

University of Toronto

CONCEPTUALIZING CITIES IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

COURSE OUTLINE
JPF 455H1/ JPF 2430H

Time: Fall 2025 Tuesdays 10am – 12pm

Location: Daniels Faculty One Spadina
Room 240

Professor Patricia McCarney
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TITLE OF COURSE: CONCEPTUALIZING CITIES IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

JPF 455H1 / JPF 2430H

COURSE DESCRIPTION

With over half of the population on the planet being urban, the significance of improving our understanding of cities in a global context has never been greater. This course is designed to improve awareness of cities as approached by different disciplines and in different international contexts. This course is recommended to be taken in conjunction with the Spring offering of JPF 456H1 / JPF 2431H.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE

The course will introduce theoretical frameworks for understanding city development and then move to the key issues and challenges confronting cities globally. The role of cities as new sites of governance in a global context will be examined through the lens of these core challenges. More generally, the course will explore cities and global change; cities and urban design; cities and social justice; cities and climate change; cities and poverty; state reform and city politics; cities and citizenship; cities and immigration; cities and economic development; cities and governance; and, cities and the political- economy of urban space.

By bringing together leading faculty members on campus and global experts in the field who focus on cities in their work, be it within Political Science, Planning, Urban Design, Architecture, Real Estate Development, Environment and Health, Management, Geography or Social Work, the course will explore, through different disciplinary perspectives, just how the study of cities is evolving for a renewed understanding of the subject, for research and for teaching at the University of Toronto.

The course design is undertaken also in recognition of the importance of bringing together area studies, where the study of cities of Latin America, Asia and Africa and the Middle East, are brought together in comparative context with the study of cities of Europe and North America.

STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

The course will be offered as a combined fourth year and graduate level course. This offering has been selected in order to accommodate senior undergraduate and graduate students from different departments like Political Science, History, Literature, Geography, Sociology, and Economics as well as students from specific programmes like the design programmes of the Daniels Faculty of Architecture.

The course will be structured as a mixed format—offering students lectures, power-point presentations, city photographs and images, data tables, web-links to international agencies and related reports.

As a cross-disciplinary course, the aim will be to improve understanding of different disciplinary approaches to the study of cities and consider common veins which run through these approaches and require improved understanding, deeper investigation, and future collaborative work. While disciplinary focus will propel the course, the intent is to bridge traditional disciplinary divides which have tended to obscure significant discourse on cities. This will be achieved in part again by course design wherein panel discussions, guest instructors leading seminar discussions and cross disciplinary faculty will help us to identify and address inter-disciplinary links, divides and areas of resonance in the urban field.

The course will also involve invited guests, urban specialists and practitioners from outside the university to help bridge students and faculty to the broader academic and global city community. By mixing formats which include for example lectures, panel discussions, and student only seminars (for discussion and debate on readings and arguments posed by lectures and panellists), the course will allow for movement in our ideas which govern the study of cities.

The course will be organized according to units, each with core and optional reading lists; discussion questions for consideration; and periodic assignments.

SUMMARY OF COURSE SCHEDULE

UNITS	TOPICS
JPH455H1/JPF2430H – Conceptualizing Cities in a Global Context	
1. Sept 09	Welcome and Introduction to the Course
2. Sept 16	Conceptualizing Cities in A Global Context
3. Sept 23	Frameworks for Defining Global Cities
4. Sept 30	Introduction to the History of Modern City Design
5. Oct 07	City Design in a Changing Global Context: The Struggle Over Place
6. Oct 14	I Viewing Global Agendas Through the Lens of Cities: The Global Resilience Agenda in Cities – City Impacts & City Strategies in Making Cities Resilient
7. Oct 21	II Viewing Global Agendas Through the Lens of Cities: The UN and Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – City Impacts & City Strategies in Addressing Climate Change and Making Cities Sustainable
Oct 27-31	READING WEEK
8. Nov 04	Thinking About Cities in a Global Context – New Research Frontiers – <i>Student Presentations</i>
9. Nov 11	Thinking About Cities in a Global Context – New Research Frontiers – <i>Student Presentations</i>
10. Nov 18	Thinking About Cities in a Global Context – New Research Frontiers – <i>Student Presentations</i>
11. Nov 25	Thinking About Cities in a Global Context – New Research Frontiers – <i>Student Presentations</i>
12. Dec 2	Final Roundtable and Submission of Final Papers

