

Western University · Dept. of Political Science

Urban Political Economy

Political Science 9524

Fall 2020

Instructor: Dr. Zack Taylor
E-mail: zack.taylor@uwo.ca
Phone: 519-661-2111 ext. 85169
Office Hours: Online via Zoom by appointment
Dates: Wednesdays 1:30–3:30pm
Location: Online via Zoom (address to follow).

What is political power? Who has it? How is it acquired? How is its use enabled or constrained? How are political and economic power inter-related? This course takes up these foundational questions in the urban context. We will survey classic and contemporary theories of urban political economy. The first half of the course examines perspectives on the acquisition and exercise of power *in* the city. The second half considers the power *of* the city—in an increasingly borderless world, is there such a thing as an autonomous local politics, or must urban political economy be understood only in relation to broader forces? How do the institutional layering and fragmentation that characterize urban governance shape the exercise of political power? As these ideas have developed in relation to one another through time, the flow is chronological.

While empirically focused on urban and local governance, we will discuss how these concepts may be applicable to other contexts and scales of analysis. (Indeed, there be no better time to think about power than now, in our age of populist discontent, profound political disagreement, and alienation from politics!) We will also use the terrain of urban political economy research to discuss and debate the methodological dilemmas all political scientists face as they have studied the acquisition and use of power—dilemmas you too may face as you write theses, dissertations, and research papers.

This is a required core course for all PhD students intending to write a Comprehensive Exam in Urban Politics and Local Government.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, you will:

- be familiar with leading theories of urban political economy,
- have sharpened your analytic and argumentative skills through classroom discussions and assignments.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Class 1 Sept. 9 Introduction: Structure, Agency, and Power
Assign reading presentations

Part I – Power in the City

Class 2 Sept. 16 Power and History: The Development of Urban Politics
Reading presentations begin

Class 3 Sept. 23 The Community Power Debate: Elitism vs. Pluralism

Class 4 Sept. 30 Urban Regime Analysis

Class 5 Oct. 7 Regimes and Governance in Comparative Perspective

Class 6 Oct. 14 Group Conflict in Urban Politics

Class 7 Oct. 21 Capitalism, Urban Development, and the Local State

Part II – The Power of the City

Class 8 Oct. 28 Capitalist Urbanization and Neoliberal Urbanism

**** Reading Week, Nov. 2–6 ****

Class 9 Nov. 11 From City Limits to the Competitive City
Abstract due

Class 10 Nov. 18 Multilevel Urban Governance

Class 11 Nov. 25 Governing Metropolitan Areas

Class 12 Dec. 2 Reflections on Methods for the Study of Urban Politics

Dec. 9 *Final paper due*

COURSE WEBSITE

This course makes use of OWL. Please refer to the course website regularly for announcements and course information: <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal>.

COURSE FORMAT

This is a seminar course. There will be no lecture. Students will lead and actively contribute to the discussion. **Reading the assigned texts in advance is a necessary prerequisite for doing well in this course and will make for more exciting and insightful discussion.**

Per the university's response to COVID-19, the seminar will take place on-line using Zoom. There are no scheduled office hours. Students are welcome to schedule consultations (over Zoom) with the instructor.

COURSE MATERIALS

Most of the readings will be posted on OWL. You will, however, purchase one book, which is available in the university bookstore and on popular on-line booksellers:

Stone, Clarence. 1989. *Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta 1946–1988*. Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press.

EVALUATION

Participation (20%): Lively, informed, and thoughtful discussion is at the heart of this course. You will be evaluated on the preparation and thoughtfulness that you bring to your in-class discussion contributions.

Seminar leadership (10%): Depending on the size of the course enrolment, you will lead a one-hour seminar discussion at least once during the term. On your chosen day, you will distribute a (maximum two-page) summary of the reading or readings you have prepared to the class. You will briefly (maximum 10 minutes) present some key points from the reading, after which you will motivate discussion by posing discussion questions that you have prepared, and by moderating and participating in the discussion.

