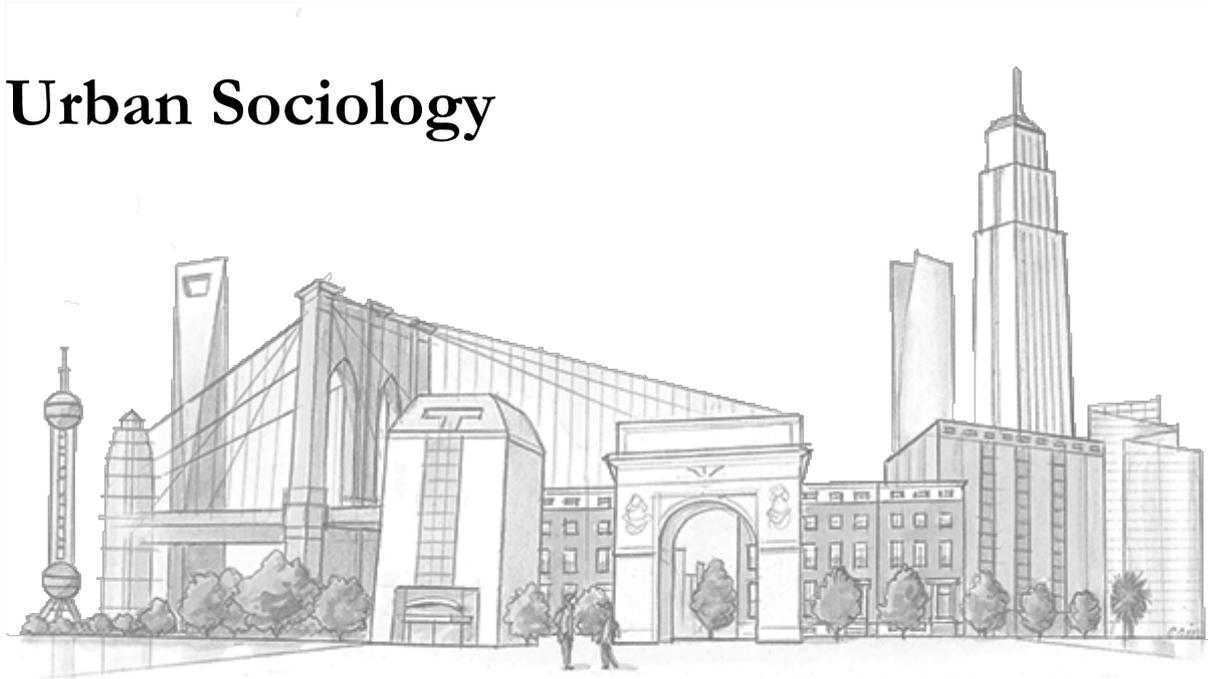


Urban Sociology



SOCS-SHU 360 | Spring 2019 | Room 307 | Mo/We 9:45 – 11 am

Professor Yifei Li

Email: yifei.li@nyu.edu

Office: 1203

Office hour: Mo/We 8:30 to 9:30 am

Prerequisite: Satisfactory completion of at least one course in social science methods.

Equivalent to Cities, Communities, and Urban Life (SOC-UA 460 or SCA-UA 760)

Course Description

Are cities sites of individual opportunity and rich communal life, or sources of individual pathology and community decline? What social, economic, and political factors promote one outcome or the other? How do different groups fare in the urban context, and why? This course approaches the city from a social scientific perspective. It offers an introduction to sociological theories on the city and empirical strategies for studying the city. Students will participate in a group research project on Shanghai as part of the course requirement.

Required Texts

Zhang, L. (2001). *Strangers in the city: Reconfigurations of space, power, and social networks within China's floating population*. Stanford University Press.

Zukin, S., Kasinitz, P., & Chen, X. (2015). *Global cities, local streets: Everyday diversity from New York to Shanghai*. Routledge.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, students will (1) achieve a general familiarity with major authors and theoretical traditions in urban sociology, (2) understand the strengths and limits of different methods of urban sociological research, (3) gain experience in conducting first-hand empirical data collection and analysis, (4) formulate theoretically motivated and empirically informed understandings of the city.

Requirements

This is an upper-level focus course on the subfield of urban sociology. As such, the course requires a substantial amount of work on your part in reading, writing, and researching the city from a sociological perspective.

