Course blog:** <http://urbaninquirer.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/>  
An important component of our class is our course blog, named The Urban Inquirer. This is where you will post and comment and otherwise further synthesize, analyze, critique and discuss course material and topics outside of class.
- **Blackboard site:**  
Our blackboard site is very minimal, acting only as a library for any readings that are not publically accessible online. Some of these readings are the most important readings in this class so make sure you have access to your account.

## Course Requirements

**Reading:** All [assigned readings](#) should be completed by the corresponding class date, per the syllabus. You are responsible for knowing the key ideas, concepts, processes, actors and history outlined in the readings, so annotation of the reading is strongly suggested.

**Attendance & In Class Participation:** Regular, timely attendance and active participation in class discussions are essential elements for excelling in this class.

Please note that we have in-class group activities on Wednesday 8/30/17, Wednesday 9/6/17, Monday 9/18/17, Wednesday 10/11/17.

**GRADING:** If you attend class regularly, arrive on time, and contribute to class discussions regularly, you will receive full credit. Regular tardiness or absences will be noted and will affect your grade. Failure to partake in and complete in-class activities may also affect your grade.

**Assignments:** Students have 3 assignments to complete for this course. These assignments are designed to help students engage course material in both individual and collective ways.

Assignment 1: [Reflections](#) (3 in total)

You will have a reflection due at the beginning, middle and end of the semester. Each asks you to reflect on course material, what you've learned, and the work you've produced this semester as a way of making you a present, conscious and agentive party in your learning process.

**Due by 12midnight on Monday 9/11/17, Friday 10/20/17, and Friday 12/8/17.**

Assignment 2: [Course Blog Contributions & Comments](#) (4 in total)

The majority of assignments in this class will be completed by you as a blogger for a public audience. Submissions will be posted by you to our course blog, The Urban Inquirer, which is publically accessible online. Each student will be asked to compose at least 6 blogs over the course of the semester, though you may always post more, and to comment on other students blogs. Students will be grouped and asked to first and foremost engage with the blogs of those in their groups. They of course may also read and comment on other student's blogs as well.

**Due WEEKLY-ish starting Friday 9/15/17. Post by 12midnight on Fridays. Comment by 12noon on Sundays.**

Assignment 3: [Poverty Debate](#) (1)

Understanding the 3 competing perspectives on poverty explains a lot about how policies around poverty and inequality are constructed, thus students will spend two class periods discussing and deconstructing these perspectives, and composing a debate among 3 political pundits each eliciting a competing perspective of poverty.

**Due Friday 9/22/17 by 12midnight.**

**Exams:** You will have two in-class exams: a midterm and a final. The midterm exam will include multiple choice and short answer questions. The final exam will include multiple choice and short answer questions. Study materials will be shared with the class one week before the exam.

- The Midterm exam will be held in class on Wednesday 10/18/17
- The Final exam will be held in class on Monday 12/11/17

## Grading:

- Attendance & In-Class Participation: 10% (includes participation in in-class activities) 10%
- Assignment 1, Reflections: 20%
- Assignment 2, Course Blog Contributions: 25%
- Assignment 3, Poverty Debate: 5%
- Midterm Exam: 20%
- Final Exam: 20%

*\*If at any point in the semester you are curious about where you stand in the class, you can use this breakdown to determine what your grade is.*

## Extra Credit Opportunities:

Students will have the opportunity to earn extra credit throughout the semester. [Extra credit opportunities](#) will be announced on the course website as they come up. Students will only be able to earn up to 5 pts of extra credit per half of the semester. If a student exceeds 5 pts during the first half of the semester, the additional points will roll over to the second half of the semester. If a student exceeds 5 pts during the second half of the semester, only 5 pts will be used towards improving the students grade.

**Pre-midterm due date: Friday 10/13/17**

**Pre-final due date: Friday 12/8/17**

**BE MINDFUL OF DUE DATES FOR EXTRA CREDIT.** If you submit extra credit assignments late, you WILL NOT receive any credit.

## Course Policies:

**Respectful participation:** Please note that people come to this class with different kinds of academic expertise, different life experiences, and different customs (both individual and cultural). These differences can, and hopefully will, contribute positively to the substance and quality of class discussion. However, because these differences are often related to social inequalities, they can also be a source of misunderstanding and frustration. It is thus important to keep in mind that active, respectful class

participation is as much about listening to and engaging the ideas of others as it is about speaking one's own mind.

