Urban Studies

Faculty

Core Faculty

Christine Drennon, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Sociology and Anthropology
Shana McDermott, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Economics
Tahir H. Naqvi, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Sociology and Anthropology
Kathryn O’Rourke, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Art and Art History; Acting Director

Contributing Faculty

Nels Christiansen, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Economics
Kenneth Loiselle, Ph.D., Associate Professor, History
Curtis Swope, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Modern Languages and Literatures
Carey H. Latimore IV, Ph.D., Associate Professor, History
Timothy O’Sullivan, Ph.D., Professor, Classical Studies

Overview

Urban Studies is an interdisciplinary major that focuses on the global phenomenon of urbanization as well as the history and nature of cities. The program incorporates a wide variety of disciplinary approaches to the study of urbanization, urban processes, urbanity, and urbanism. Students explore the city from multiple perspectives, which prepares them for graduate work in several disciplines and careers in fields concerned with urban life. Urban Studies majors have extensive interaction with the city in research, class projects, and internships. Students are encouraged to shape their course of study according to their interests in consultation with their advisor.

Requirements
The Major

The requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts with a major in Urban Studies are as follows:

I. Specific major degree requirements (34-39 credit hours total):

   A. The Core Curriculum:

   URBS/SOCI 1310  The Urban Experience

   One methods class from the following list:

   URBS/SOCI 3465  Research Methods: GIS
   URBS/SOCI 3360  Research Methods: Social Statistics
   SOCI 3353  Research Methods: Fieldwork
   HIST 3381  Historians and Their Craft
   GEOS 3308  GIS and Remote Sensing

   The Senior Experience:

   URBS 4494  Capstone in Urban Studies

   B. The Interdisciplinary Curriculum: at least 24 credit hours from the following list (18 of which must be at upper-division level):

   ANTH 4352  Global Cities
   ANTH 3445  Understanding Refugees
   ARTH 1412  Art and Architecture of Latin America Since the Sixteenth Century
   ARTH 3452  Nineteenth-Century Architecture and Urbanism
   ARTH 3454  Mexico City
   ARTH 3464  Twentieth-Century Architecture and Urbanism
   CLAS 1308  Daily Life in Ancient Rome
   ECON 3323  The Economics of Government
   ECON/URBS 3334  Urban Economics
   GEOS 1304  Environmental Geology
   GRST 3307  Berlin: From Cabarets to Communists
   HIST 1371  The African-American Experience since Reconstruction
   HIST 3333  History of Paris
   PLSI 3413  Policy Analysis and Policymaking
   PLSI 3416/URBS 3336  Urban Government and Politics
   SOCI 2314  Social Problems and Human Values
   SOCI 3340  Urban Geography
   URBS 3370  Applied Urban Studies
   URBS 4-91  Special Topics in Urban Studies (as appropriate)

II. University requirements: completion of all other required elements of the Pathways curriculum and at least 124 credit hours.
The Minor

Students may complete a minor in Urban Studies by meeting the following requirements:

I. Completion of 18 credit hours of Urban Studies courses, including:

A. URBS/SOCI 1310—The Urban Experience

Urban Studies electives (15 credit hours) chosen from the course list above.

Additional Requirements:

At least 9 hours of the total must be in upper-division courses.

No more than 12 of the hours used to satisfy the minor requirements (including crosslisted courses) may come from any one department.

At least 9 hours of the total must come from URBS courses (including cross-listed courses).

No more than 3 hours of URBS 3-88/3-89 may be used to meet the minor requirements.

Courses

URBS-1310 The Urban Experience
An introduction to the city, its origins, contemporary form, and likely future. The course will present the city and urban phenomena in both the American context and other national environments. The major emphasis will be placed on understanding the physical, social, economic, and political systems which create and sustain urban areas. (Also listed as SOCI 1310.) (Offered every year.)

URBS-1316 People and Places in Global Context
A study of the complex ways in which modern social organization materializes geographically. Topics include the distribution and movement of human populations, characteristics and distribution of cultural mosaics, patterns of economic interdependence, and the forces of cooperation and conflict among peoples from both global and local perspectives. (Also listed as SOCI 1316.)

URBS-2328 Social Inequality
A study of the stratification of American society in terms of the unequal distribution of wealth, status and power. Theories on the origin and development of social classes as well as the functional necessity of social inequality will be examined along with empirical works dealing with inequality. (Also listed as SOCI 2328). (Offered occasionally).
URBS-3305 The City in History
Cross-cultural examination of urban life in the pre-industrial and industrial cities of Asia, Europe and the Americas from a historical perspective with special emphasis on the U.S. urban experience. Lecture and discussion format. (Also listed as HIST 3382.)

URBS-3330 Economics and the Environment
The economic problem of coping with a finite environment. Study of the interrelationships among economic growth, environmental quality, urban concentration and resource constraints. Economic analysis of pollution control and other environmental policy problems. (Also listed as ECON 3330.) Prerequisite: ECON 1311.

URBS-3334 Urban Economics
Analytical study of the reasons for cities to exist, the location of economic activity, the economic base of urban areas and the functioning of urban land markets. Economic analysis of selected urban policy issues such as local economic development, zoning and growth controls, housing, transportation, poverty, crime, and the provision of local public services. Attention is paid to the urban experience outside as well as within the U.S. (Also listed as ECON 3334.) Prerequisites: ECON 1311, and three hours of upper-division credit in either Economics or Urban Studies.

