

PA 8896: Special Topics - Urban Policy

Summer 2020 Syllabus
University of Nebraska at Omaha

Online

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Course Description

PA 8896 is a special topics course in Urban Policy. The focus of the course is on various current urban issues and the policy options surrounding them. The course begins with coverage of the urban environment including how policy is made, policy theories, and the institutions of policy-making in cities. The course then goes into a wide variety of topics including policing, economic development, land use, transportation, education, poverty, housing, and ordinances. The purpose of the 6-week seminar is to gain an understanding of the historical and current debates in urban politics and policy. Special attention throughout the course is given to issues in Omaha, and to experiential learning through participation in a policymaking simulation.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand current issues in urban policy.
- Understand the main theories and processes of urban policymaking.
- Evaluate alternative courses of action for a wide range of urban issues and policies.
- Clearly articulate policy positions through oral and written communication.

Required Texts

1. *Urban Issues: Selections from the CQ Researcher*, 8th ed. CQ Press.

Please buy/rent the 8th edition. There is no guarantee that older editions will contain the same information.

Other readings from journals, newspapers, and magazines will be located on Canvas.

Course Requirements

1. Quizzes (180 pts.): Quizzes will be due each **Saturday** evening during the semester by **11:59 PM**. Quizzes will be multiple choice and based upon the readings, videos, and lecture videos. Quizzes will not cover any of the simulation or its materials. Quizzes will be between 10-20 questions and worth 30 points each. There are six quizzes in the course. They are timed to encourage you to read/watch the material and then take the quiz. You may use the readings and videos during the quiz (no group quiz-taking) for reference. Quizzes can be accessed in Canvas.
2. Reflections (90 pts.): At the **end of Weeks 2, 4, & 6**, you will submit a reflection on the previous 2 weeks of material and activities. Reflections will consist of 4-6 questions, for which

you should respond to in 1-2 paragraphs each. Reflection directions will be posted at the beginning of the week for which they are due. For the semester, there are 3 reflections, worth 30 points each.

3. Participation (120 pts.): We will be doing a simulation throughout the course. It is usually an in-person simulation, but I have tried to adapt it to an online format. It involves policymaking and class participation. The more you engage, the more you will learn. Therefore, I have placed a lot of importance on participation virtually. We'll use technology in Canvas to help facilitate the simulation. You will not need to do any live participation, but I would encourage you to check into the course site and discussion board once every other day. Each week, I will ask you to engage in video and/or discussion board comments for the simulation regarding policy or responses to others' comments. Each week will have 20 participation points. Participation instructions for the week will be posted in the Announcements section.

Grade Components

Quizzes	180
Reflections	90
Participation	120
Total	390

Grading Scale

A+	97% - 100%	(377 - 390)
A	≥93% < 97%	(361 - 376)
A-	≥90% < 93%	(350 - 360)
B+	≥87% < 90%	(338 - 349)
B	≥83% < 87%	(322 - 337)
B-	≥80% < 83%	(311 - 321)
C+	≥77% < 80%	(299 - 310)
C	≥73% < 77%	(283 - 298)
C-	≥70% < 73%	(272 - 282)
D+	≥67% < 70%	(260 - 271)
D	≥63% < 67%	(244 - 259)
D-	≥60% < 63%	(233 - 243)
F	<60%	(<233)

Round up from 0.5% has been included in the point spread above.

Course Expectations & Policies

Courtesy

Comments and language in class should be professional and courteous. Some of the topics we will be discussing/debating are sensitive in nature, with ideological divisions. Respectful disagreement is fine; insults are not, and will not be tolerated.

Diversity & Inclusiveness

There must be a clear respect for diversity maintained in the class. This includes respect for people related to gender, sexual orientation, religious identity, disability, age, socio-economic status, ethnicity, race, culture and other differences (including political orientation). All of us have something to offer, and together, we can cultivate a classroom environment where individuals of varying opinions, experiences, and backgrounds are able to learn in a supportive and inclusive setting.