**In-Class Technology:** You are permitted to use laptops and tablets in class to reference readings and take notes. However, I reserve the right to amend this policy for any student or the class as a whole if the device becomes disruptive or distracting in any way.

That said, you should be aware that recent research finds that students do better in class when they are not distracted by their devices. Follow the following links to learn more:

- <http://web.stanford.edu/class/linguist156/laptops.pdf>
- <http://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/the-case-for-banning-laptops-in-the-classroom>
- <http://pss.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/04/22/0956797614524581.abstract>

Phones should be turned off/silenced and put away during class. If your phone proves to be distracting or disruptive, I reserve the right to hold your phone on my desk during class.

There is NO USE OF ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT PERMITTED DURING EXAMS.

**Incompletes:** Except in extraordinary circumstances and with proper documentation, incompletes will not be granted for this course. After-the-fact requests for extensions and incompletes will not be considered. I really mean this.

**Grade Change Policy (for all assignments and exams):** Students disputing an answer marked wrong must submit their dispute in writing and it should include 1) documentation of the grading error and 2) evidence of the error (from the text or lecture materials). These requests should be submitted directly to Professor Hackett only.

**Email Policy and Etiquette:** Demonstrate to me that you are a college student and an adult. Need I say more... If I must, review the tips on email correspondence with professors at the following links (also found under 'Resources' on the course website).

- <http://web.wellesley.edu/SocialComputing/Netiquette/netiquetteprofessor.html>
- [https://www.scribendi.com/advice/how\\_to\\_email\\_a\\_professor.en.html](https://www.scribendi.com/advice/how_to_email_a_professor.en.html)

**Academic Dishonesty & Plagiarism:** Queens College takes cheating and plagiarism very seriously; if caught you may fail the course and/or be suspended from the college. Don't copy other people's work. This means that you should not take the words or ideas of another person and submit them without acknowledging the original author. Examples of plagiarism include copying from another student's homework assignment or taking phrases, paragraphs or papers from course readings, the internet or other

students and representing them as your own. You must always indicate when you have used an idea from someone else's work; anything else constitutes stealing from others and violates both the ethics of this class and established academic standards. There are now sophisticated search engines that prove beyond a reasonable doubt when students have downloaded web-based material and submitted it as their own (CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity, adapted June 28, 2004). See <http://web.cuny.edu/academics/info-central/policies/academic-integrity.pdf>)

You should know that **using cell phones or other devices during exams, or writing down exam questions, is considered a serious violation of the above policy!** Such behavior will result in failure of the exam and immediate referral to Queens College's Academic Integrity Officer.

Below is a week-by-week schedule of readings, assignments, exam and in-class activities. I reserve the right to adjust this schedule as needed over the course of the semester. Students will be notified of any changes via our [Course site](#).

## **MONDAY 8/28/17: INTRODUCTION TO COURSE**

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Introduce course and review syllabus.

In-Class Activity

- Calculating a Household Budget, 1

## **WEDNESDAY 8/30/17: MEASURING POVERTY**

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Reading:

- [In between in California: Above the Poverty line, but not quite middle class](#). Al Jazeera, Story and photography by E. Tammy Kim and Lam Thuy Vo. Published June 11, 2014
- Fredrickson, Allyson. (October 2015). [Pay up! Long hours and Low Pay Leave Workers at a Loss](#). Alliance for a Just Society. The Job Economic Prosperity Series. *Just spend 45 mins or so perusing this.*

In-Class Activity:

- Calculating a Household Budget, 2

**\*\*NO CLASS MONDAY 9/4/17\*\***

## **WEDNESDAY 9/6/17: THEORIZING POVERTY & THE AMERICAN DREAM**

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### Reading:

- BB: Top-Down Economics and Bottom-Up Politics. (pp. 1-14). In Goldsmith, W., & Blakely, E. (2010). *Separate societies: Poverty and inequality in US cities*. Temple University Press.
- [“Ever higher society, ever harder to ascend”](#). Meritocracy in America, *The Economist*, , December 29, 2004.
- Leonhardt, David. 2013. [In climbing the Income ladder](#). *NY Times*, July 22
- James Surowiecki, [“The Mobility Myth”](#) *The New Yorker*, March 3, 2014.
- Radiolab Presents: [On the Media: Busted, America’s Poverty Myths](#), An Interview with Brooke Gladstone. Wednesday, January 18, 2017.