Your grade for this course will be based on the following assignments, arranged in ascending level of challenge. See page 3 for formatting guidelines and grading rubric.

Book Reviews *100*2 pts*

You are required to submit two book reviews – one for each of the two textbooks. A successful review gives a succinct account of the book’s main findings, before offering a thoughtful analysis of its strengths and/or weaknesses, in terms of theoretical contribution, methodological clarity, and empirical sophistication. Each review should be approximately four pages in length. See NYU Classes for exemplars. They are due by March 18 and May 6, respectively.

Lexicon *100 pts*

You are required to maintain an evolving urban sociological lexicon – a list of names and terms you curate, maintain, and update throughout the semester. Create a google doc, and grant me (NetID: yl1135) permission to edit. It is recommended that you update the lexicon every week after you complete the reading assignments, but you may edit it as frequently or infrequently as you desire. The purpose of the lexicon is to furnish yourself with a personal document which you can refer back to when you need to look things up. The lexicon, hopefully, will be a handy reference for the exams, research project, and your future undertakings in urban sociology. It will be graded on May 15 for accuracy and breadth, but I may comment on it periodically. See NYU Classes for an exemplar.

Exams *100*2 pts*

The two exams consist of identification and short-answer questions. They are non-cumulative. You will not be tested on your ability to mechanically memorize names of authors, years of publication, titles of books, spelling of a term, or the like. The exam gauges your organic comprehension of ideas, theories, methods, traditions, and how they relate to each other.

Research Project *500 pts*

As is the case in the “real world” of urban sociological research, the research project for this course has a number of key components:

- an ethics protocol that addresses the precautionary considerations for the protection of human subjects involved in the project (100 pts, due March 1),
- a literature review that outlines the structure of past sociological scholarship that informs and inspires the research you wish to undertake (100 pts, due March 29),
- a proposal that outlines the methodological orientation and specific empirical strategies for investigating the issues you wish to focus on (100 pts, due April 12),
- an in-class presentation, in which you flesh out the question you started with, the evidence you gathered, and the preliminary conclusion you draw (100 pts, on May 5), and
- a written report that articulates all of the above – theory, methods, evidence, and conclusion (100 pts, due May 17).

Paper Formatting Guidelines

All written work should follow these formatting requirements, unless otherwise specified.

- Your papers should be formatted on A4-size paper, with one-inch (or 2.54 centimeters) margins on all four sides, double-spaced.
- Use your student ID (N*****) to identify yourself; do not write your name.
- Except for the Lexicon, submit electronically to the designated folder on NYU Classes on or before the due date.
- Attach a list of works cited only if you cite sources other than the ones on the syllabus. The list does not count toward the page limit.
- Failure to follow these guidelines may result in lowering of your mark.

Grading Rubric for Social Science Papers

A (Excellent)

The paper demonstrates excellent composition skills including a clear and thought-provoking thesis, appropriate and effective organization, lively and convincing supporting materials, effective diction and sentence skills, and perfect or near perfect mechanics including spelling and punctuation. The writing accomplishes the objectives of the assignment through synthesis, analysis, and attention to scholarly detail. The paper follows the formatting and length requirements. The paper is turned in on time.

B (Good)

The paper contains above average composition skills including a clear and thought-provoking thesis, although development, diction, and sentence style may suffer minor flaws. Shows careful and acceptable use of mechanics. The writing effectively accomplishes the goals of the assignment. The paper follows the formatting and length requirements. The paper is turned in on time.

C (Satisfactory)

The paper demonstrates competent composition skills including adequate development and organization, although the development of ideas may be trite, assumptions may be unsupported in more than one area, the thesis may not be original, and the diction and syntax may not be clear and effective. Minimally accomplishes the goals of the assignment. The paper fails to follow formatting and length requirements. The paper is turned in on time.

D (Poor)

Composition skills may be flawed in either the clarity of the thesis, the development, or organization. Diction, syntax, and mechanics may seriously compromise clarity. Minimally accomplishes the majority of the goals of the assignment. Fails to follow formatting and length requirements. The paper is turned in on time.

F (Fail)

Composition skills are flawed in two or more areas. Diction, syntax, and mechanics are excessively flawed. Fails to accomplish the goals of the assignment. Fails to follow formatting and length requirements. The paper is not turned in on time.

