

GEOG 442: URBAN SPACES-URBAN SOCIETY, FALL 2017
INSTRUCTOR: DR. MADHURI SHARMA [MSHARMA3@UTK.EDU]

AT: BURCHFIEL GEOG. BUILD. # 301; TIME: TUES/THURSDAYS: 12:40PM-1:55 PM

OVERVIEW

This course will focus on the ***social relations*** and the ***complex ways*** in which various elements of human diversity such as race/ethnicity, nationality, culture, class, gender, sexuality, age and education interact with each other and within the built environments to ***produces spaces and opportunities of difference***.



Through lectures, class/group-discussions, movie critiques, and short writing assignments, this course will introduce students to the basic concepts of ***urban spaces and urban society***, especially within the context of contemporary USA. We will also read and discuss few case studies from Europe, Latin America and the fast globalizing, newly industrializing and developing countries from Asia and Africa.

Topics include: Origin of cities and theoretical foundations to contemporary issues surrounding urban restructuring, redevelopment, suburbanization and gentrification, access to and (re)creation of public vs. private spaces, modernism and post-modernism, post-colonial theory, social ramifications of restructuring of the city under capitalism, suburbanization, socio-economic polarization, urban renewal, segregation, urban poverty and uneven development, environmental racism, racial/gender differences in work opportunities, gender & labor segmentation, sexuality, crime, poverty, etc. We will start with important conceptual frameworks on analyzing urban-social/economic patterns, from the Chicago School to the Los Angeles School of Postmodernism & the Market-Led Pluralism.

Learning Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to

- (i) Describe how the production and consumption of spaces occur due to different levels of interaction among various social groups that are divided based on race, color, class, lifecycle, nationality, religion, sexuality, etc., (ii) How & why geography affects the above, (iii) How can you use the various theories/frameworks to explain human mobility and settlements patterns that create varied social & economic landscapes, (iv) Why and how the socio-economic characteristics and skills associated with human beings residing in different regions/locations of the world relate with their economic engagement in certain types of activities & vice-versa that also creates a distinct spatial division of labor and hence a distinct regionality, (v) Recognize and relate to the local, regional, and global changes and challenges through geographic research and technical writing by engaging into writing assignments and in-class discussions.



Practical experience (NEW): Field visit to local communities to examine: (i) Reasons/concerns of poverty & income inequality and how that affects population health, & (ii) Environmental racism and issues of poverty and spatial deprivation

Work load: Class discussions (w-attendance), Two-short writing assignments (movie critique/field visit report), midterm & a final exam (Graduate students will have an additional work load).

Text/Readings: “*The New Urban Sociology*” by Gottdiener, Hutchinson and Ryan (5th Edition, 2015) Plus readings posted on Blackboard.