



Los Angeles Civic Center, 1946

Urban Geography

Geography 8 CRN 43309 Spring 2020

Professor Elizabeth Lobb

Tuesday/Thursday 11:30am-12:55pm, 26D-3270

How to reach me:

You can email me: elobb@mtsac.edu. I respond to emails within 36 hours.

You can visit me during my office hours: 26D-2481L, Tu/Th 9:30-11:15; Th. 1-2

You can call me during my office hours: 909-274-5775.

Course Website:

<https://faculty.mtsac.edu/elobb/geography8.html>

Course Description:

This course is an introduction to all things “urban” and, as a result, is truly interdisciplinary. We will examine how and why cities came to exist and how they have changed over time. We will look at the impacts that industrialization and suburbanization have had on urban form. We will examine the ideas of major schools of urban planning as well as consider the challenges cities face in the 21st century. The course also pays special attention to the Los Angeles metropolitan area—one of the most important cities in the world. This course seeks to capture the complexities of the urban experience of humans, and it’s my goal to inspire you to become more engaged with the urban (and suburban) places you live in and that surround you.

Course Outcomes

Upon completing Urban Geography, you will be able to:

1. Analyze the historic-geographic context for contemporary urban planning and design and contemporary urban issues including housing, transportation, urban redevelopment, segregation and “smart-growth” policies.
2. Apply social-scientific models to differentiate between different types of urban spaces and unique urban morphologies and between urban, suburban and rural spaces.
3. Critically read urban landscapes, especially that of Los Angeles as the quintessential postmodern, fragmented metropolis—what is good, bad about the city and how might conditions be improved and what obstacles stand in the way of such improvement
4. Recognize evolving connections between people, cities and environments in the context of globalization
5. Analyze and compile demographic data and socio-economic data to assess specific urban settings and situations

Required Text and Materials

“Triumph of the City: How Our Greatest Invention Makes Us Richer, Smarter, Greener,

Healthier, and Happier” Edward Glaeser. New York: Penguin Books, 2011. The book is about \$10 from various online retailers.

Daily Work/Homework

I expect you to keep up with the readings, on a weekly basis. Your “homework” each night is to be reading! It’s also a good idea to review any other materials, like Power Points, that I have made available to you before coming to lecture.

Major Assignments

- **Map Quizzes:** Three (3) map quizzes, 20 points each. These require you to locate important cities on a map.
- **Content Quizzes:** Three (3) exams, 30 points each. Each quiz will have 20 multiple choice questions and 1 essay question.
- **Exams:** Three (3) exams, 100 points each. None of the exams is cumulative. Each exam has four essay questions. Blue Books are required for the exams.
- **Glaeser Papers:** Five (5) papers based on the book. You can drop the lowest score, or only write on 4. These are reading-response type papers with some shorter and longer responses that require no other source material (just the Glaeser book).
- **Field Trip:** 1 field trip, guided by me, to downtown Los Angeles on Thursday, May 28th from 9:30am – 12:30pm. We will be taking public transportation to downtown.
- **Field Trip Paper:** 1 paper based on the field trip, 50 points. You cannot receive the points for the paper unless you attend the field trip on Thursday, May 28th

Class Participation

I do not give participation points or attendance points. However, your success in the course is very much connected to both of these. If you are in class, taking notes, paying attention, and engaging in the material, it is reflected in the quality of the materials you turn in to me. I realize everyone has different comfort levels with class participation, but showing up to class and showing me through body language that you are paying attention and are engaged goes a long way! If you find yourself “borderline” at the end of the course (between two grades), your enthusiasm, respect and commitment to the class as a student are used as I weigh my final decision.

Course Grading

I do not grade on a curve but I do take the overall performance of the class into consideration when I calculate grades. In other words, if there is one question that everyone seems to have missed, I throw it out. I grade all assignments anonymously—I don’t know whose paper I am grading until I’ve finished all the papers/quizzes/exams. When a quiz or exam is returned to you, I ask you to respect a “24 hour wait period”—that is, I ask you wait 24 hours before coming to me to complain about the grade. Before you come to discuss your grade on an assignment with me, please carefully review the quiz/paper/exam and all the materials you used to prepare for that assignment. Please bring these materials with you when we sit down to discuss the grade.

