

Western University
Department of Political Science

Power in the City

Political Science 3363F
Fall 2022

Instructor: Martin Horak
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Office Hours: Wed. 2pm – 3pm (in person), or by appointment (in person or on Zoom)
Physical Office: SSC 7237

Class Time and Location: Wednesdays, 10:30am – 12:30pm, SSC 2028

Course Description

Most people now live in cities. As a result, politics is today profoundly urban in character. It takes place largely in cities, it is shaped by urban processes, and it responds to distinctly urban problems, ranging from local economic development and housing inequality to public transit and immigrant integration. This course aims to introduce you to leading theories of urban politics, which we will apply to compare urban political processes in Canada, the United States, and Western Europe. Our main focus will be on *local* government in cities, but we will also examine the ways in which urban politics is inherently multi-level in, and how other levels of government help to shape responses to urban policy issues. We will discuss how contrasting national traditions and institutional structures shape the terrain of urban politics; we will investigate the role played in urban politics at the local level by politicians, business, and community actors, and compare how they operate in various settings; and we will focus on three specific urban political issues that the class will select in discussion with the instructor.

The course will also give you the opportunity to learn about politics in an ‘adopted city’ of your choice, and to conduct an independent research project in which you analyze some aspect of urban politics in your ‘adopted city’ and/or another city or cities of your choice, using theories and concepts drawn from the course.

Prerequisites

You must have taken at least 1.0 full course equivalent in Political Science at the 2200 level to enroll for this course. Previous courses related to local politics and/or urban studies will be an asset but are not required. This course is useful preparation for both **POL4210 Globalization and Urban Politics** and **POL4211 Multilevel Governance**.

Course Format

This is a mixed format course. I will usually introduce key concepts with a brief lecture, but much of the class time will be reserved for discussion. *You must be committed to reading all the assigned material before each class.* Advance reading is a prerequisite for doing well in this course (see “Course Evaluation” below) and will help make the seminar discussions exciting and

dynamic for all of us. *All readings will be posted under “Resources” on our course OWL site unless otherwise noted. There is no textbook.*

The course also has an element of curriculum co-design: during the week of October 26th, students will collectively choose two topics in urban politics that we will engage with in Weeks 11 and 12 of the course (Nov 30, Dec 7).

Course Requirements

The final grade for this course will be composed of three main elements:

1. *Participation in class discussion (15%).*

Discussion among students in the class is an important part of this course, and you are expected to participate actively. If for any reason you do not feel comfortable participating in class discussion, please let me know as soon as possible, so we can address the challenge and make alternative arrangements as necessary. I will also set up an online discussion forum on OWL as an additional discussion forum. For every week except the first week of the course, I will post **discussion questions** on the OWL site. Please come to class prepared with some thoughtful reflections on them.

2. *Writing assignments on your adopted city (40%).*

By September 21st, you will choose an “adopted city” whose politics you will learn about in some detail. You will be expected to bring your knowledge of politics in your city to our class discussions. Between Week 3 and Week 7 of the course, you will write a total of three assignments on some aspect of politics in your adopted city. These assignments will respond to factual questions about politics in your city. I will post the questions on OWL one week before the day in which they are due. The first two assignments will each be about 500 words long, and each will be worth 10% of your grade. The third assignment will be about 1000 words long and will be worth 20% of your grade.

Below you will find a list of suggestions for “adopted” cities. You can also choose one that is not on the list, with my prior approval (the main concern is that you choose a city on which there is enough information available):

Amsterdam	Atlanta	New Orleans	Moscow	London (UK)	Sydney
Vancouver	New York	Chicago	Montreal	Detroit	Paris
Glasgow	Barcelona	Houston	Portland	Los Angeles	Berlin
London (ON)	Miami	Calgary	San Francisco	Baltimore	Winnipeg
Prague	Boston	Pittsburgh	Phoenix	Manchester	Toronto

3. *Research project (50%)*

A significant proportion of your grade in this course will be based on your research project. This project is a chance for you to investigate in depth some aspect of urban politics that you are

particularly interested in. You may select an aspect of urban politics in your ‘adopted city’ and investigate it in depth using concepts from the course; or you may compare aspects of urban politics across two or more different cities. The research project has two components:

- a. Proposal for your research paper (10%)

By **November 9th**, you will put together a 500 to 750-word research proposal. The aim of the proposal is to focus your research question and develop a strategy for the rest of your research. Full guidelines will be handed out mid-way through the term.