### OPTIONAL READING:

- Bruenig, Matt 2014. [Two Theories of Poverty. Demos.](#)
- Bucheit, P. (2014, August 3). [Three facts that poverty deniers don’t want to hear.3-facts-poverty-deniers-dont-want-hear.](#)

### In-Class Activity

- Debating Poverty, Part 1

### Assignment:

- Reflection 1 Due 12midnight FRIDAY 9/8/17

## **MONDAY 9/11/17: USING TECH TO TEACH AND LEARN**

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### In-Class Activity:

- Today Professor Hackett will walk you through the technical and substantive aspects of posting to the course blog and collaborating via your Google Drive.

### Assignment:

- Reflection 1 to be posted by 12midnight MONDAY 9/11/17

## **WEDNESDAY 9/13/17: THE INTERSECTIONS OF ECONOMIC INEQUALITY**

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### Reading:

- Autor. 2010. "[The Polarization of Job Opportunities in the U.S. Labor Market](#)". Center for American Progress. p1-15
- Hum, Tarry. 2011. "[Persistent Polarization in the New York Workforce: New Findings of Labor Market Segmentation](#)." Regional Labor Review, Center for the Study of Labor and Democracy, Hofstra University, Spring-Summer, 13, –
- Pager, D., & Western, B. (December 9, 2005). [Race at Work: Realities of Race and Criminal Record in the New York City Job Market](#). Report prepared for the 50th Anniversary of the New York City Commission on Human Rights.
- Kochhar, Rakesh, Paul Taylor, and Richard Fry. 2011. [Wealth gaps rise to record highs between whites, blacks and Hispanics](#). Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center.
- Washington, [Black's economic gains wiped out in downtown](#), NBC News
- Kasperkevic, J. [College-educated women earn \\$8,000 less a year than men as gap widens](#). *The Guardian*, April 21, 2016
- Article on age and inequality forthcoming.

### Assignment:

- BLOGS DUE 12midnight FRIDAY 9/15/17, COMMENTS DUE 12noon SUNDAY 9/17/17, Topical Category: Economic Inequality

## **MONDAY 9/18/17: POVERTY DEBATE WORKING SESSION**

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### In-Class Activity:

- Debating Poverty, Part 2

**\*\*NO CLASS WEDNESDAY 9/20/17\*\***

### Assignment:

- Assignment 2 Poverty Debate due 12midnight FRIDAY 9/22/17.

## **MONDAY 9/25/17 & WEDNESDAY 9/27/17: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF CITIES**

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### Reading:



- BB: Ross, Byron and Myron Levine. 2012. Urban Politics, Cities and Suburbs in a Global Age, Chapter 2. NYC: ME Sharpe.
- BB: Peter Eisinger 2000. The Politics of Bread and Circuses : Building the City for the Visitor Class. Urban Affairs Review 2000 35: 316-333.
- Freeman, Josh. 2014. [If you can make it here.](#)
- Mtua, Angela. '[Senator call Roosevelt Avenue 'the new Times Square,' pushes for liquor license ban](#)' Qns, August 29, 2016.

OPTIONAL:

- Rothstein, R. "[The Making of Ferguson](#)". Economic Policy Institute. October 15, 2014
- BB: Josh Freeman. 2000. Working Class New York, "The Fiscal Crisis", Chapter 15. New Press.
- Website: [CUNY Digital Archive History](#)

Assignment:

- BLOGS DUE 12midnight FRIDAY 9/29/17, COMMENTS DUE 12noon SUNDAY 10/1/17, Topical Category: Historical Development of Cities

**MONDAY 10/2/17: GLOBALIZATION & PRIVATIZATION OF RISK AND WELL-BEING**

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Reading:

- BB: Massey, D. S. 2008. "Globalization and Inequality: Explaining American Exceptionalism". European Sociological Review. 25 (1): 9-23.
- Fortin, J. [Ethiopia's cheap labor attracts foreign firms](#), Equal Times, 10/2/2014

**WEDNESDAY 10/4/17: LOW WAGE WORK & SHIFTS IN WELFARE**

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Reading

- BB: Edin, K. and H. Luke Shaefer. 2015. *\$2.00 a Day*. Chapters 1-2.
- Kasperkevic, J. "[The benefits cliff: when minimum wage increases backfire on the people in need.](#)" *The Guardian*, July, 20, 2014.

OPTIONAL:

- BB: Collins, J. (2008). The specter of slavery: Workfare and the economic citizenship of poor women. New landscapes of inequality: Neoliberalism and the erosion of democracy in America, 131-151.

