

Urban Politics in the Post-Industrial Era: Hamilton & Detroit Winter 2021

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Course Description

This course examines the changing economic landscapes in Hamilton Ontario and Detroit Michigan with a view to understand the causes and consequences of these changes. Further, we will examine the various interventions made by state and non-state actors to mitigate these effects, specifically those found in the arts, cultural sector, and so-called “creative economy”. This course is unique in that it challenges students to go beyond traditional classroom pedagogy by engaging in local observation, photography, and film. The goal of this course is to increase your knowledge of the structure of local government, theories of urban politics, and critical readings of “the city”, all while building your capacity to intervene as active and engaged citizens. Each week we will look at critical urban issues in general, with a specific reading of both Hamilton and Detroit.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Explain the major theoretical approaches to studying the politics of cities;
- Critically assess the spaces and places within lived public environments and connect those spaces to broader structural and systemic processes;
- Understand the key issues in local governance and municipal public policy, specifically in Hamilton and Detroit;
- Compile a project/initiative which includes aspects of grant writing, the navigation of funding sources, knowledge of relevant jurisdictions, and clear communication tied to informed theoretical positions.

Required Materials and Texts

- All materials and texts are available online, through McMaster Libraries, or will be posted on Avenue to Learn.

Class Format

This class is designed in a synchronous virtual classroom format, meaning that the lectures and discussions will be held during the allotted three (3) hours each week on Zoom. During class there will be a mix of lecture/instruction as well as open and active discussion. Students are expected to virtually attend these classes unless they are unable for personal or medical reasons.

Course Evaluation – Overview

- Participation on Avenue to Learn: 20%
- Political Epistemology Assignment (Due February 8th): 15%
- Local Observation Reflection (Due March 1st): 25%
- Project Plan/Policy Brief (Due March 29th): 40%

Course Evaluation – Details

Participation on Avenue to Learn: 20%

Students achieve participation marks by discussion posts on Avenue to Learn. Students should come prepared by reading the assigned materials. There are two (2) ways in which to gain full participation marks for this class.

- 1) Orally participating in class discussions during Zoom meetings;
- 2) Providing a 200-word response on Avenue to Learn regarding the in-class discussion.

Discussions will be based on active listening and non-violent communication so as to produce an atmosphere of respect and safety in the classroom. Please let me know if you have any concerns or if you would like further accommodations.

Political Epistemology Assignment (Due February 8th): 15%

This assignment asks students to venture outside of a traditional Political Science paper while remaining cognizant of how political theories inform our visions of the world. You are to write a two (2) page paper which addresses some of the following questions: What is a city? How have you experienced the city? How might others experience the city different to you? What are the most important things cities offer? What is a beautiful city? What is an equitable city?

The goal of this assignment is to compel you to think about how spaces and places in the urban field can affect your behaviour or emotional response.

Local Observation Reflection (Due March 1st): 25%

Capture video footage and/or photography from your neighbourhood/town/city. Some examples of this could be, a new condo, a closed-down business, a park, an intersection, a rec-centre. Choose three (3) readings from the course that may offer perspective on these images and explain this connection (Note: with your consent these images will be used for a short documentary that will be screened the last day of class and possibly in various venues in Hamilton. Your reflection should be roughly four (4) pages in length.

Project/Initiative Report (Due March 29th): 40%

In consideration of the course themes of de-industrialization, this assignment asks you to develop a proposal for a project, initiative, start-up, policy intervention or technological solution to an issue in Hamilton *and/or* Detroit. The proposal should look to existing literature and data (minimum 10 sources). Feel free to include visuals, graphics, tables or graphs that help explain your ideas.

Your project report should include:

- a) A name for your project with an abstract.
- b) A summary of the issue/problem and a description of the factors influencing the issue/problem. In this you should include why you think this is an important topic that fits within the course themes. Make sure to include ten (10) sources with two (2) being from the class-assigned readings.

- c) A description of who and where this is being addressed. Is it for City Hall? The Mayor's Office? A private funder? A granting agency?
- d) A budget, timeline, and plan for implementation.
- e) A bibliography (10 sources).

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (January 11th)

Introduction & Thinking About Cities in Canadian Political Science

Taylor, Zack, and Gabriel Eidelman. 2010. "Canadian Political Science and the City: A Limited Engagement." *Canadian Journal of Political Science / Revue Canadienne De Science Politique* 43:4, 961-81.

Week 2 (January 18th)

Post-industrial Society? Theories and Criticisms

Bell, Daniel. 1973. "Introduction" in Daniel Bell *The coming of post-industrial society: a venture in social forecasting*. New York: Basic Books. [On Avenue to Learn]

Liagouras, George. 2002. "The political economy of post-industrial capitalism." *Thesis Eleven* 81, no. 1: 20-35.