Two readings summaries (10%): You will select two readings from weeks other than your seminar week and prepare and submit via OWL a one-page summary of each reading. These are due Monday night before each Wednesday's class.

Final paper (60%): Building on the course material, you will write an *argumentative essay* that critically engages with an important question in urban political economy. This may involve taking a deeper dive into the literature to compare and contrast diverse theoretical perspectives

and their extensions, or it may involve applying a theory to one or more empirical cases. **You will submit a short (1–2 pages) proposal for instructor feedback on or before November 11.** Masters students will submit a maximum 20-page paper. Doctoral students will submit a maximum 30-page paper. **Papers are due on Wednesday, December 9.**

Both your abstract and your paper will be submitted via the OWL assignment submission system. Further details on the paper assignment will be discussed early in the term.

COURSE POLICIES

Communication with the instructor: Please do not hesitate to e-mail me if you would like to discuss course material. I will make every effort to respond to e-mails within 24 hours (weekends excepted). If you are having trouble with the course material or are falling behind in your work, please contact me as soon as possible.

E-mail policy: All Western University students are required to have an @uwo.ca e-mail account. The instructor will *only* respond to e-mails sent from your Western University account. The instructor will *not* accept assignments by e-mail.

Academic integrity: To protect and uphold academic integrity in the class, it is the responsibility of each student to be able to demonstrate the originality of his or her work if called upon to do so. At a minimum, for every assignment, the sources of all information and ideas must be properly referenced using a standard academic referencing style such as Chicago, APA, or MLA. Failure to properly reference ideas, concepts, and quotations in an assignment that are not your own will result in academic penalties as required by university policy:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf.

All graduate students are expected to have a thorough understanding of the rules and conventions of academic writing. If you are unclear about what constitutes plagiarism or how to reference sources, please visit the Writing Support Centre <http://writing.uwo.ca> or review information at: <http://www.lib.uwo.ca/tutorials/plagiarism/>.

Help with writing: Learning to express ideas clearly is a central goal of the university experience. If academic writing does not come easily to you, you are strongly encouraged to make use of the Writing Support Centre: <http://writing.uwo.ca>.

Late assignments: The penalty for late assignments is two percentage points per day (including weekend days). Extensions due to illness require a medical certificate. If you foresee problems meeting submission deadlines please consult the instructor early; accommodations can always be made with adequate advance notice.

Accommodations on medical grounds: Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments must apply to the Academic Counseling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Please refer to https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/index.html. Students who are in

emotional/mental distress should refer to Western Health and Wellness at <https://www.uwo.ca/health/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Accommodations on religious grounds: Every effort has been made to avoid scheduling assignment due dates on religious holidays. Please inform the instructor at the beginning of the course if you will be unable to attend class for reason of religious observance.

READING LIST AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Class 1

Introduction: Structure, Agency, and Power

Questions: Where are power and politics in Burgess' and Wirth's classic portrayals of the city? How do the two accounts differ in this respect? How does Imbroscio's portrayal of structure and agency fit within Alford and Friedland's typology of power?

- Burgess, Ernest W. 1925. "The Growth of City: An Introduction to a Research Project." Ch. 2 in Robert E. Park, Ernest W. Burgess, and Roderick D. McKenzie, eds., *The City*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. pp. 47–62.
- Wirth, Louis. 1938. "Urbanism as a Way of Life". *American Journal of Sociology* 44(1): 1-24.
- Alford, Robert R. and Roger Friedland. 1985. *Powers of Theory: Capitalism, the State, and Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP. Introduction (pp. 1–14).
- Alford, Robert R. and Roger Friedland. 1985. *Powers of Theory: Capitalism, the State, and Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP. **Introduction (pp. 1–14).**
- Imbroscio, David. 1999. "Structure, Agency, and Democratic Theory." *Polity* 32(1): 45–66.