EVALUATION & MARKS BREAKDOWN

IN-CLASS DISCUSSION 15% OF TOTAL GRADE

Contributions to the weekly discussions will be worth 15% of the grade.

PERIODIC ASSIGNMENTS 50% OF TOTAL GRADE

For two units, each student is expected to submit a short assignment. The assignment must be submitted by email on the day that topic is indicated and addressed on the course schedule. Assignments should be typed using 12-point font, Times New Roman and one-inch margins (2 pages double-spaced or one page single-spaced). Page length does not include the title page, graphs, tables, charts, endnotes, or bibliography. Assignment questions for these particular units are provided in the reading list attached. Each assignment is worth 25% of the course grade. The two periodic assignments are worth a total of 50% of the course grade (25% each x 2).

Deadlines: Students must submit a copy of each of the two periodic assignments at the beginning of the class on the date it is due by email (in Word). The assignment shall be emailed to the instructors by no later than 9:00 am before the class it is due for. Email Contacts are on the cover sheet of this course outline.

Since these assignments are the basis for in-class discussion, students cannot receive an extension without penalty. The late penalty is 5% per day for one week. No papers will be accepted after one week. This penalty commences at the end of class after 12:00 pm.

FINAL ASSIGNMENT 35% OF TOTAL GRADE – Due December 2, 2025

Final assignment due by email on December 2, 2025

Drawing on materials and lectures from this course that address the relationship between global issues and trends as they hit the ground in cities locally, answer the following question:

Why study cities in a global context? This paper should include specific examples of issues and trends being considered globally and locally (for example global poverty and inclusive cities, immigration and local governance, climate change and resilient cities, sustainable cities, etc.).

Students will discuss their ideas for the final assignment in class as part of the roundtables. Students should come to the roundtable prepared to present their research outline and preliminary research. This assignment will be limited to 2000 words. A penalty of 2% per day will be enforced for any late papers.

READING LIST

UNITS	TOPICS
JPF455H1/JPF2430H – Conceptualizing Cities in a Global Context	
1. Sept 09	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE
2. Sept 16	<p>CONCEPTUALIZING CITIES IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT</p> <p>No readings or Assignment are due for this unit. Students are encouraged to consult the following websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Habitat www.unhabitat.org • UN Sustainable Development Goals http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/ • World Bank Urban Development Site. http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/urbandevelopment • United Nations Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) https://www.undrr.org/ https://mcr2030.undrr.org/ <p>Suggested Reading: Sassen, S. (2002). Locating cities on global circuits. <i>Environment and Urbanization</i>, 14(1), 13</p>
3. Sept. 23	<p>FRAMEWORKS FOR DEFINING GLOBAL CITIES</p> <p>Required Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sassen, Saskia (2001). <i>The Global City</i>; New York, London, Tokyo. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ. (Chapter One: Overview, pp. 3-15). • Beaverstock, J.V.; Smith, R.G. and Taylor, P.J. (2000) 'World city network: A new metageography?' <i>Annals of The Association of American Geographers</i>, 90(1): 123-134. <p>Suggested Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portes, Alejandro and Armony, Ariel C (2022). <i>Emerging Global Cities: Origin, Structure, and Significance</i>. New York: Columbia University Press. • Gottlieb, Robert and Ng, Simon (2018) <i>Global Cities: Urban Environments in Los Angeles, Hong Kong, and China</i>. Cambridge: MIT Press • Hall, Peter. (2001). "Global City-Regions in the Twenty-first Century" in Allen J. Scott (ed.) <i>Global City-Regions: Trends, Theory, Policy</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press. <p>It is recommended that students review the Globalization and World Cities Study Group and Network at http://lboro.ac.uk/gawc. This site is an excellent resource on global cities, as it has a range of on-line papers, as well as other relevant data sources.</p> <p>ASSIGNMENT How is the term "Global City" defined? How useful is this concept in thinking about cities globally and in measuring and ranking cities worldwide?</p>

