

## **The History of United States Urbanization Summer 2013**

**Presented to China University of Political Science and Law (CUPL) in cooperation with  
the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) China Center**

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Class Time:

Location:

e-mail

### **Course Description and Objectives**

This course presents the history of urbanization in the United States from the Colonial period of the 1600s to the present. The course instructors will present the influences and trends in the development of cities, immigration influences and outcomes, the development of suburbs and movement of people there from urban centers, local government land use process utilized in development, and the challenges, trends and issues faced by U.S. cities today. Specific focus will be directed toward recent trends and opportunities in the industrial Midwest (Detroit, MI and Chicago, IL), Pacific Northwest (Portland, OR metropolitan area), and the Southeastern U.S.

The focus will be on influences and outcomes of immigration during the time periods when cities and suburban areas developed and the prospects for the future of cities and suburbs. Course objectives will include the following:

- Understanding the history of development of urban centers in the U.S. from the Colonial period through the 1800s
- Understanding the role immigration to the U.S played in the development of cities
- Pre-World War II urbanization centers such as Chicago (agriculture and manufacturing center) connected with rail and river links and extolled with the Chicago's Columbian Exposition World's Fair of 1893; and, Detroit's industrialization exemplified by the Ford River Rouge integrated complex in 1928
- Understanding the impacts of World War II and post-war industrial development on cities and internal migration; creation of the suburbs following the return of soldiers and de-militarization
- Understanding the opportunities made available to citizens following the Great Depression and World War II that made home ownership available to the masses and created a migration to suburbs
- Understanding the social problems created by large scale abandonment of urban areas

- Understanding the role that local government land use process utilize to review and approve development proposals created for community growth that influence opportunities for people to move into communities
- Understanding the impacts of the financial crisis of 2007 on U.S. cities and trends of immigration
- Current challenges of U.S. urban centers with transportation, fiscal stress, building scale for remaining competitive in global environment, decentralization of responsibilities without corresponding resources
- Understanding the experiences of three distinct areas of the United States that have experienced change and have different outlooks for the future - the Midwest, Pacific Northwest, and Southeastern U.S.
- The New Urbanism and return of focus on cities

For the sake of this course, the instructor refers to the term "urbanization" to include: (1) the growth and development of U.S. cities; (2) the movement of people to and from cities to live and work; (3) the societal problems that have developed as a result of large scale migration to cities and out migration to suburbs; (4) the local government land use process utilized to review and approve land development applications to comply with local community plans; and (5) the problems and challenges facing U.S. cities today as a result of the population shifts occurring.

### **Course Goals**

The goals of the course include (1) exposing you the history of urbanization in the United States; (2) exposing you to the changes that took place in the U.S. after 1945 as suburban development took place and central cities declined; (3) enabling you to think critically about the issues and opportunities available to citizens of both central cities and smaller scale suburbs; (4) requiring you to connect these ideas to practice through the study of real-world examples of urban and suburban successes and failures; and (5) introducing you to the role and challenges faced by a local government manager addressing urbanization in both small and large cities in the United States today.

### **Texts Utilized**

Mark Gottdiener and Ray Hutchison, *The New Urban Sociology*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (Trade Paperback, 2010)

*Articles by various authors to be provided by the instructors.*

### **Teaching Philosophy**

We believe that students learn best when they are engaged in material and think analytically about subject matter.

### **Course Outline by Topics - Tentative Schedule, Subject to Change**

1	<i>Introduction</i>	Introduction to the course, syllabus review, expectations, discussion of urbanization in the United States
2-5	<i>Urbanization in the U.S. from the Colonial Period until Civil War; industrialization and the assembly plant to World War II 1945</i>	Describing the history of urbanization in United States: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- growth of early cities</li> <li>- freedom of movement for people</li> <li>- Rivers to trails to railroads: Connecting the centers</li> <li>- westward expansion and the role of transportation</li> <li>- early manufacturing centers; North and South in antebelleum United States and the Civil War</li> <li>- immigrants: where they settled and why</li> <li>- population churning</li> <li>- Henry Ford and the assembly plant, the automobile</li> <li>- the role of urban transport and automobiles</li> </ul>
6-9	<i>From 1945 to the 1980s - Suburban Movement</i>	Describing the reasons suburban development boomed after 1945 and the impacts on cities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- opportunities for home ownership</li> <li>- mass production of new towns and subdivisions; local control and zoning</li> <li>- transportation availability</li> <li>- freedom to be involved in governing communities</li> <li>- movement of minorities to cities</li> <li>- issue of flight of whites to suburbs and hollowing out of the urban cores</li> <li>- exclusionary practices of local banks, developers, and communities</li> <li>- Return of the old with New Urbanism, neo-traditional communities</li> <li>- economic issues and impact on fiscal health of cities, their planning and growth</li> <li>- Rise of the private sector and decline of the public; private developments with their roads and utilities; charter schools</li> </ul>

10-11 *Local Government Land Use Process*

Describing the process used by a local government to process a land use application

- local planning and zoning - plans and regulations
- planning in the U.S.
- local government planners
- legal constraints to planning and development
- how planning impacts opportunity for people to move to urban environments
- the elements of the process - "due process"
- the roles of the applicant, local government staff, decision-maker, citizens
- approval criteria
- how procedural due process elements insure fairness

12 - 13 *Case Study1 and 2 -the Midwest and Southeastern United States*

Case study - the Midwest U.S. - Detroit, MI and Chicago, IL

- changes since 1970s
- why people have moved from here
- climate
- loss of jobs from the auto industry
- urban flight from increase in minority populations
- lack of jobs
- challenges and opportunities today

Case study - the Southeastern U.S.

- growth since 1980s
- why people moved there
- climate
- low cost energy
- retirement populations
- jobs
- challenges

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the Pacific  
Northwest*
- Case Study - the Pacific Northwest (Portland, OR metropolitan area)
- growth since the 1980's but slower since 2007
  - why people moved here
  - environment
  - jobs in high tech
  - lifestyle
  - sustainability movement
  - urban growth boundary and the separation of urban from farms and forest
  - problems and opportunities
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- 15- 18                *Trends in U.S.  
Cities Today*
- Governing cities with diverse populations with unique demands- the future
- distributing limited resources to serve the needs of both high income and poor populations
  - the demands of a growing senior populations
  - addressing social, recreational, health care, and transportation needs of the population
  - issues that are present in cities in urban centers and suburbs:
    - police
    - homeless population
    - taxing citizens to provide services
    - citizen engagement and the balancing of service delivery to address needs
  - economic development challenges for cities
  - the provision of urban services to meet the needs of diverse populations
  - public education and demands for lifetime learning opportunities
  - replacing aging infrastructure
  - immigration issues today
  - the role of local government managers in addressing the issues of the 21st Century
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