Part I – Power in the City

Class 2

Power and History: The Development of Urban Politics in Canada and the United States

Questions: How and why did Canadian and American local politics, local government institutions, and intergovernmental relations historically come to differ? What role did power—and whose power?—play in the evolution of these differences?

- Merton, Robert. 2002 [1957]. "The Latent Functions of the Machine." Ch. 8 in Dennis R. Judd and Paul Kantor, eds., *The Politics of Urban America: A Reader*, 3rd ed. New York: Pearson. pp. 101–109.
- White, Andrew D. 2002 [1890]. "City Affairs are Not Political." Ch. 10 in Dennis R. Judd and Paul Kantor, eds., *The Politics of Urban America: A Reader*, 3rd ed. New York: Pearson. pp. 128–131.
- Trounstine, Jessica. 2009. "Challenging the Machine–Reform Dichotomy." Ch. 4 in Richardson Dilworth, ed., *The City in American Political Development*. New York: Routledge. pp. 77–97.
- Magnusson, Warren. 1983. "Introduction: The Development of Canadian Urban Government." In A. Sancton and W. Magnusson, eds., *City Politics in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. pp. 3–57.
- Taylor, Zack. 2014. "If Different Then Why? Explaining the Divergent Political Development of Canadian and American Local Governance." *International Journal of Canadian Studies* 49: 53–79.

Supplemental

- DiGaetano, Alan. 1988. "The Rise and Development of Urban Political Machines: An Alternative to Merton's Functional Analysis." *Urban Affairs Quarterly* 24(2): 242–267.
- Hays, Samuel P. 1964. "The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era." *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* Oct.:157–169.
- Wickett, S. Morley. 1900. "City Government in Canada." *Political Science Quarterly* 15(2). pp. 240–260.
- Higgins, Donald J.H. 1986. *Local and Urban Politics in Canada*. Toronto: Gage. [ch. 6]

Class 3

The Community Power Debate: Elitism vs. Pluralism

Questions: What is power according to Hunter? How is it acquired and exercised? Who are the elites? How does the pluralist perspective on power differ from the elite domination perspective? How do Bachrach and Baratz critique the pluralist and elite domination perspectives?

- Hunter, Floyd. 1953. *Community Power Structure: A Study of Decision Makers*. Chapel Hill, NC: Univ. of North Carolina Press. [Chs 1 and 4.]
- Dahl, Robert. 2005 [1961]. *Who governs? Democracy and power in an American city*, 2nd ed. New Haven, CT: Yale UP. [Chs. 7–8, 10–12, 19–27 (the chapters are short)]
- Bachrach, Peter, and Morton S. Baratz. 1962. "Two faces of power." *American Political Science Review* 56(4): 947–52.

Supplemental

- Mills, C. Wright. 1956. *The Power Elite*. New York: Oxford UP. [chs. 1, 11, 12.]
- Domhoff, G. William, and Hoyt B. Ballard. 1968. *C. Wright Mills and The Power Elite*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Polsby, Nelson W. 1980. *Community power and political theory: a further look at problems of evidence and inference*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Young, Robert A. 1978. "Review: Steven Lukes's Radical View of Power." *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 11(3): 639–649.

Class 4

Urban Regime Analysis

Questions: What is an urban regime? How successfully does Stone resolve the structure-agency conflict in the earlier debate between structuralist/Marxist and pluralist perspectives?

- Stone, Clarence. 1989. *Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta 1946–1988*. Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press. [Read whole book.]

Class 5 Regimes and Governance in Comparative Perspective

Questions: Does the urban regime concept belong to a particular space and time? Is the approach underlying the regime concept more generally applicable than the concept itself? How is the concept of governance different from the concept of regime?

