

Draft: August 10, 2015

*****DRAFT, subject to revision*****

Sociology 301 Survey of Urban Sociology

Fall 2015

Instructor: Dr. Jennifer Darrah-Okike

Tues/Thurs 1:30-2:45, Webster Hall 113

Email: darrah@post.harvard.edu OR jdarrah@hawaii.edu

Office Hours: Before or after class, or by appointment

Office Location: Saunders 210

Teaching Assistant: Keith Scott

Course Overview:

Welcome to an introduction to the study of urban sociology!

This survey course will involve the study of what you probably think about when you hear the words “urban” or “city”: *inner-city poverty, ghettos and slums, housing projects, mega-developments, high-end real-estate, property speculation, urban crime, gangs, ethnic enclaves, global cities, housing policy, international and rural-urban migration to cities and suburbs, the urbanization of rural areas.*

More than this, however, you should come away from this course with new ways of thinking critically about people and places: the geographies in which we all live (urban or otherwise!), how they emerge, and how they matter for our futures, life-chances and identities. Another goal is for you to gain a hands-on understanding of how to think like an urban sociologist by studying a neighborhood or ahupua'a of O'ahu.

This semester we will pay special attention to the history and current challenges facing **Kaka'ako, Honolulu**. We will use Kaka'ako as a window into urban development, fights for inclusive public space, gentrification, and the impact of transnational migration and investment on places.

In this course, we will dive into the study of vexing urban social problems and also learn to think critically about urban processes like urbanization, suburbanization and urban development—and how they matter for social opportunity, identity and inequality.

So, what is urban sociology?

- 1) The study of how individuals and social groups *shape* and *are shaped by* the places and spaces where they live.
- 2) The study of urban processes such as urbanization, urban development, and housing markets

- 3) The study of the interplay between the housing/urban infrastructure and social inequality.

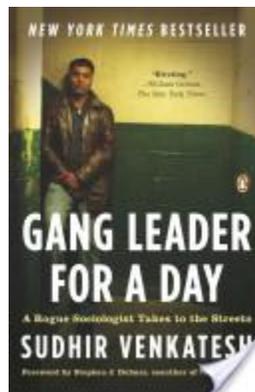
Student Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be able to understand and use key sociological concepts in the study of urban/community sociology.
2. Students will develop their ability to communicate clearly and effectively in writing by producing a research-based analytical paper.
3. Students will develop familiarity with methods used in urban sociology by studying neighborhoods/ahupua'a of O'ahu and drawing conclusions from research and analysis.
4. Students will develop skills in effective oral communication by presenting research findings.
5. Students will gain experience working collaboratively in groups.

Course Approach and Materials:

How will the course proceed?

- 1) We will explore course themes and approaches in urban sociology by reading a gripping (and controversial) novel called “Gang Leader for a Day”: a firsthand account of the experience of a leading sociologist as he studied one of the most notorious and dangerous public housing projects of Chicago and became closely involved with a prominent local gang.



- 2) The course will incorporate film showings especially the film documentary “DISLOCATION” as well as other films accompanying the book “Gang Leader for a Day”



(from Venkatesh film “Dislocation” Trailer)

- 3) And finally, most exciting, you will have the opportunity to use a neighborhood or *ahupua'a* of O’ahu as a field site by engaging in a group study of a specific place on the island.



As a group, you will complete observations and specific analyses (which I will guide you through) of your assigned neighborhood, so you can begin to think and work like an urban sociologist. This work will culminate in a group presentation and an individual paper

Text Books:

There is one required textbook. You are expected to have regular access to this book as we will be discussing it and having reading quizzes on it. This is also on reserve at Sinclair Library.

- 1) GANG LEADER FOR A DAY: A Rogue Sociologist Takes to the Street by Sudhir Venkatesh
- 2) Additional Reading selections from scholarly books and journals will be provided through Laulima and library reserves.