Grading System

- Quizzes (3): 90 points
- Exams (3): 300 points
- Map Quizzes (3): 60 points
- Reading Papers (4): 200 points
- Field Trip & Field Trip Paper (1): 50 points
- Total points: 700

Grading Cutoffs

90% A 80% B 70% C

Course Policies and Information for Students

1. ATTENDANCE POLICY. As per the College Catalog: “Students are expected to attend all class meetings.” I take attendance at the beginning of every lecture. If you have more than three consecutive absences I reserve the right to drop you from the course. However, do not assume that you have been dropped just because you haven’t been showing up. It is the student’s responsibility to drop a course through the portal.
2. PENALTIES FOR LATE WORK and REQUESTS FOR EXTENSIONS. I do not accept late work.
3. POLICIES ON MISSED EXAMS, MAKE-UP EXAMS OR QUIZZES. If you have a legitimate medical excuse, and you contact me within 12 hours of the exam or quiz date, I will try to accommodate a make-up quiz or exam for you.
4. TECHNOLOGY POLICIES. No cell phones out or on during the lecture period. Laptops can be used with my permission, but are for the purposes of note-taking only. Audio recording may only be done with prior approval from me. You may not take photos of anything in the class—me, the board, the beautiful maps, etc. during lecture.
5. ETHICS/VIOLATIONS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY. Ethical behavior is an essential component of learning and scholarship. Students are expected to understand, and adhere to, the College’s academic integrity policy: <http://catalog.mtsac.edu/registration-policies/college-policies-notices/#academichonestytext>. Students who violate this policy will be referred to the Office of Student Life. Penalties for violating the policy can be suspension and/or expulsion from the College. Be sure that your work is your own, or that you have given appropriate credit to any sources! **Always cite your sources when you present ideas and/or language that you have not developed yourself, including material from class lectures and discussions. Violation of this policy includes collaborating on assignments where collaboration is not allowed and/or utilizing notes, texts, etc. on any assignment where use of such materials is not allowed.**

Resources for Students

6. DISABILITY RESOURCES: If you have a disability that requires an accommodation, please speak with me and consult the **Accessibility Resource Center for Students (ACCESS)** <http://www.mtsac.edu/access/>. ACCESS staff will determine appropriate accommodations and will work to make sure these are available to you.
7. WRITING ASSISTANCE: For additional help on your writing, consult the expert staff of **The Writing Center** <http://www.mtsac.edu/writingcenter/> in Building 26B, 1561A (behind the clock). It can be enormously helpful to ask someone outside a course to read your essays and to

provide feedback on strength of argument, clarity, organization, etc.

8. MENTAL HEALTH: Student health services on campus has professional staff members who work with students to resolve personal and interpersonal difficulties, many of which can affect the academic experience. These include conflicts with or worry about friends or family, concerns about eating or drinking patterns, and feelings of anxiety and depression.

See: <http://www.mtsac.edu/healthcenter/counseling/index.html>

Schedule of Assignments and Topics

Week	Topics/Assigned Readings/Homework	Assignments and Deadlines
1	Introduction to urban geography Readings: Introduction & chapter 1 (Glaeser)	
2	Cities and globalization. Readings: continue reading Intro & ch. 1	Map Quiz 1: 3/5
3	Urban life: the social geography of cities. Readings: chapters 5 & 6 (Glaeser)	Quiz 1: 3/12
4	Urban morphology: the shape of cities. Readings: continue reading ch. 5 & 6	Glaeser Paper 1: 3/19
5	Exam 1: bring a Blue Book for the exam.	Exam 1: 3/26
6	Pre-Industrial cities Readings: continue reading chapters 5 & 6 (Glaeser)	
7	North American cities Readings: chapters 2 & 4 (Glaeser)	Map Quiz 2: 4/7 Glaeser paper 2: 4/9
8	Industrialization and the rise of the modern city. Readings: continue reading chapters 2 & 4 (Glaeser)	Quiz 2: 4/16
9	Urban planning I: responses to the industrial city. Readings: chapters 6 & 7 (Glaeser)	Map 3: 4/21 Glaeser Paper 3: 4/23
10	Exam 2: bring a Blue Book for the exam.	Exam 2: 4/30
11	Decentralization and suburbanization Readings: chapters 6 & 7 (Glaeser)	
12	Urban planning II: responses to the sprawling city. Readings: chapters 3, 9, conclusion (Glaeser)	Glaeser Paper 4: 5/14
13	Urban poverty and urban renewal: blight vs slum Readings: continue reading ch 3, 9 & conclusion	Quiz 3: 5/21
14	The segregated American Dream Readings: continue reading ch 3, 9 & conclusion	Field trip: 5/28
15	The segregated American Dream Readings: continue reading ch 3, 9 & conclusion	Glaeser Paper 5: 6/4
16	Final Exam: Tuesday, June 9, 2020, 10:30am – 1:00pm	Field Trip Paper: 6/9

Instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus at any time.