

University of Toronto

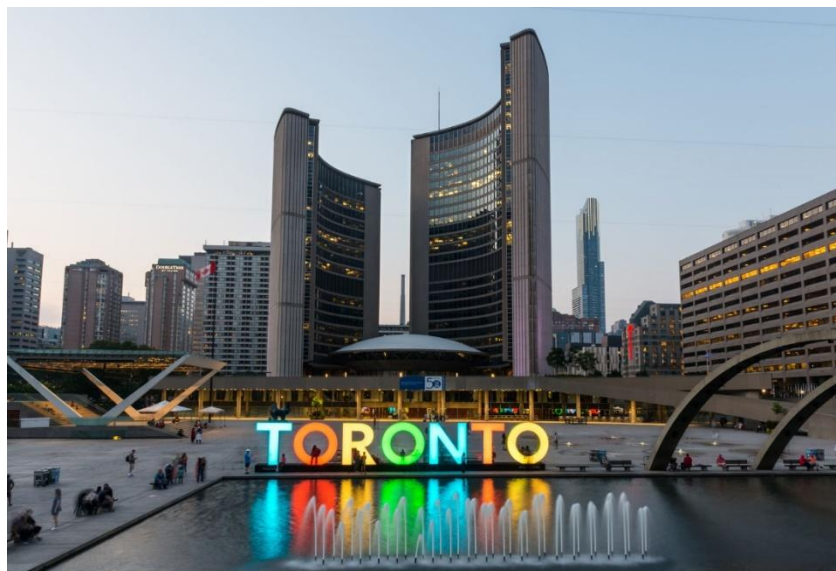
GLOBAL CITIES – CORE ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

COURSE OUTLINE JPF 456H1

Time: Winter 2026 Tuesday
10 am – 12 noon

Location: Daniels Faculty One Spadina
Room 240

Prof. Patricia McCarney, Political Science
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TITLE OF COURSE: GLOBAL CITIES: CORE ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

JPF 456H1

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The core issues confronting city leaders across the globe are examined in comparative perspective and in a context of shifting global agendas. The study of cities of Latin America, Asia and Africa, are brought together in comparative context with the study of cities of Europe and North America.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE

With now over half of the population on this 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. 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 experts in the field who focus on cities in their work, be it within Political Science, Planning, Urban Design, Architecture, 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.

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. Case Studies will be appended to a number of units as illustrations of lecture material.

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 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 |
|--|--|
| JPF456H1 - Global Cities – Core Issues and Challenges | |
| 1. Jan 6 | Welcome and Introduction to the Course |
| 2. Jan 13 | Cities and Poverty: Housing, Basic Services, and Infrastructure Investment |
| 3. Jan 20 | Urban Design in a Shifting Urban Landscape |
| 4. Jan 27 | Canadian City Managers: Leadership in the Shadows |
| 5. Feb 3 | Landscapes of Resilience: Designing Cities for Climate Change |
| 6. Feb 10 | Climate Resilient Cities |
| Feb 16-20 | READING WEEK |
| 7. Feb 24 | Smart Cities – How Technological Advancements are Reshaping Community Engagement in Planning and Design |
| 8. Mar 3 | Thinking About Cities in a Global Context – New Research Frontiers – <i>Roundtable - Student Presentations</i> |
| 9. Mar 10 | Thinking About Cities in a Global Context – New Research Frontiers – <i>Roundtable - Student Presentations</i> |
| 10. Mar 17 | Thinking About Cities in a Global Context – New Research Frontiers – <i>Roundtable - Student Presentations</i> |
| 11. Mar 24 | Thinking About Cities in a Global Context – New Research Frontiers – <i>Roundtable - Student Presentations</i> |
| 12. Mar 31 | 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 of the units (2 in total), each student is expected to submit a short one-page 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 will be graded out of twenty-five points and converted into a grade for a total of 50% (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 no later than 10:30 am before the class it is due for. Emails 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 1:00 pm.

FINAL ASSIGNMENT 35% OF TOTAL GRADE – Due March 31, 2026

Final assignment due by email to instructors on March 31, 2026

Drawing on materials and lectures from this course, answer the following question: Choose a city as a case study and identify what you believe to be the most important challenge in that city. How is it being addressed? How should it be addressed?