4. Sept 30	<p>INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF MODERN CITY DESIGN</p> <p>Required Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Francoise Choay: <i>The Modern City: Planning in the 19th Century</i>.(1977) Studio Vista; London, pages 7-110. • Marshall Berman: "Baudelaire: Modernism in the Streets" in <i>All That Is Solid Melts Into Air - The Experience of Modernity</i>, Penguin Books, (1988) 131-172 • David Harvey: "The Right to the City," in <i>New Left Review</i>, vol. 53, 2008, 23-40
5. Oct 7	<p>CITY DESIGN IN A CHANGING GLOBAL CONTEXT: THE STRUGGLE OVER PLACE</p> <p>Required Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melvin M. Webber: "The Urban Place and the Nonplace Urban Realm" in Webber (ed.), <i>Explorations into Urban Structure</i>, (1963) University of Pennsylvania Press, 79-153. • Jane Jacobs: "Introduction & "The Uses of Sidewalk Safety," "The Generators of Diversity," and "The Kind of Problem a Cities is" in <i>The Death and Life of Great American Cities</i>, Pelican Books Harmondsworth, 1964, pp. 3-54, 143-151, 428-447 • Richard Sommer: "Beyond Centers, Fabric and the Culture of Congestion: Urban Design as a Metropolitan Enterprise" in <i>Urban Design</i>, Alex Krieger and William Saunders (eds.) (2009) Minnesota University Press. 135-152 <p>ASSIGNMENT</p> <p>Identify three physical and social pressures that are particular to the modern city that emerged in the west after the industrial revolution (i.e., from 1850 on). Then identify and describe three physical planning and design approaches/techniques and how they were employed to address these new circumstances. You may choose one particular city, or a larger geographic setting (Canadian Cities, etc.). Then, please identify a circumstance after WWII, where one or more of these approaches/techniques were employed in the planning and design of a non-western city. In which ways were planning and design experts successful or unsuccessful in translating these novel approaches to other contexts?</p>
6. Oct 14	<p>I. VIEWING GLOBAL AGENDAS THROUGH THE LENS OF CITIES: THE GLOBAL RESILIENCE AGENDA IN CITIES – CITY IMPACTS & CITY STRATEGIES IN MAKING CITIES RESILIENT</p>
7. Oct 21	<p>II. VIEWING GLOBAL AGENDAS THROUGH THE LENS OF CITIES: THE UN AND GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) – CITY IMPACTS & CITY STRATEGIES IN ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE AND MAKING CITIES SUSTAINABLE</p>
Oct 27- 31	READING WEEK
8. Nov 04	<p>THINKING ABOUT CITIES IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT – NEW RESEARCH FRONTIERS Student Presentations</p> <p>Interdisciplinary Roundtable with Students in preparation of final assignment.</p>

9. Nov 11	<p>THINKING ABOUT CITIES IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT – NEW RESEARCH FRONTIERS Student Presentations</p> <p>Interdisciplinary Roundtable with Students in preparation of final assignment.</p>
10. Nov 18	<p>THINKING ABOUT CITIES IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT – NEW RESEARCH FRONTIERS Student Presentations</p> <p>Interdisciplinary Roundtable with Students in preparation of final assignment.</p>
11. Nov 25	<p>THINKING ABOUT CITIES IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT – NEW RESEARCH FRONTIERS Student Presentations</p> <p>Interdisciplinary Roundtable with Students in preparation of final assignment.</p>
12. Dec 2	<p>FINAL ROUNDTABLE AND SUBMISSION OF FINAL PAPER</p> <p>Final Assignment Due December 2, 2025 (As per course outline – section above)</p>