- b. Research paper (40%)

The final product of your research project will be a 3000-4000 word paper on your research topic. The paper must be presented in formal format: double spaced with a consistent referencing style and a complete bibliography at the end. Full guidelines will be handed out mid-way through the term. The final paper will be due on **December 12th**.

Course Policies

Submitting assignments: All written work should be submitted via the course’s OWL site. Work handed in late will be subject to a penalty of 2% for each day past the deadline, weekends included. 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. This means *at least one week before the deadline*.

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. 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:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/scholasticdisciplineundergrad.pdf>.

All upper-year 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://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing/> or review information at: <http://www.lib.uwo.ca/tutorials/plagiarism/>

Instructor contact: I encourage you to bring any questions or concerns about course material, requirements or assignments to me. My office hours will be held on Zoom by appointment. Questions or concerns can also be sent my e-mail to: mhorak@uwo.ca. I will usually respond within 24 hours, except on weekends and holidays.

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://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing/>

Accommodations on medical grounds: Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed participation components and/or assignments must apply to the Academic Counseling office and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Please refer to the Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness <https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm> and download a Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca/> under the Medical Documentation heading. Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (Sept 14): Introduction: Cities and Urban Politics

Our first session will include an overview of the structure, aims and requirements of the course. We will also discuss what a ‘city’ is, what urban politics is, and why it is important. Both to our daily lives, and as an object of study in political science.

Wirth, Louis. 1938. “Urbanism as a Way of Life.” *American Journal of Sociology* 44(1). **Read excerpt, pp. 1-18 only.**

John, Peter. 2009. “Why Study *Urban Politics*?” In Jonathan Davies and David Imbroscio, eds., *Theories of Urban Politics*, 2nd ed., pp. 17–23. Los Angeles: Sage.

Part I: Urban Political Institutions in Comparative Perspective

Week 2 (Sept 21): Local and Urban Politics: Differing National Traditions

* Choose your “adopted” city *

Keating, Michael. 1991. “Systems of Local Government: Culture and Structure.” In *Comparative Urban Politics: Power and the City in the United States, Canada, Britain and France*, pp. 13-35. Aldershot: Edward Elgar.

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.

Week 3 (Sept 28): Local Elections and Political Parties

Keating, Michael. 1991. "Parties and Elections." In *Comparative Urban Politics: Power and the City in the United States, Canada, Britain and France*, pp.43-49. Aldershot: Edward Elgar.

Moore, Aaron. 2017. "The Potential and Consequences of Municipal Electoral Reform." *IMFG Perspectives* No. 20
https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/78793/1/IMFG_perspectives_20_electoral_reform_AaronMoore_Oct_17_2017.pdf.

Sayers, Anthony, and Jack Lucas. 2017. "Policy responsiveness and political accountability in city politics." *University of Calgary, The School of Public Policy*.
<https://www.policyschool.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Policy-Responsiveness-Sayers-Lucas.pdf>

*** Short Writing Assignment #1 Due Sept. 28 ***

Week 4 (Oct 5): Local Political Leadership

Greasley, Stephen and Gerry Stoker. 2009. "Urban Political Leadership." In Jonathan Davies and David Imbroscio, eds., *Theories of Urban Politics*, 2nd ed. pp. 125–136. Los Angeles: Sage.

Sancton, Andrew. 2015. "Mayors and Local Political Leadership" in *Canadian Urban Politics*, 2nd ed. Toronto: Oxford. **Excerpts: "Models of Mayoral Leadership" (pp. 239–247) and "How Mayors Become Powerful" (pp. 232–236) — in that order.**

Stoker, Gary and Harold Wolman. 1992. "Drawing Lessons from U.S. Experience: An Elected Mayor for U.K. Local Government." *Public Administration* 70: 241–267.

*** Short Writing Assignment #2 Due Oct 5 ***

Part II: Power in the City

Week 5 (Oct 12): The Community Power Debate: Who Governs?