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, case study city and challenge identified. 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 |
|--|--|
| JPF456H1 - Global Cities – Core Issues and Challenges | |
| 1. Jan 6 | WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE |
| 2. Jan 13 | <p>CITIES AND POVERTY: HOUSING, BASIC SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT</p> <p>Required Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>UN HABITAT (2025) - Expert Group and Intersessional Thematic Meeting on: Definition of Informal Settlements ANNEX</i> https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2025/08/definitions_-_informal_settlements_-_annex_14.08.2025.pdf • <i>Habitat for Humanity and Cities Alliance (2021) Compendium of Best Practices for Housing in Africa</i> https://www.citiesalliance.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/HFHI_compendium_best_cases_Africa.pdf <p>Suggested Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baker, J. (2008). Urban Poverty: A Global Overview. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, available_ http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2008/01/9112288/urban-poverty-global-view • <i>UN Habitat (2024) Annual Report 2023 : Local Action in a Time of Crisis</i> https://unhabitat.org/annual-report-2023-local-action-in-a-time-of-crises <p>ASSIGNMENT</p> <p>What are the three key challenges for planners in addressing slums in the world’s poorest cities? Identify and discuss each challenge and describe potential solutions in confronting these challenges.</p> |
| 3. Jan 20 | <p>URBAN DESIGN IN A SHIFTING LANDSCAPE</p> <p>Required Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koolhaas, Rem, “Junkspace” in <i>October</i>, Vol. 100, Obsolescence, MIT Press (Spring, 2002), pp. 175-190 https://www.jstor.org/stable/779098 • Mattern, Shannon “A City Is Not a Computer,” <i>Places Journal</i>, February 2017. https://doi.org/10.22269/170207 • LeCavalier, Jesse “All Those Numbers: Logistics, Territory and Walmart,” <i>Places Journal</i>, May 2010 https://doi.org/10.22269/100524 <p>Suggested Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mattern, Shannon, “Post-It Note City,” <i>Places Journal</i>, February 2020 https://doi.org/10.22269/200211 • Jameson, Fredric: “Future City” in <i>New Left Review</i> 21, May-June, 2003. http://www.newleftreview.org/?view=2449 <p>ASSIGNMENT</p> <p>Identify an emerging urban condition and a related urban technology that will significantly impact cities within the next few decades/generation. Explain how you think the condition and technology you cite will impact/change both the form of cities and how they are occupied, and the role that urban designers can or should play in these transformations.</p> |

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| 4. Jan 27 | <p>CANADIAN CITY MANAGERS: LEADERSHIP IN THE SHADOWS</p> <p>Required Reading: Siegel, David. (2011). "Leaders in the Shadows: The Leadership qualities of Municipal Chief Administrative Officers". Toronto: The Institute of Public Administration of Canada and the University of Toronto, Conclusion, pp. 233-281.</p> |
| 5. Feb 3 | <p>LANDSCAPES OF RESILIENCE: DESIGNING CITIES FOR CLIMATE CHANGE</p> |
| 6. Feb 10 | <p>CLIMATE RESILIENT CITIES</p> <p>Required Readings: Health Canada. 2020. Reducing Urban Heat Islands to Protect Health in Canada—An Introduction for Public Health Professionals. Chapters 1&2 Suggested: Browse Ch 3 case studies. Available at: https://www.canada.ca/en/services/health/publications/healthy-living/reducing-urban-heat-islands-protect-health-canada.html</p> |
| FEB 16-20 | READING WEEK |
| 7. Feb 24 | <p>SMART CITIES – HOW TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS ARE RESHAPING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN PLANNING AND DESIGN</p> |
| 8. Mar 3 | <p>THINKING ABOUT CITIES IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT – NEW RESEARCH FRONTIERS Student Presentations Interdisciplinary Roundtable with Students in preparation of final assignment.</p> |
| 9. Mar 10 | <p>THINKING ABOUT CITIES IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT – NEW RESEARCH FRONTIERS Student Presentations Interdisciplinary Roundtable with Students in preparation of final assignment.</p> |
| 10. Mar 17 | <p>THINKING ABOUT CITIES IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT – NEW RESEARCH FRONTIERS Student Presentations Interdisciplinary Roundtable with Students in preparation of final assignment.</p> |
| 11. Mar 24 | <p>THINKING ABOUT CITIES IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT – NEW RESEARCH FRONTIERS Student Presentations Interdisciplinary Roundtable with Students in preparation of final assignment.</p> |
| 12. Mar 31 | <p>FINAL ROUNDTABLE</p> <p>Final Assignment Due March 31, 2026: As per course outline</p> |