Grading Distribution and Course Workload:

- 1) Short written assignments (in lieu of course mid-term)—20%
 - a. Short written reflections/analyses on films, course readings, or guest speakers.
 - b. Additional short individual assignments related to your neighborhood project.
- 2) Participation and Reading Quizzes—20%
 - a. The class involves active participation. We keep track of attendance especially on discussion, group work days, workshops and guest speakers.
 - b. You are expected to keep up with assigned readings and we will have regular reading quizzes either in class or on line.
- 3) Neighborhood Project Group Presentation—20%

You will study the chosen neighborhood as a group and coordinate the presentation together. You will be required to visit your research site as a group at least twice in the semester outside of class time. You will receive detailed guidance about what kind of information to discover about your chosen ahupua'a or neighborhood. Short written assignments will aid you as you develop your neighborhood analysis. All group members are expected to contribute equally and actively. However, we reserve the right to assign different grades to group members.
- 4) Neighborhood Project Individual Paper (6-8 pages)—20%

You will study the chosen neighborhood as a group and share ideas as a group. Each individual however will write their own paper based on the neighborhood/ahupua'a data uncovered. You are also free to write your paper about a different course related topic of your choice—but only with advanced approval.
- 5) Final Exam: short and long answer questions based on lectures and readings.
20%
 - a. Lecture notes and power point slides will be made available on Lulima.
- 6) Additional: **“Kaka’ako boot camps”**

-Participants in this course are invited to participate in several “boot camps” organized in cooperation with Professor Karen Umemoto’s “Community Planning and Social Policy” course DURP 610, in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning). These will provide opportunities for students to collaborate with community members, public officials and graduate students about issues facing Kaka'ako including: planning and zoning, threats to local surf spots and gathering spaces, the crisis of housing affordability, the coming of rail and the challenges and opportunities of infrastructure.

You will be asked to participate in at least one boot camp of your choice and you may attend additional sessions for extra credit.

Phones, Laptops, Electronic Devices:

For the sake of mutual respect and creating a positive learning environment—use of electronic devices is strictly restricted to note-taking or directed instructional/group work tasks *ONLY*. Please do not text or browse the internet. If you feel you must look at your electronic devices please wait until after class or if it is urgent please leave the room. Mahalo. (Also, this will negatively affect your participation grade!).

Specific Course Calendar and assignment due dates:

To be distributed

KOKUA for Students with Disabilities:

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability is invited to contact me privately. I would be happy to work with you, and the KOKUA Program (Office for Students with Disabilities) to ensure reasonable accommodations in my course. KOKUA can be reached at (808) 956- 7511 or (808) 956-7612 (voice/text) in room 013 of the Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is taken very seriously. Please see guidelines below and consult the UH System side student code of conduct.

The following are guidelines adapted from Dr. Bill Wood, Dept. Chair, Sociology 301 Syllabus:

How to not plagiarize:

“First know what plagiarism is: It is ultimately each student's responsibility to learn about plagiarism and how to avoid it. Ignorance of the rules, saying "I forgot about that" or "I made a mistake," are not considered valid excuses when it comes to plagiarism

A brief summary of the American Sociological Association's Style Guide, which explains the rules clearly, can be found at:

<http://www.buffalostate.edu/library/docs/asa.pdf>

The following definition of plagiarism comes from The University of Hawaii System wide Student Conduct Code:

The term “plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials (E7.208, Pages 4 and 5).

(For the entire Student Conduct Code, see: <http://www.hawaii.edu/apis/ep/e7/e7208.pdf> and http://studentaffairs.manoa.hawaii.edu/downloads/conduct_code/UHM_Student_Conduct_Code.pdf.)

Important Guidelines on how not to Plagiarize:

- If you quote (use the exact words or almost the exact words), you must use quotation marks and (Author’s Last Name, page number) at the end of the sentence
- You must cite everything that is not your own idea, work, or concept—**this includes facts, words and ideas that are not your own**. If you learned it from the book or from your article, you must cite it. If you put something in your paper that is not common knowledge (something that almost everyone would know), you must tell me where it came from even if it is “My high school teacher/mother/uncle/boss said ...”

List of Course Topics and Themes:

Introductions

- Case Study of Kaka’ako, Honolulu
- What is Urban Sociology?
- Concentrated Poverty and “ghettos”
- Methods of urban and community sociology: urban ethnography, participant observation (of public places); using the U.S. census to track race/ethnicity, immigration and socio-economic status.
- Racial Segregation
- Crime and gangs
- Housing Policy and Public Housing
- Homelessness in Hawaii
- Race/Ethnicity in American metropolises: demographic patterns
- Ethnic Enclaves and Ethnic suburbs
- Urbanism and Urban Lifestyles
- Conceptualizing “Community” in urbanization
- Urbanization in Developing Countries
- Global Megacities
- Asian Urbanization
- Korean Metropolitan Dynamics
- African and Latin Urbanization

