

Syllabus: UST 302 (Section 502) Fall 2017
Contemporary Urban Issues (Web course)
Department of Urban Studies

Instructor: **Dr. Dennis Keating**
Office: UR 229 (2nd floor, east wing)
Office Telephone: (216) 687-2298
Email: w.keating@csuohio.edu
Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Description

This is an upper-level undergraduate course designed to explore American urban life through the lens of race, class, and ethnicity with an emphasis on African-American communities. Through these lenses, political, social and economic issues related to urban life will be considered.

The issues selectively covered can be controversial. You are encouraged to respect differences of opinion in reading and writing about them.

Course Objectives

The purpose of the course is to provide students with academic and practical skills. By participating in the course, students are expected to gain a better understanding of:

1. Issues and challenges in urban America;
2. Public policy and politics relevant to race and ethnicity;
3. Appreciation of diversity;
4. Enhanced writing, research, critical thinking and analytical skills through writing assignments, online discussions, and a final exam;
5. Especially the African-American experience.

General Educational Requirement

UST 302 meets the criteria for the *African-American Experience Social Diversity* requirement and the skill areas of *critical thinking* and *informational literacy*.

African-American Experience Criteria

UST 302 has as a primary focus the African-American experience, while also including issues and perspectives of other minority groups. It provides students with both an historical and also contemporary perspective on the African-American experience within an urban context and a theoretical and empirical framework.

Skill Areas

This course emphasizes critical thinking. Students are to analyze information through the assigned readings about contemporary urban problems. They will acquire information literacy in responding to questions about the assigned readings and in researching and writing two essay papers.

Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC)

Go to the CSU Writing Center website for the WAC requirements:

<http://www.csuohio.edu/academic/writingcenter/index.html>

In order to receive WAC credit, you must receive a grade of at least “C” in the course. Students will write two essay papers, both draft and final versions.

Blackboard Learn

Because this course is web-based, students must be familiar with computers, the Internet, and Blackboard Learn. Students needing information about Blackboard Learn or needing assistance should contact the Center for eLearning (216) 687-3960 or the CSU Help Desk (216) 687-5050 .

Assignments

1. Discussion Responses: Every week Questions about the assigned Readings will be posted as Blackboard Assignments. Students are to respond individually.
2. Research Papers: As a WAC course, there are two essay papers: African-American Unemployment and Urban Education Reform. For each topic, there will be a draft and final paper. Instructions will be provided at the Assignment tab. These papers are to be submitted through Blackboard Learn. For the African-American Unemployment paper, the draft will be DUE by **October 13** and the final version by **October 27**. For the Urban Education Reform, the draft will be DUE by **November 3** and the final version by **November 17**.
3. On **December 12**, there will be a final online exam on selected readings.

Weekly Discussion Responses

Each week beginning the Instructor will post Questions about the assigned readings. Students are to participate individually in the discussion by responding through Blackboard Learn. Responses must be at least 150-200 words in length and be timely. Questions will be posted on Blackboard at the Assignment tab on Monday (after Week 1) and student Responses must be posted through Blackboard Learn by Wednesdays by 11:59 PM. Each Response will be worth 2 points.

Final Exam

The Final Exam will be held online on **December 12**. It will selectively cover the course readings as instructed at the Assignment link on Blackboard Learn.

Plagiarism

Go to the CSU Student Life website for the link to the Student Code of Conduct:
www.csuohio.edu/studentlife/
You can also consult with the CSU Writing Center.

Grading

1. Weekly (15) Discussion Responses: 2 points x 15 weeks = 30 points
2. Essay Papers (Final version only): 25 points x 2 = 50 points
3. Final Exam: 20 points

A=94-100
A- = 90-93
B- =87-89
B=83-86
B-=80-82
C+=77-79
C=70-76
D=60-69
F-59-below

Required Textbook

Twenty-First Century American City: Race, Ethnicity, and Municipal Urban Life (2d Edition 2013, Kendall-Hunt, paper) by Doreen Swetkis and Wendy Kellogg (S&K) is the required text. It's available through the CSU Bookstore.

This textbook will be supplemented by additional materials and there will also be reference materials. Additional materials may be provided through Announcements on Blackboard Learn.

Course Schedule

(Beginning Date, Topic, Readings)

Week 1 (August 28): Immigration

Guest and Kwong. Ethnic Enclaves and Cultural Diversity, Ch. 1, S&K

Keating. Background Memo on Immigration

Andrew Friedman. "Why U.S. Cities are Fighting to Attract Immigrants" Next City (nextcity.org) (July 4, 2017)

Reference:

Refugees build new lives and businesses in Cleveland:
www.freshwatercleveland.com/features/refugees040915.aspx (April 9, 2015)

Week 2 (September 4): Inner Ring Suburbs

Leigh and Lee. Philadelphia's Space In Between: Inner-Ring Suburb Evolution, Ch. 1, S&K

Keating Background Memo on Inner Ring Suburbs

References:

Bernadette Hanlon. *Once the American Dream: Inner-Ring Suburbs of the Metropolitan United States*. Temple University Press, 2010.