Harding, Alan. 2009. "The History of Community Power." In Jonathan Davies and David Imbroscio, eds., *Theories of Urban Politics*, 2nd ed. Los Angeles: Sage. **Excerpt: pp. 27–33.**

Hunter, Floyd. 1953. *Community Power Structure: A Study of Decision Makers*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press. **Excerpt from Ch. 4: pp. 60–81.**

Dahl, Robert A. 2007 [1961]. "Who Governs?" In Elizabeth Strøm and John Mollenkopf, eds., *Urban Politics Reader*, pp. 110-119. New York: Routledge.

Bachrach, Peter and Morton S. Baratz. 1962. "Two Faces of Power." *American Political Science Review* 56 (4): 947–952.

Week 6 (Oct 19): Business and Pro-Growth Interests

Harding, Alan. 2009. "The History of Community Power." In Jonathan Davies and David Imbroscio, eds., *Theories of Urban Politics*, 2nd ed. Los Angeles: Sage. **Excerpt: pp. 33–39.**

Peterson, Paul E. 2007 [1981]. "The Interests of the Limited City." In Elizabeth A. Strøm and John H. Mollenkopf, eds., *Urban Politics Reader*, pp.120-129. New York: Routledge.

Molotch, Harvey and Serena Vicari. 1988. "Three Ways to Build: The Development Process in the United States, Japan, and Italy." *Urban Affairs Quarterly* 24 (2): 188-214.

Strom, Elizabeth. 1999. "In Search of the Growth Coalition: American Urban Theories and the Redevelopment of Berlin." *Urban Affairs Review* 31 (4): 455-481.

Week 7 (Oct 26): Community Activism and Urban Social Movements

Rabrenovic, Gordana. 2009. "Urban Social Movements." In Jonathan Davies and David Imbroscio, eds., *Theories of Urban Politics*, 2nd ed., pp. 239-254. Los Angeles: Sage.

Goetz, Edward and Mara Sidney. 1994. "Revenge of the Property Owners: Community Development and the Politics of Property." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 16 (4): 319-344.

Novy, Johannes and Claire Colomb. 2013. "Struggling for the Right to the (Creative) City in Berlin and Hamburg: New Urban Social Movements, New 'Spaces of Hope'?" *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 37 (5): 1816–1838.

*** Short Writing Assignment #3 Due Oct. 26 ***

*** Students Choose Course Topics for Weeks 11 – 12 ***

*** Fall Reading Week (Oct 31 – Nov 4) ***

Week 8 (Nov 9): Bringing it Together: Urban Regimes and Governing Capacity

Stone, Clarence. 1993. "Urban Regimes and the Capacity to Govern: A Political Economy Approach." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 15 (1): 1-28.

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.

Taylor, Zack and Neil Bradford. 2020. "Governing Canadian Cities." In Markus Moos et al., eds., *Canadian Cities in Transition: Understanding Contemporary Urbanism*, 6th ed., pp. 33-50. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

*** Research Paper Proposal Due November 9 ***

Part III: Urban Politics Beyond the Local

Week 9 (Nov 16): Governing Metropolitan Areas

Savitch, Hank and Ron Vogel. 2009. "Regionalism and Urban Politics." In Jonathan Davies and David Imbroscio, eds., *Theories of Urban Politics*, 2nd ed., pp. 106-124. Los Angeles: Sage.

Kantor, Paul. 2006. "Regionalism and Reform: A Comparative Perspective on Dutch Urban Politics." *Urban Affairs Review* 41 (6): 800-829.

Horak, Martin. 2013. "State Rescaling in Practice: Urban Governance Reform in Toronto." *Urban Research & Practice* 6 (3):311–28.

Week 10 (Nov 23): Cities in Multi-Level Political Systems

Hooghe, Lisbet and Gary Marks. 2003. "Unraveling the Central State, but How? Types of Multi-level 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.

Good, Kristen. 2019. "Municipalities Deserve More Autonomy and Respect." *Policy Options*, <https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/november-2019/municipalities-deserve-more-autonomy-and-respect/>.

Part IV: Selected Issues in Urban Politics

Weeks 11 – 12 (Nov 30, Dec 7): Topics to be chosen in class on Oct 26

*** Final Papers Due on OWL December 12th ***