- Stone, Clarence N. 1993. "Urban regimes and the capacity to govern: a political economy approach." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 15(1): 1–28.
- Mossberger, Karen, and Gerry Stoker. 2001. "The Evolution of Urban Regime Theory: The Challenge of Conceptualization." *Urban Affairs Review* 36 (6):810–35.
- Stoker, Gerry. 1998. "Governance as Theory: Five Propositions." *International Social Science Journal* 50 (1): 17–28.
- Pierre, Jon. 2014. "Can urban regimes travel in time and space? Urban regime theory, urban governance theory, and comparative urban politics." *Urban Affairs Review* 50 (6): 864–889.

Supplemental

- Harding, Alan. 1999. "Review Article: North American Urban Political Economy, Urban Theory and British Research." *British Journal of Political Science* 29:673–698.
- Davies, Jonathan. 2002. "Urban Regime Theory: A Normative-Empirical Critique." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 24(1): 1–17.
- Andranovich, Greg, Matthew J. Burbank, and Charle H. Heying. 2001. "Olympic Cities: Lessons Learned from Mega-Event Politics." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 23(2): 113–131.

Class 6 Group Conflict in Urban Politics

Questions: Governing coalitions, including urban regimes, are often characterized as being composed of groups. Is there an enduring group basis of governing and opposition coalitions in Canadian, American, and other cities? What are these groups? How can we explain their emergence and durability?

- Macedo, Stephen. 2011. "Property-owning plutocracy: Inequality and American localism". In *Justice and the American Metropolis*. Swannstrom, Todd and Clarissa Hayward, eds. 2011, pp. 33–58.
- Hajnal, Zoltan, and Jessica Trounstein. 2014. "What Underlies Urban Politics? Race, Class, Ideology, Partisanship, and the Urban Vote." *Urban Affairs Review* 50 (1):63-99.
- Ley, David. 1994. "Gentrification and the Politics of the New Middle Class." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 12 (1):53–74.
- Doering, Jan, Daniel Silver, and Zack Taylor. 2020. "The Spatial Articulation of Urban Political Cleavages." *Urban Affairs Review*. Early on-line.

Supplemental

- Trounstein, Jessica. 2018. *Segregation by Design: Local Politics and Inequality in American Cities*. Cambridge.
- Benjamin, Andrea. 2017. *Racial Coalition Building in Local Elections: Elite Cues and Cross-Ethnic Voting*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Kraus, N. 2004. "The significance of race in urban politics: The limitations of regime theory." *Race and Society* 7: 95–111.
- Urry, John. 2004. "The 'System' of Automobility." *Theory, Culture & Society* 21 (4–5):25–39.
- Fischel, William A. 2001. "Home voters, Municipal Corporate Governance, and the Benefit View of the Property Tax." *National Tax Journal* 54(1): 157–173.

Class 7

Capitalism, Urban Development, and the Local State

Questions: What is the role of the state (and the local state in particular) in the political economy? How does the logic of capital accumulation drive policy decisions? Why do pluralist and structuralist writers make such radically different claims about the nature and use of political power in the urban setting?

- Pickvance, Christopher. 1995. "Marxist Theories of Urban Politics." Ch. 13 in David Judge, Gerry Stoker, and Harold Wolman, eds., *Theories of Urban Politics*. London: SAGE. pp. 253–275.
- Logan, John R., and Harvey L. Molotch. 2007. *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*. 20th anniversary ed. Berkeley: University of California Press. Original edition, 1987. [Chs. 1–3, 6.]
- Harvey, David. 1978. "The Urban Process Under Capitalism: A Framework for Analysis." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 2(1–3): 101–131.

Supplemental

- Lindblom, Charles. 1982. "The Market as Prison." *Journal of Politics* 44(2): 324–336.
- Magnusson, Warren. 1985. "The Local State in Canada: Theoretical Perspectives." *Canadian Public Administration* 28(Winter): 575–99.
- Ferman, Barbara. 1996. *Challenging the Growth Machine: Neighborhood Politics in Chicago and Pittsburgh*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.