Week 3 (January 25th)

Post-industrial Society? Theories and Criticisms

Callinicos, Alex. 1990. "So What Else is New?: Chapter 5". In, *Against postmodernism: A Marxist critique*. 121-171. [On Avenue to Learn]

Week 4 (February 1st)

How to Approach the Study of a City: Hamilton

Simpson, L. B. "Nogojiwanong: The Place at the Foot of the Rapids." In Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (Ed.) *Lighting the Eighth Fire: The Liberation, Resurgence, and Protection of Indigenous Nations*. Winnipeg: ARP Books, 2008. pp. 205-212. [On Avenue to Learn]

Magnusson, Warren. 2005. "Are municipalities creatures of the provinces?" *Journal of Canadian Studies* 39, 2: 5-30.

Week 5 (February 8th)

How to Approach the Study of a City: Hamilton

This week has no assigned readings. Instead, I want you to find and read five (5) news articles about any of the following issues in Hamilton: affordable housing, Black Lives Matter, defunding the police, opioid crisis, the LRT, gentrification, the arts and music, indigenous land defenders.

Be prepared to speak about one or more of these findings in our online Zoom session and/or on Avenue to Learn discussion posts.

Week 6 (February 15th)

***Mid-term Recess, no class.

Week 7 (February 22nd)

How to Approach the Study of a City: Detroit

Kinney, Rebecca J. 2016. "Introduction". *Beautiful wasteland: the rise of Detroit as America's postindustrial frontier*. University of Minnesota Press. [On Avenue to Learn]

Hackworth, Jason. 2016. "Why there is no Detroit in Canada." *Urban Geography* 37, 2: 272-295.

Week 8 (March 1st)

How to Approach the Study of a City: Detroit

This week has no assigned readings. Instead, I want you to find and read five (5) news articles about any of the following issues in Detroit: affordable housing, race, defunding the police, the 1967 riots, abandoned housing and structures, gentrification, the arts and music, urban gardening.

Be prepared to speak about one or more of these findings in our online Zoom session and/or on Avenue to Learn discussion posts.

Week 9 (March 8th)

Policing, Race, and Space

Laniyonu, Ayobami. 2018. "Coffee shops and street stops: Policing Practices in gentrifying neighborhoods." *Urban affairs review* 54, no. 5: 898-930.

Jay, Mark, and Philip Conklin. 2017. "Detroit and the political origins of 'broken windows' policing." *Race & Class* 59, 2: 26-48.

Week 10 (March 15th)

Art, Culture and Creative “neoliberal” Economies

Florida, Richard. 2003. “Cities and the creative class.” *City & Community* 2, 1: 3-19.

Clement, Daniel, and Miguel Kanai. 2015. “The Detroit future city: How pervasive neoliberal urbanism exacerbates racialized spatial injustice.” *American Behavioral Scientist* 59, 3: 369-385.

Week 11 (March 22nd)

Gentrification and Displacement: Detroit

Quizar, Jessi. 2019. “Land of Opportunity: Anti-Black and Settler Logics in the Gentrification of Detroit.” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 43, 2: 113-133.

Safransky, Sara. 2014. “Greening the urban frontier: Race, property, and resettlement in Detroit.” *Geoforum* 56: 237-248

Week 12 (March 29th)

Gentrification and Displacement: Hamilton, Ontario

Bain, Alison L. 2017. “Neighbourhood artistic disaffiliation in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.” *Urban Studies* 54, no. 13: 2935-2954.

Harris, Richard, Jim Dunn, and Sarah Wakefield. 2015. *A city on the cusp: Neighbourhood change in Hamilton since 1970*. Neighbourhood Change Research Partnership, University of Toronto.

Berman, Stuart. “[The New Hamiltonians](#).” *Toronto Life*, June 21, 2017.

Week 13 (April 5th)

Examining “decline”: Ruin Porn, Poverty Tourism, and the ethics of voyeurism

Strangleman, Tim. 2013. ““Smokestack Nostalgia,” “Ruin Porn” or Working-Class Obituary: The Role and Meaning of Deindustrial Representation.” *International Labor and Working-Class History* 84: 23-37.

Cowie, Jefferson., & Heathcott, Joseph. 2003. “[The meanings of deindustrialization](#).” In J. Cowie & J. Heathcott (Eds.), *Beyond the ruins: The meanings of deindustrialization* (pp. 1-15, Notes p. 306-307). Ithaca, NY: ILR Press.

Week 14 (April 12th)

Examining “decline”: Ruin Porn, Poverty Tourism, and the ethics of voyeurism

Yang, Michelle Murray. 2020. "A city in ruins or a living city: spatial and temporal presence and visual refutation in representations of Detroit." *Argumentation and Advocacy* 56, 3: 174-194.

Jordano, David. "[Detroit: Unbroken Down](#)". 2010-2013. David Jordano Photography.

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted online through Avenue to Learn.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

Late work will be penalized at 3% per day, including weekends. If there is a medical/personal emergency that will affect your ability to finish your work on time, please let me know in advance of the deadline.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

Courses with an On-Line Element

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail

accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Online Proctoring

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

Authenticity / Plagiarism Detection

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software.

All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about [McMaster's use of Turnitin.com](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity) please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their

instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online.**

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This

policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.