Late Work Policy & Make-Up Exams and Assignments

Since you have ample notice of the due dates of the assignments, and their requirements, no extensions will be given for assignments, unless there is approved medical, legal (jury duty), or university documentation. Materials turned in after the indicated due date and time will automatically receive a 10% deduction. Late work will receive an additional 15% deduction for each additional 24 hours that pass in which the assignment is not turned in.

Extra Credit

No extra credit will be offered in this course.

Incompletes

Incompletes will only be given in the most extreme and extenuating circumstances.

Student Privacy

Per regulations outlined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), I will not discuss your grades, class performance, or any issues dealing with your personal circumstances as they relate to this course with another party that cannot legally access your your collegiate records or legally obtain such information. I will not field phone calls from your parents concerning your performance or circumstances related to this course. Your performance may be discussed with other members of the faculty as it pertains to your progress in the program, consideration for awards/funding, and as it is relevant to other university and department-related considerations.

Student Disability Services

Reasonable accommodations are provided for students who are registered with Accessibility Services Center (ASC) and make their requests sufficiently in advance. For more information, contact ASC (Location: H&K 104, Phone: 402.554.2872, Email: unoaccessibility@unomaha.edu)

Academic Misconduct

Students are expected to adhere to all the rules, regulations, and standards set forth by the University of Nebraska at Omaha with regard to academic dishonesty (<http://www.unomaha.edu/graduate-studies/academic-integrity.php>). This statement covers plagiarism (intentional or unintentional), cheating on examinations, using or stealing others' work, and so forth. The penalty for academic dishonesty could be a failing course grade and/or disciplinary actions.

Syllabus Change Policy

The contents of this course syllabus are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

Course Schedule

Week 1: July 5 - July 11

Urban Political Setting

- Watch Lecture 1: Course Introduction & Syllabus

- Read over documents in Canvas Camelot Module. Candidates should declare their candidacy and put up short platform video in Camelot Videos by **Saturday, July 11 at 11:59 PM**. Those not running should put up a short introductory video in Camelot Discussion by **Saturday, July 11 at 11:59 PM**.

- Watch Lecture 2: Urban Policy Overview

- “The Political Environment of Cities in the Twenty-first Century.” Selections from John P. Pelissero’s Cities, Politics, and Policy. 2003. pp. 13-20. Access in Canvas Readings Module.

- “City Councils.” Chapter from John P. Pelissero’s Cities, Politics, and Policy. 2003. pp. 181-186. Access in Canvas Readings Module.

- Erickson, Amanda. 2012. “The Birth of Zoning Codes: A History.” Bloomberg CityLab. Link: Zoning History - Left-Leaning Perspective.

Policing & Law Enforcement

- Urban Issues Textbook Ch. 8: Racial Conflict. pp 177-182; 187-191; 193-194.

- Quiz 1 - Due Saturday, July 11, by 11:59 PM.**

This Week’s Council Activities

-Campaigns

Week 2: July 12 - July 18

- Vote for your council candidate. Respond to survey link by **Tuesday, July 14 at 11:59 PM.**

Policing & Law Enforcement

- Watch Lecture 3: Community Oriented Policing.
- Urban Issues Textbook Ch. 5: Police Tactics.
- Urban Issues Textbook Ch. 6: Racial Profiling.
- Malcolm, John, and Charles Stimson. 2020. Heritage Foundation. Police Reform - Conservative Perspective.

Land Use

- Urban Issues Textbook Ch. 3: Coastal Development.
- Quiz 2 - Due Saturday, July 18, by 11:59 PM.**
- Reflection 1 Due Saturday, July 18, by 11:59 PM.**
- Video and Discussion Board Response due Saturday, July 18, by 11:59 PM.**

This Week's Council Issues

- Police Officer Protection Issue.
- Downtown Hotel Plaza Issue - In Addendum
- Budget Introduction.
- 1 Surprise Issue.