Part II – The Power of the City

Class 8

Capitalist Urbanization and Neoliberal Urbanism

Questions: Is local power an illusion within global capitalism? What is a “spatial fix,” and how is it functional to the maintenance of capital accumulation? How is Harvey’s conception similar to or different from Logan and Molotch’s? What is neoliberalism? Do local actors and governments enjoy any meaningful autonomy under capitalist urbanization?

Harvey, David. 1989. “From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: the transformation of urban governance in late capitalism”. *Geografiska Annaler* 71B, 3–17.

Harvey, David. 2001. “Globalization and the ‘Spatial Fix’.” *Geographische Revue* 3(2): 23–30.
<http://geographische-revue.de/gr2-01.htm>

Peck, Jamie, Nik Theodore, and Neil Brenner. 2009. “Neoliberal urbanism: Models, moments, mutations.” *SAIS Review* 23: 49-66.

Supplemental

Kantor, Paul. 1987. “The Dependent City.” *Urban Affairs Quarterly* 22 (4):493–520.

Harvey, David. 2001. “The Urbanization of Capital.” Ch. 1 in *The Urban Experience*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP. pp. 17–58.

Peck, Jamie, and Adam Tickell. 2002. “Neoliberalizing Space.” *Antipode* 34 (3):380–404.

Peck, Jamie. 2012. “Austerity Urbanism.” *City* 16 (6):626–655.

Arrighi, Giovanni. 2004. “Spatial and Other ‘Fixes’ of Historical Capitalism.” *Journal of World-Systems Research* 10(2): 527–539.

Christophers, Brett. 2011. “Revisiting the Urbanization of Capital.” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 101(6): 1347–1364.

Class 9

From City Limits to the Competitive City

Questions: What are the interests of the limited city, as Paul Peterson calls them? How does Savitch and Kantor’s account of local agency differ from Peterson’s and the Marxist accounts in the previous week? How do they build on the regime approach in their work?

Goldsmith, M. 1995. “Autonomy and City Limits”, in D. Judge, G. Stoker and H. Wolman (eds), *Theories of Urban Politics*. London: Sage, pp. 228–52.

Ostrom, Vincent, Charles M. Tiebout, and Robert Warren. 1961. “The Organization of Government in Metropolitan Areas: A Theoretical Inquiry.” *The American Political Science Review* 55 (4): 831–42.

Peterson, Paul. 1981. *City Limits*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Read Chs. 1–3.

Savitch, Hank V., and Paul Kantor. 2002. *Cities in the International Marketplace: The Political Economy of Urban Development in North America and Western Europe*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. **[Read Chs. 1, 2, 5, 9, and 10.]**

Supplemental

- DiGaetano, Alan, and John S. Klemanski. 1999. *Power and City Governance: Comparative Perspectives on Urban Development*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Stoker, Gerry. 2011. "Was Local Governance Such a Good Idea? A Global Comparative Perspective." *Public Administration* 89(1): 15–31.
- Eckersley, Peter. 2017. "A New Framework for Understanding Subnational Policy-making and Local Choice." *Policy Studies* 38(1): 76–90.
- Sellers, Jefferey M. 2002. *Governing from Below: Urban Regions and the Global Economy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Class 10 Multilevel Urban Governance

Questions: If urban governing power is distributed across multiple levels of government, what does this mean for its exercise? How do Horak's (2013) and Sellers' approaches differ from Savitch and Kantor's?

- Hooghe, Lisbet and Gary Marks. 2003. "Unraveling the Central State, but How? Types of Multi-level Urban Governance." *American Political Science Review* 96(2): pp. 233–243.
- Horak, Martin. 2012. "Conclusion: Understanding Multi-Level Governance in Canada's Cities." In Martin Horak and Robert Young, eds., *Sites of Governance: Multilevel Governance and Policy Making in Canada's Big Cities*. Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press. 339– 370.
- Horak, Martin. 2013. "State Rescaling in Practice: Urban Governance Reform in Toronto." *Urban Research & Practice* 6 (3):311–28.
- Sellers, Jefferey M. 2005. "Re-Placing the Nation: An Agenda for Comparative Urban Politics." *Urban Affairs Review* 40 (4):419–45.