FURTHER READINGS:

CONCEPTUALIZING CITIES IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

- Cities and Global Governance – New Sites for International Relations (eds. Patricia McCarney with Amen, Toly and Segbers). Surrey, England: Ashgate 2011.
- Clark, C. (2003). *Urban World / Global City*, 2nd edition, London: Routledge
- Davis, Diane (2005) 'Cities in global context: A brief intellectual history', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 29(1): 92-109.
- Glaeser, Edward: *The Triumph of the City*, Penguin Press, New York, 2011
- Hall, P. (1998) *Cities and Civilization*. New York: Pantheon.
- Hall, P. (1999) 'Mega-cities, world cities and global cities,' Megacities Lecture, available at http://www.megacities.nl/lecture_hall.htm
- J.R. Short and Y. Kim. *Globalization and the City*. Longman, Essex, 1999.
- Sassen, S. (2006) *Cities in a World Economy* Pine Forge Press, updated 3rd ed.
- Robinson, Jennifer. (2006) *Ordinary Cities. Between Modernity and Development*. New York: Routledge.
- Sassen, S. (2008) *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* Princeton University Press, updated 2nd ed. (1st ed. 2006)
- Smart, A., and Smart, J. (2003) 'Urbanization and the global perspective', *Annual Review of anthropology*, 32: 263-85.
- Van Vliet W. "Cities in a globalizing world: from engines of growth to agents of change." *Environment and Urbanization*, Volume 14, Number 1, 1 April 2002, pp. 31-40(10).

FRAMEWORKS FOR DEFINING GLOBAL CITIES

- Amin, A., and Graham, S. (1997) 'The ordinary city', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 22(4): 411-429
- Beaverstock, J.V and Taylor, P.J. (1999). A Roster of World Cities. *Cities*, Vol. 16, No. 6, pp. 445–458.
- Clark, C. (2003) "The Future Urban World" in *Urban World / Global City*, 2nd edition London: Routledge, pp. 191-216.
- Grant, R and Nijman, J. (2002) "Globalization and the Corporate Geography of Cities in the Less-Developed World." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 92 (2), 2002, 320-340.
- Hamnett, C. (1995) 'Controlling space: global cities', in J. Allen and C. Hamnett (eds.) *A Shrinking World? Global Unevenness and Inequality*, Oxford: Oxford University Press and the Open University, pp. 103-142
- Saito, A., & Thornley, A. (2003). Shifts in Tokyo's world city status and the urban planning response. *Urban Studies*, 40(4), 665–685.
- Scott, Allen J., John Agnew, Edward W. Soja and Michael Storper. 2001. "Global City-Regions" Ch. 1 (pp. 11-30) in Allen J. Scott (ed.) *Global City-Regions: Trends, Theory, Policy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Scott, A. (2001). Globalisation and the rise of city-regions, *European Planning Studies*, 9(7): 813-826.
- Shatkin, G (2006) 'Global cities of the south: emerging perspectives on growth and inequality. *Cities*, 24, (1), 1-15