Week 3: July 19 - July 25

Economic Development & Land Use

- Watch Lecture 4: Overview of Economic Development Policies.

- Maher, Craig S., Park, Sungho, and Ji Hyung Park. 2019. "The (D)Evolution of TIF Use: Redevelopment to Land Development in Nebraska." Chapter from Tax Increment Financing and Economic Development. 2nd ed. pp. 173-193. Access in Canvas Readings Module.

- Watch Omaha City Council Video on Aksarben Village. Aksarben Village Discussion. Watch the November 20, 2018 Video from 42:53 to 1:12:30.

Inequality

- Urban Issues Textbook Ch. 10.

Housing

- Watch Lecture 5: Trends and Issues in Housing Policy.

- Urban Issues Textbook Ch. 11

- Quiz 3 due by Saturday, July 25 at 11:59 PM**

- Video and Discussion Board Response due Saturday, July 25, by 11:59 PM.**

This Week's Council Issues

- Beauty Salon Variance Issue.
- The Budget Issue. - In Addendum.
- Fairness in Housing & Employment Issue.
- 2 Surprise Issues.

Week 4: July 26 - Aug. 1

Land Use, Housing, & Transportation

- Watch Lecture 6: Smart Growth

- Kennedy, Christopher et al. 2005. "The Four Pillars of Sustainable Transportation." *Transport Review*. 25(4): 393-414. Access in Readings Module on Canvas.

- Watch City Council Video on Transit Oriented Development Proposed Changes (TOD) TOD Changes
Watch the August 27, 2019 Video from 2:59:04 to 3:12:08.

- Omaha's Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Proposed Changes. Access in Readings Module on Canvas.

- Dundee-Memorial Park Neighborhood Association Newsletter - TOD Proposed Changes. Access in Readings Module on Canvas.

Homelessness

- Urban Issues Textbook Ch. 9.

- Quiz 4 - Due Saturday, Aug. 1, by 11:59 PM.**

- Reflection 2 Due Saturday, Aug. 1, by 11:59 PM.**

- Video and Discussion Board Response due Saturday, Aug. 1, by 11:59 PM.**

This Week's Council Issues

- Strip Mall Development Issue.
- Drug Testing Issue.
- Home for Pregnant Teenagers Issue.
- 2 Surprise Issues.

Week 5: Aug. 2 - Aug. 8

Poverty

- Urban Issues Textbook Ch. 12.

“Sin” Ordinances

- Watch Lecture 7: “Sin” Ordinances.

- Watch Omaha City Council Meeting on Proposed Bikini Bar.
Bikini Bar
Watch the July 17, 2018 Video from 15:15 to 35:35.

- Watch Omaha City Council Meeting on Club Omaha.
Club Omaha
Watch the July 16, 2019 Video from 1:23:40 to 2:09:13.

- Lavin, Melissa F. 2013. “Rule-Making and Rule-Breaking: Strip Club Social Control Regarding Alcohol and Other Drugs.” *Deviant Behavior*. 34(5): 361-383.
Available in Reading Module in Canvas.

- Quiz 5 due by Saturday, Aug. 8 at 11:59 PM**

- Video and Discussion Board Response due Saturday, Aug. 8, by 11:59 PM.**

This Week’s Council Issues

- Massage Therapy Issue.
- Topless Bar and Grill Issue.
- Noise Ordinance Issue.
- 1 Surprise Issue.

Week 6: Aug. 9 - Aug. 15

Education

- Urban Issues Textbook Ch. 1.

- Urban Issues Textbook Ch. 2.

Climate Policy

- Urban Issues Textbook Ch. 4.

- Quiz 6 due Saturday Aug. 14, by 11:59 PM.**

- Video and Discussion Board Response due Saturday, Aug. 15, by 11:59 PM.**

- Reflection 3 due Saturday Aug. 15, by 11:59 PM.**

This Week's Council Issues

- Curfew Ordinance Issue.
- 1 Surprise Issue.
- Leftover Business.
- Recall Elections.