Supplemental

- Taylor, John H. 1986. "Urban Autonomy in Canada: Its Evolution and Decline." In *Power and Place: Canadian Urban Development in the North American Context*, edited by Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F.J. Artibise, 269–91. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
- Sellers, Jefferey M. 2002. "The Nation-State and Urban Governance: Toward Multilevel Analysis." *Urban Affairs Review* 37 (5):611–641.
- Taylor, Zack, and Neil Bradford. 2020. "Governing Canadian Cities." In *Canadian Cities in Transition: Perspectives for an Urban Age*, edited by P. Fillion, M. Moos, T. Vinodrai and R. Walker, 33–50. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

Class 11 Governing Metropolitan Areas

Questions: How does fragmented (or “polycentric”, or specialized) metropolitan governance affect the exercise of political power in the urban arena? Is the development of a fully unified or coordinated metropolitan governance a realistic goal? Why or why not? Should metropolitan governance be understood as a form of multi-level urban governance?

- Stephens, G. Ross, and Nelson Wikstrom. 2000. *Metropolitan Government and Governance: Theoretical Perspectives, Empirical Analysis, and the Future*. New York: Oxford University Press. [ch. 2]
- Norris, Donald F. 2001. “Prospects for Regional Governance under the New Regionalism: Economic Imperatives Versus Political Impediments.” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 25 (3):557–71.
- Miller, David, and Jen Nelles. 2018. “Order out of Chaos: The Case for a New Conceptualization of the Cross-Boundary Instruments of American Regionalism.” *Urban Affairs Review* 56 (1):325-59.
- Mullin, Megan. 2008. “The Conditional Effect of Specialized Governance on Public Policy.” *American Journal of Political Science* 52(1): 125-141.

Supplemental

- Taylor, Zack. 2020. *Theme and Variations: Metropolitan Governance in Canada*. Toronto, ON: Institute on Municipal Finance and Governance, University of Toronto.
- Wolman, Harold. 2019. “Looking at Regional Governance Institutions in Other Countries as a Possible Model for U.S. Metropolitan Areas: An Examination of Multipurpose Regional Service Delivery Districts in British Columbia.” *Urban Affairs Review* 55 (1):321–54.
- Sancton, Andrew. 2008 *The Limits of Boundaries: Why City-Regions Cannot be Self-Governing*. Montreal: MQUP.

Class 12 Reflections on Methods for the Study of Urban Politics

Questions: Are case studies the only way to study urban politics? What are the limits of comparative analysis of urban politics?

- Trounstein, Jessica. 2009. “All Politics is Local: The Reemergence of the Study of City Politics.” *Perspectives on Politics* 7 (3):611–18.
- Pierre, Jon. 2005. “Comparative Urban Governance: Uncovering Complex Causalities.” *Urban Affairs Review* 40 (4):446–62.
- Denters, Bas, and Karen Mossberger. 2006. “Building Blocks for a Methodology for Comparative Urban Political Research.” *Urban Affairs Review* 41:550–571.

DiGaetano, Alan, and Elizabeth Strøm. 2003. "Comparative Urban Governance: An Integrated Approach." *Urban Affairs Review* 38 (3):356–395.

Supplemental

Lucas, Jack. 2016. "Patterns of Governance: A Sequence Analysis of Long-Term Institutional Change in Six Canadian Cities." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 39 (1):68–90.

Rast, Joel. 2012. "Why History (Still) Matters: Time and Temporality in Urban Political Analysis." *Urban Affairs Review* 48(1): 3–36.