Katrin Anacker, Ed.. *The New American Suburb: Poverty, Race and the Economic Crisis*. Ashgate, 2015.

Week 3 (September 11): Regional Fair Share

Myron Orfield. Beyond Segregation: Toward a Shared Vision of our Regions, Ch. 2, S&K.

Reference:

Douglas Massey et al. *Climbing Mount Laurel: The Struggle for Affordable Housing and Social Mobility in an American Suburb*. Princeton University Press, 2013.

Week 4 (September 18): Poverty and Race

Deborah Johnson. Disentangling Poverty and Race, Ch. 2, S&K

Keating Background Memo

References:

Jeanne Sahadi. "Minimum Wage going up in 21 states, 22 cities" (CNNMoney, December 19, 2016): <http://money.cnn.com/2016/12/19/pf/minimum-wage-increases/index.html>.

Evergreen Cooperatives: www.evgoh.com

Living Wage: What It is, How It's Calculated, and How It Compares to the Minimum Wage: <http://useconomy.about.com/od/fiscalpolicy/p/Living-Wage.htm>

Week 5 (September 25): African American Unemployment

Keating Background Memo

Black Unemployment Rate 2015: [http://www.ibtimes.com/black-unemployment-rate-2015-better](http://www.ibtimes.com/black-unemployment-rate-2015-better-economy-african-americans-see-minimal-gains) economy-african-americans-see-minimal-gains March 8, 2015

Jared Bernstein. "The Black-White Unemployment Gap is at an all-time low. Here's how to keep it there". Washington Post (July 13, 2017)

Olivera Perkins. Black Unemployment rate has decreased, but still more than double that of whites. Plain Dealer (PD)(cleveland.com) (August 12, 2015)

Economic Policy Institute. Recovery is still in full swing for African American workers (January 8, 2016): <http://www.epi.org/blog/recovery-is-still-in-full-swing-for-african-american-workers/>

Economic Policy Institute. Black Unemployment is Still Higher than Pre-Recession Levels in 28 States (March 26, 2015): <http://www.epi.org/press/black-unemployment-is-still-higher-than-pre-recession-levels-in-28-states>

Travis Waldron. Black Unemployment Has Topped 10 Percent for Most of the Last 50 Years:

www.thinkprogress.org/economy/2012/03/12/442500/black-unemployment-50-years/

Frontline Interview-Professor William Julius Wilson: The Two Nations of Black America:

www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/race/interviews/wilson.html

Reference:

Cuyahoga County Office of Reentry: <http://reentry.cuyahoga.us/>

Research Paper: Draft Due October 13, Final Version Due October 27

Week 6 (October 2): Housing and Neighborhoods: Subprime Mortgage Crisis/Housing Abandonment

Alyssa Katz. Cleveland, Ohio, 2006, Ch. 3, S&K

Keating Background Memo

References:

Slavic Village Development: www.slavicvillage.org

[Study Shows Slavic Village emerging as model community \(February 17, 2015\):
http://www.freshwaterecleveland.com/devnews/slavicvillagestudy021715.aspx?](http://www.freshwaterecleveland.com/devnews/slavicvillagestudy021715.aspx?)

Cuyahoga County Land Bank: www.cuyahogalandbank.org

Michelle Jarboe. Taking Stock: Cleveland Housing-Cash woes spur debate on demolition strategy. PD(cleveland.com), November 22, 2015

Week 7 (October 9): Neighborhood Gentrification

Kane & Hayslett-McCall. Neighborhood Effects on Gay and Lesbian Access to City Institutions., Ch. 3, S&K

Reference:

Feargus O’Sullivan. The ‘gaytrification’ effect: why gay neighbourhoods are being priced out (January 13, 2016): www.theguardian.org

Week 8 (October 16): Urban Education Reform

Christine Sleeter. Context-Conscious Portraits and Context-Blind Policy, Ch. 5, S&K

Keating Background Memo

Jackson plan for schools taking shape. PD (April 30, 2012)

Cleveland Municipal School District (CMSD). Transformation Plan: www.cmsdnet.net/

Gauging Investment Schools’ progress is tricky. PD (May 3, 2015)

Karen Connelly. 5 Key Takeaways about school improvement in Cleveland. PD, August 13, 2015.