- BB: Excerpt Chapter 1: Working Lives. in Newman, K. S. (2009). No shame in my game: The working poor in the inner city. Random House LLC. *Read at least one story.*
- Morath, E. “[Get a Job? Most Welfare Recipients Already Have one.](#)” *Wall Street Journal Blog: Real Time Economics*, April 13, 2015.
- Black, R. & Sprague, A. (2016). [The ‘Welfare Queens’ is a Lie.](#) *The Atlantic.*
- Sin, M. P. [Government spends more on Corporate Welfare Subsidies than on Social Welfare programs](#), Think by Numbers,<sup>1</sup>

Assignment:

1. BLOGS DUE 12midnight FRIDAY 10/6/17, COMMENTS DUE 12noon SUNDAY 10/8/17, Topical Category: Globalization & Privatization **OR** Welfare & Low wage work

**\*\*NO CLASS MONDAY 10/9/17\*\***

### **WEDNESDAY 10/11/17: HISTORICAL RECAP**

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In-Class Activity:

1. Constructing a Timeline

## **Monday 10/16/17: Midterm Review**

## **Wednesday 10/18/17: Midterm**

Assignment:

1. Reflection 2 Due 12midnight Friday 10/20/17

### **MONDAY 10/23/17: PERSISTING SEGREGATIONS**

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Reading:

1. BB: Boustan, Leah Platt. 2013. Racial Residential Segregation in American Cities, NBER Working Paper No. 19045.
2. Listen to [Episode 512: House Rules](#), *This American Life*, , November 22, 2013.
3. Eligon, J. [A Year after Ferguson, Housing Segregation defies tools to erase it.](#) *New York Times*, August 8, 2015.
4. Oh, Inae. 2014. [Luxury Condo Will Have a New ‘Poor Door.’](#) Huffington Post.

Optional:

1. Hannah-Jones, Nikole. 2012. [Living Apart: How the Government Betrayed a Landmark Civil Rights Law](#). Pro Publica
- 2.

### **WEDNESDAY 10/25/17: GENTRIFICATION & SEGREGATION**

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Reading:

READ 1 of the Following 3:

1. Rotondaro, V. and Ewing, M. [The Ins and Outs](#). *Narratively*, January 15, 2013.
2. Adams, Micheal Henry. "[The end of Black Harlem](#)". *New York Times Sunday Review*, May 27, 2016.
3. Bontemps, Johnny. [Southside Story](#)". *Narratively*, January 14, 2013.

AND

1. Grant, Benjamin. "What is Gentrification?" *POV, PBS*
2. Knafo, Saki. "[Is gentrification a human-rights violation?](#)" *The Atlantic*, 2, 2015.
3. Gates, M. [To Prevent Worsening Inequality, Put Affluent Neighborhoods ON NYC Re-Zoning List](#). *Metropolitix.eu*, November 17, 2015.

Assignment:

1. BLOGS DUE 12midnight FRIDAY 10/27/17, COMMENTS DUE 12noon SUNDAY 10/29/17, Topical Category: Residential Segregation

### **MONDAY 10/30/17 & WEDNESDAY 11/1/17: UNPACKING THE 'HOUSING ISSUE'**

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Reading:

1. Greenberg, Michael. (August 17, 2017). [Tenants Under Siege: Inside New York City's Housing Crisis](#). *The New York Review of Books*.
2. Blungart, Jake. (August 10, 2015). [Affordable Housing's Forever Solution](#). *Next City*.
3. Navarro, M. "[How do Rent-Burdened New Yorkers Cope?](#)" *New York Times*, August 24, 2016
4. Ruby Russel, [Berlin becomes first German city to make rent cap a reality](#). *The Guardian*, June 1, 2015

OPTIONAL:

1. [Housing New York: A Five-borough, Ten year plan](#). The City of New York, Mayor Bill De Blasio. *Executive Summary and Introduction ONLY*
2. [What is affordable housing? A guide developed by the Center for Urban Pedagogy](#). *SKIM*
3. Madden and Marcuse. [The Permanent Crisis of Housing](#). *Jacobin*, October 2, 2016. *EXTRACT THE MAIN POINT*
4. BB: Meehan, J. (2014). Reinventing Real Estate: The Community Land Trust as a social invention in affordable housing. *Journal of Applied Social Science*, 8, 2, 113-133.