Attendance

Full attendance is expected. I understand that there may be extenuating circumstances that prevent you from attending classes. You do not need to present an excuse for the occasional absence, but if you expect such circumstances to recur, speak with me soon. Unsatisfactory attendance can result in a grade of F for the entire course at my discretion.

Grading Scale

A=95% or higher	A-=90-94.9%	B+=85-89.9%	B=80-84.9%
C=70-79.9%	D=60-69.9%	F=59.9% or lower	

Academic Honesty

All work that you submit for this class must be your own. All sources and assistance used in preparing your work must be precisely and explicitly acknowledged. There will be serious consequences if you violate NYU rules regarding academic integrity.

Lateness

If you submit your work after its due date, your mark will be penalized by 10% for each day of lateness. The date and time of your submission are determined by the timestamp on NYU Classes. On NYU Classes, be sure to set your time zone to China Standard Time (GMT+8).

Make-up Exam

A make-up exam will be given only if you provide, in writing, an acceptable excuse endorsed by an accredited professional regarding the situation. You should submit the written notice before the day of the exam. Last minute requests will not be accommodated. The make-up exam will be scheduled at a time that is convenient for all students who miss the exam, but no later than a week from the original exam date.

Responsible Use of Technology

Although electronic devices are valuable for research and study, they are inimical to participation and collegiality in the classroom. You may take notes on a laptop, provided that you use it responsibly. Refrain from using the laptop for purposes other than note-taking. Make sure your screen does not present a distraction to those around you. Do not let the device distract yourself from participating in class.

Communications

Course-related information will be communicated to you via messages through NYU Classes. Make sure you check your nyu.edu emails at least once a day. You are welcome to communicate with me via emails. If you prefer to meet in person, please use the office hour.

Accommodation

I wish to include fully any students with special needs. Please let me know (the earlier the better) if you need special accommodation in the curriculum, instruction, or evaluation procedures in order for you to fully participate. We work with the Moses Center on Washington Square to provide you with assistance and accommodation as needed. Please note that Moses Center registration is required for any special needs to be considered. The Academic Resource Center (ARC) can help you with obtaining necessary documentation.

Weekly Schedule of Readings and Writings

Note: this schedule is subject to adjustments.

Week 1: Introduction

2/11 – No readings

2/13 – Simmel, Lefebvre, Duncier

Week 2: Urban citizenship and the sense of belonging

2/18 – Zhang, pp. 1-46

2/20 – Davis, Kasinitz et al.

Week 3: Migrant enclaves and the space of marginality

2/25 – Zhang, pp. 47-90

2/27 – Riis, Wacquant

3/1 – Ethics protocol due

Week 4: Social capital and neighborhood effects

3/4 – Zhang, pp. 91-136

3/6 – Putnam, Sampson

Week 5: Crime, order, and regime politics

3/11 – Zhang, pp. 137-185

3/13 – Logan & Molotch, Goffman

Week 6: Space and displacement in the city

3/18 – Zhang, pp. 186-216

3/18 – Book review due

3/20 – Gans, Desmond

Week 7

3/25 – Mid-term review on NYU Classes (No class meeting today.)

3/27 – Mid-term (in-class)

3/29 – Literature review due

Week 8

4/1 – Workshop for research proposals

4/3 – Proposal writing (No class meeting today.)

Week 9: Methods

4/8 – Bearman, Robinson

4/10 – Sharkey & Faber, Ludwig

4/12 – Proposal due

Week 10: Streets and the urban ecosystem

4/15 – ZKC, pp. 1-58

4/17 – Jacobs, Zukin

Week 11: Everyday diversity and the creative class

4/22 – ZKC, pp. 59-119

4/24 – Lu, Florida

Week 12: Ordinary spaces and the right to the city

4/29 – ZKC, pp. 120-169

5/5 (Sunday) – Presentations

Week 13: Global city-making and local struggles

5/6 – ZKC, pp. 170-215

5/6 – Book review due

5/8 – Sassen, Glaeser

Week 14: The spirit of the city: From liberty to civility

5/13 – de Tocqueville, Anderson

5/15 – Final exam

5/15 – Lexicon due

5/17 – Report due

End of syllabus.