Gregory Korte. The Every Student Succeeds Act vs. No Child Left Behind: What’s Changed? USA Today, December 11, 2015

Patrick O’Donnell. Did Cleveland schools improve as promised? Scores Fell, but Rose when compared to state averages”. PD (September 25, 2016)

Emma Brown. School choice advocates divided over Trump and his education pick, Betsy DeVos. Washington Post (December 12, 2016) <https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/school-choice-advocates-divided>

Emma Brown. What should America do about its worst public schools? States still don't seem to know. Washington Post (August 6, 2017)

References

Kelly Patterson and Robert Silverman. *Schools and urban revitalization: Rethinking institutions and community development* (2014)

Diane Ravitch. *The Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice are undermining Education* (2010).

Jeffrey Henig and Wilbur Rich, eds. *Mayors in the Middle: Politics, Race, and Mayoral Control of Urban Schools* (2004).

Film: *Waiting for Superman* (DVD: February 2011)

Ohio School District Report Cards: Ohio Department of Education: www.ode.state.oh.us
Research Paper: Draft DUE November 3, Final Version DUE November 17

Week 9 (October 23) Tax Abatements/Home Ownership

Doreen Swetkis. Policy Makers versus citizens, Ch. 4, S&K

Keating Background Memo

Tanvi Misra. Why America's Racial Wealth Gap is Really a Homeownership Gap (March 12, 2015): Atlantic City Lab: <http://citylab.com/housing/2015/03/why-americas-racial-wealth-gap-is-really-a-homeownership-gap>.

Reference:

"For the Black Middle Class, Housing Crisis and History Collude to Dash Dreams" (2016): <http://wcpn.ideastream.org/news/npr/492251653>

Week 10 (October 30) Police Review

Ronnie Dunn. Race and the Relevance of Citizen Complaints Against the Police, Ch. 4, S&K

Keating Background Memo

Henry Gomez. Cleveland consent decree provides blueprint for long-elusive police reforms: The Big Story. PD (May 26, 2015)

Andrew Tobias. Cleveland will create citizen panel that will scrutinize city police reforms. PD (May 26, 2015)

Eric Heisig. City announces members of new Cleveland Community Police Commission. PD (September 8, 2015)

Eric Heisig. Civilian Police Review: Complaint system redo sought PD (November 30, 2016)

Week 11 (November 6) Urban Health

Howard Frumkin. Urban Sprawl and Public Health, Ch. 6, S&K

Brie Zeltner. Cuyahoga County partnership releases plan to address poor health, inequities. PD (June 9, 2015)

Keating Memo on Sprawl and Health

Reference:

Cuyahoga County Health Improvement Partnership: <http://www.hipcuyahoga.org>

Week 12 (November 13) Urban Health

Lead Poisoning, Infant Mortality

Lead: Crisis Abandoned:

www.ideastream.org/news/cuyahoga-lead-contamination-often-overlaps-poverty

[Brie Zeltner. "Public Health: Infant Mortality initiative gets \\$3M". PD \(June 8, 2016\)](#)

[Brie Zeltner. "Cuyahoga sees drop in infant mortality but racial disparity remains high here". PD \(July 21, 2017\)](#)

Reference:

Cuyahoga County Board of Health: <http://www.ccbh.net/lead-poisoning>

Week 13 (November 20) The Digital Divide

Wendy Kellogg and Anjali Mathur. Environmental Justice and Information Technologies, Ch. 7, S&K

Keating Memo on Digital Divide

Marcia Pledger. "Cleveland public housing connection a first". PD (May 12, 2017)

References:

Cuyahoga County Library Technology

Training: <https://www.cuyahogalibrary.org/Events/Technology-Training.aspx>

Michael McIntyre. Champion of free public Wi-Fi in Old Brooklyn wants upgrades.

May 26, 2015 [http://www.cleveland.com/tipoff/
/index.ssf/2015/05/champion_of_free_public_wi-fi.html](http://www.cleveland.com/tipoff/index.ssf/2015/05/champion_of_free_public_wi-fi.html)

City and inner ring lag in web access: PD (April 12, 2013)

Week 14 (November 27) Media Coverage of Cities

Peter Dreier. How the Media Compound Urban Problems, Ch. 7, S&K

Reference:

Improving Media Coverage and Public Perceptions of American-American Men and Boys (May 2013): www.opportunityagenda.org

Week 15 (December 4) Sustainability

Michelle Kaiser. Food Security, Ch. 8. S&K,

Keating Background Memo

References

Community Kitchen, fresh-foods café and mobile market serve Kinsman neighborhood (September 13, 2012)

<http://freshwatercleveland.com/forgood/bridgeportkitchen091312.aspx>

Burton, Bell, Carr Development: <http://www.bbcdevelopment.org/> Link to: CornUcopia

December 12 Final Exam