URBS-3340 Urban Geography
This course examines the history and contemporary processes of urbanization, primarily in the North American context. In particular, we are concerned with the geography of these processes, resulting in differentiation of space and the creation of distinct places. We will examine the geography of urbanization at several scales, ranging from development of the North American urban system to the experiences of neighborhoods within cities. (Also listed as SOCI 3340.) Prerequisite: At least 3 hours completed in Sociology

URBS-3460 Research Methods: Applied Social Statistics
This course provides hands-on approach for learning how to undertake quantitative social research focused on the design and completion of a semester long research project. A variety of statistical tools are addressed, including descriptive statistics, tests of significance, and linear regression and correlation. The course goals emphasize writing and rewriting, learning how to formulate and test research hypotheses, and understanding how to present results in an accurate and effective manner. (Also listed as SOCI 3460 and ANTH 3460.)(Offered every Spring.) Prerequisite: ANTH or SOCI 3359

URBS-3366 Governance and Public Policy in Contemporary China
This course covers most significant issues of contemporary policies and public policy in China. It explores the forces changing the lives of nearly a fifth of humanity, the 1.1 billion people of China. This course is designed to be experimental in both subject and teaching methodology. In order to explore the political, economic, and social processes of liberalization that have created this new era of the increased circulation of people, ideas, commodities and technologies across national boundaries, seminar participants must use materials and methods from many scholarly disciplines and traditions: urban studies, political science, sociology, history, anthropology, economics, and media/cultural studies. In order to study these increasingly mobile populations that often fall outside the boundaries of conventional area studies approaches, students must develop innovative comparative
URBS-3367 Comparative Views of Modern China
This course represents an overview of the most important economic relationship of the twenty-first century. The global financial crisis that started in 2008 revealed just how much the strategic relationship between China and the United States represents the heart of the world's economy. China has recently surpassed Japan to become the world's second largest economy and America's third largest commercial partner. The rise of China has brought about a reorganization of the global economy and the international balance of power. This new world order carries challenges and opportunities. China remains a communist country with a significant legacy of a command economy. It is also a market economy. Understanding this mixture - capitalism with Chinese characteristics or the Chinese variety Capitalism - is the major aim of this course. We also cover topics relevant to the economic relationship between China and the USA, including international trade and the balance of trade, the Chinese currency system, the growth of China and its growing influence in the international sphere. (Also listed as ECON 3367, CHIN 3367, and BUSN 3367.)

URBS-3370 Applied Urban Studies
This course combines the academic study of Urban Studies with a service learning component; classroom work will be integrated with off-campus internships. Prerequisites: URBS 1310 and Urban Studies Major, or consent of instructor.

URBS-3416 Urban Politics
An exploration of the urban space, including the politics, institutions, power centers, policies, and the people who live in urban environments. Emphasis is given to why cities matter, how cities are organized, how cities operate as an economic engine, and how cities shape identity and experiences while producing inequality. Contemporary urban issues are considered, such as demographic changes, community power, and public transportation. (Offered every Spring.) (Also listed as PLSI 3416.)

URBS-3445 Understanding Refugees
An interdisciplinary study of the refugee experience from global and local perspectives. The course will examine how the human rights of refugees are understood from the points of view of international law, humanitarian institutions, and of refugees themselves. The ways in which refugees negotiate the trauma of the past and the demands of everyday life in cities in their home countries will also be examined. Includes a directed field research experience. (Also listed as ANTH 3445 and SOCI 3445.) (Offered every other year.) Prerequisite: At least 3 hours completed in ANTH, SOCI, or URBS

URBS-3452 Global Cities: Africa, Asia, and the Americas
This course offers theoretical and empirical tools for the study of urban processes in Asia, Africa, and the Americas. It examines the major problems of housing and infrastructure confronting cities in these regions, and emphasizes the role of globalization in urban transformation. (Offered every other year.) (Also listed as ANTH 3452.) Prerequisite: URBS 1310 or at least 3 hours completed in ANTH

URBS-3465 Research Methods: GIS
This course provides a hands-on approach for learning how to undertake spatial social research focused on the design and completion of a semester long research project. Spatial tools introduced emphasize geographic information systems. The course goals include map making and the integration of information technology and cartography. (Also listed as SOCI/ANTH 3465.) (Offered every year.) Prerequisite: SOCI 3359 or ANTH 3359

URBS-3-88 Urban Studies Internship
Field-work experience in a setting approved by the student, professor, and the organization selected. Supervision and guidance will be provided by the host organization and the professor. The course must be taken on a graded basis. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor

URBS-3-89 Urban Studies Practicum
Field-work experience in a setting approved by the student, professor, and the organization selected. Supervision and guidance will be provided by the host organization and the professor. This course must be taken on a Pass/Fail basis. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor

URBS-3-90 Independent Study
Independent study in selected areas. 1 to 6 hours. Prerequisites: 6 advanced hours in Urban Studies or consent of instructor.

URBS-4391 Special Topics in Urban Studies
Announcement of each course will be by prospectus. May be repeated when topics vary.

URBS-4494 Senior Seminar
The Senior Seminar in Urban Studies is the capstone experience for the Urban Studies Major. It serves as a synthesis course for the wide variety of courses taken in this interdisciplinary program. In it, students undertake either a traditional research project, or community-based research project, for which they are responsible for primary data collection, analysis, and presentation. Projects are true synthesis of the various discipline perspectives of the city and urban issues.