DESIGN AND CONTEMPORARY URBANISM

- Avermarte, Tom; Gosseye, Janina: *Urban Design in the 20th Century: A History*, 2021
 - Baird, George: "Theory: Vacant Lots in Toronto"; in Vacant Lottery, Myers, B. and Baird, G. (editors), Vacant Lottery, Design Quarterly No: 108, Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis, 1978
 - Bauer, Catherine: *Modern Housing*. Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1934
 - Berman, Marshall: *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air - The Experience of Modernity*, Penguin Books, 1988
 - Bruegmann, Robert: *Sprawl, A Compact History*, University of Chicago, 2005
 - Crawford, Margaret; Chase, John; John, Kaliski: *Everyday Urbanism*. New York: Monacal Press, 1999
 - Choay, Francis: *The Modern City: Planning in the 19th Century*.(1977) Studio Vista; London
 - Davis, Mike: *City of Quartz*, Verso Press, 1990
 - de Certeau, Michel: *The Practice of Everyday Life*. (1980 Trans.by Steven Rendall. University of California Press. 1984.
 - El-Khoury, Rodolphe; Robbins, Edward: *Shaping the City: Studies in History, Theory, and Urban Design*, Routledge, London 2013
 - Jackson, Kenneth, T.: *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*, 1988
 - Jacobs, Jane: *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, (1961) Random House, New York (Vintage Books edition, 1992).
 - Jameson, Fredric: "Future City" in *New Left Review* 21, May-June, 2003
<http://www.newleftreview.org/?view=2449>
 - Lynch, Kevin: *The Image of the City*, MIT Press, 1964
 - Kern, Leslie: *Feminist City: Claiming Space in a Man-Made World*, Verso, 2019
 - Krieger, Alex and Saunders, William (eds.): *Urban Design*, Minnesota University Press, 2009
 - Koolhaas, Rem; Mau, Bruce: *SMLXL*, Monacelli Press, New York, 1995
 - Koolhaas, Rem: *Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan*, Oxford University Press, 1978
 - Le Corbusier: *The City of Tomorrow*, The Architectural Press, London, 1947
 - Lefebvre, Henri: *The Urban Revolution*, (1970) trans. Robert Bononno, Minnesota Press 2003
 - Madanipour, Ali (ed.): *Whose Public Space?: International Case Studies in Urban Design and Development*, Routledge, London 2013
 - Masoud, Fadi: *Terra-Sorta-Firma: Reclaiming the Littoral Gradient*, Actar, 2021
 - Mumford, Eric: *Designing the Modern City: Urbanism Since 1850*, Yale University Press, 2018
 - Rowe, Colin and Koetter, Fred: *Collage City*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1978
 - Saunders, Doug: *Arrival City*, Knopf Canada, Toronto, 2011
 - Simpson, Deane; Jensen, Vibeke; Rubing, Anders (eds): *The City between Freedom and Security: Contested Public Spaces in the 21st Century* 2017
 - Sitte, Camillo: *The Art of Building Cities*, Reinhold Publishers, New York, 1945
 - Smets, Marcel: *Foundations of Urban Design*, Actar, 2022
 - Sorkin, Michael: *What Goes Up: The Right and Wrongs of the City*, London, Verso, 2018
 - Soules, Matthew: *Icebergs, Zombies and the Ultra Thin – Architecture and Capitalism in the Twenty-First Century*, Princeton Architectural press, 2021
 - Venturi, Robert; Scott Brown, Denise; Isenour Steven: *Learning from Las Vegas - The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form* (1972), revised edition, MIT Press, 1977
 - Waldheim, Charles: *The Landscape Urbanism Reader*, Princeton Architectural Press, 2006
- ALSO, this highly recommended compendium:
- LeGates, Richard; Stout, Frederick (eds.) *The City Reader*, 7th edition, Routledge, 2020

METROPOLITAN GOVERNANCE

- Frisken, Frances. 2001. "The Toronto story: Sober reflections on fifty years of experiments with regional governance." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 23 (5): 513–541.
- Katz, Bruce and Jennifer Bradley. 2013. *The Metropolitan Revolution. How Cities and Metros Are Fixing Our Broken Politics and Fragile Economy.* Washington: Brookings Institution Press.
- Keil, R. (2000) 'Governance Restructuring in Los Angeles and Toronto: Amalgamation or Secession?' *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 24(4), December: 758–781.
- OECD. (2001). *Cities for citizens: Improving Metropolitan Governance* OECD Publications Service, Paris.
- Razin, Eran, and Patrick J. Smith, eds. 2006. *Metropolitan governing: Canadian cases, comparative lessons.* Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press.
- Stren, R. & Cameron, R. (2005), Metropolitan Governance: An introduction; *Public Admin. & Dev.* 25, 317–327.