Assignment:

1. BLOGS DUE 12midnight FRIDAY 11/3/17, COMMENTS DUE 12noon SUNDAY 11/5/17, Topical Category: Housing Affordability

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### **MONDAY 11/6/17 & WEDNESDAY 11/8/17: WHOSE PUBLIC SPACE?**

Reading:

1. The Pratt Center for Community Development 2012. [Queens Triple Play: Willets West, Major League Soccer and The National Tennis Center](#). Brooklyn, NY: The Pratt Institute (September 21, 2012).
2. Dawg. 2008. "[Policing public space](#)". BLOG POST.
3. BB: Davis, Mike. 1992 "Fortress LA"
4. "[No Safe Place: The Criminalization of Homelessness in US Cities](#)". A Report by the National Coalition for the homeless. Pgs16-29, the section on the Criminalization of Homelessness

OPTIONAL:

1. Re-visit: BB: Peter Eisinger 2000. The Politics of Bread and Circuses : Building the City for the Visitor Class. *Urban Affairs Review* 2000 35: 316-333.

Assignment:

1. BLOGS DUE 12midnight FRIDAY 11/10/17, COMMENTS DUE 12noon SUNDAY 11/12/17, Topical Category: Public Space

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### **MONDAY 11/13/17 & WEDNESDAY 11/15/17: CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

Reading:

1. BB: Alexander, Michelle. 2010. The New Jim Crow, Chapter 1 (pp. 20-57).

2. Greenberg, Michael. "[Broken Windows and the New York Police.](#)" *The New York Review of Books*, November 6, 2014.
3. Paddock, Barry and Sarah Ryley. 2014. [Arrests for transit fare evasion surge in recent years, putting it amongst top city offenses leading to jail](#), Daily News, August 18.
4. Ryley, Sarah, Laura Dareh Gregorian, 2014. [Racial disparities in summons for minor violations in 'broken windows'](#) New York Daily News. August 4.

OPTIONAL:

1. BB: Wacquant, Class, race and hyper-incarceration in revanchist America
2. Vera Institute. 2014. [Race and Prosecution in Manhattan.](#)
3. BB: Kahn, K. B. and Martin, K. D. (2016). Policing and race: Disparate Treatment, Perceptions and Policy responses. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 10, 1 82-121.
4. PODCAST: [Cops see it differently, Part 1.](#) Episode 547. *This American Life*. WEBZ Chicago.
5. PODCAST: [Cops see it differently, Part 2.](#) Episode 548. *This American Life*. WEBZ Chicago.

Assignments:

1. BLOGS DUE 12midnight FRIDAY 11/17/17, COMMENTS DUE 12noon SUNDAY 11/19/17, Topical Category: Criminal Justice

**MONDAY 11/20/17 & WEDNESDAY 11/22/17: THE INVISIBILITY OF THE IMMIGRATION ISSUE**

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Reading:

1. BB: Kwong, Peter 2009. "What's Wrong with the US Immigration Debate?" Fields, Jeff, and Ida Susser, eds. *Rethinking America: the imperial homeland in the 21st century*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers. Pp. 300-312.
2. Economic Policy Institute. 2010. [Immigration and Wages](#)

Assignments:

1. BLOGS DUE 12midnight FRIDAY 11/24/17, COMMENTS DUE 12noon SUNDAY 11/26/17, Topical Category: Immigration Policy

**MONDAY 11/27/17 & WEDNESDAY 11/29/17: URBAN FUTURES**

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Reading:

1. Kolbert, Elizabeth. (2011). [Enter the Anthropocene – Age of Man](#), National Geographic.
2. McPhearson, T. The [Rise of Resilience: Linking Resilience and Sustainability in City Planning](#). The Nature of Cities.
3. Jaffe, E. “[Bike-Share is \(Still\) Struggling to Reach Poor People Across North America](#).” *CityLab*, 24, 2014.
4. Ross, T. and Solomon, D. “[Flint Isn’t the Only Place with Racism in the Water](#).” *The Nation*, 9, 2016.
5. [Copenhagen unveils first climate-change adapted neighborhood](#), From Al JazeeraAmerica, January 26, 2015, by Elisabeth Braw.
6. Steinberg, T. [Looking Backward into the Future of New York](#).ed, January 12, 2015

OPTIONAL:

1. [Sustainability vs. Resilience](#): Why bouncing back is the way of the future.

Assignment:

1. BLOGS DUE 12midnight FRIDAY 12/1/17, COMMENTS DUE 12noon SUNDAY 12/3/17, Topical Category: Environmental Justice

**MONDAY 12/4/17: TBD**

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**Wednesday 12/6/17: FINAL REVIEW SESSION**

**Monday 12/11/17: FINAL EXAM**

Assignment:

- Reflection 3 due 12midnight Monday 12/18/17