FURTHER READINGS:

SUSTAINABLE CITIES: GLOBAL AND LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

- Building Safer; Cities: The Future of Disaster Risk; Disaster Risk Management Series No. 3; A. Kreimer, M. Arnold, and A. Carlin, eds.; The World Bank, 2003; Table 8.1, p. 103.
- Capello, R., Nijkamp, P. and Pepping, G. (1999) *Sustainable Cities and Energy Policies*, Berlin: Springer Verlag.
- Elliott, J.A. (1999) *An Introduction to Sustainable Development*, London: Routledge.
- Hardoy, J.E., Mitlin, D. and Satterthwaite, D. (1992) *Environmental Problems in Third World Cities*, London: Earthscan.
- Houghton, G. and Hunter, C. (1994) *Sustainable Cities*, London: Regional Studies Association
- Huq, S, et al. Editorial: Editorial: Reducing risks to cities from disasters and climate change. *Environment & Urbanization*. 19(1):3-15. April 2007.
- McCarney, P. "Climate Governance" chapter in *Climate Adaption in Global Cities: Building Governance for Climate Resilience* Washington: World Bank 2011
- McCarney, P. "Cities and Governance: Coming To Terms With Climate Challenges" Chapter in: *Climate Governance* Joerg Knieling and Walter Leal Filho (eds.) Springer 2011
- McCarney, P. "Urban Land and Climate Strategies" Lead Author with Hilda Blanco, Susan Parnell, Marco Schmidt and Karen Seto Chapter 8 in *Climate Change and Cities: First Assessment Report of the Urban Climate Change Research Network* Cambridge University Press 2011
- Polese, Mario and Richard Stren, eds. (2000) *Socially Sustainable Cities*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- World Bank. (2010). *Cities and Climate Change: An Urgent Agenda*. Kennedy, C., Cuddihy, J., & Engel-Yan, J. (2007). The Changing Metabolism of Cities. "Journal of Industrial Ecology", 11 (2), 43-59

CITIES AND POVERTY: HOUSING, BASIC SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

- *Cities Alliance 2021* <https://www.citiesalliance.org/resources/publications/global-knowledge/compendium-best-practices-slum-upgrading>
- Newman, P., & Thornley, A. (2005). *Planning world cities: Globalization and urban politics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Saunders, Doug: *Arrival City*, Knopf Canada, Toronto, 2011
- UN-HABITAT. *State of African Cities 2010. Governance, Inequalities and Urban Land Markets*
- UN-HABITAT. *State of the World's Cities 2010/2011 - Cities for All: Bridging the Urban Divide*
- UN-HABITAT. *Water and Sanitation in the World's Cities: local Actions for Global Goals*, Earthscan, London, 2003, chapter 7
- World Bank, *World Development Report 2004: Making services work for the poor*, Washington D.C., 2004: Overview chapters 1, 2 & 9.
- Golubchikov, O. & Badyina, A. (2012). *Sustainable Housing for Sustainable Cities: A Policy*

- Framework for Developing Countries. *UN-HABITAT*. Retrieved from <http://mirror.unhabitat.org/pmss/listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=3365>.
- Ogun, T. P. (2010). Infrastructure and poverty reduction: Implications for urban development in Nigeria, Working paper // *World Institute for Development Economics Research*, No. 2010, 43, pp. 1-18.
 - The Cities Alliance. (2008). Slum Upgrading Up Close: Experiences of Six Cities. Retrieved from <http://www.citiesalliance.org/node/694>.
 - UN-HABITAT. (2003). The Challenge of Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements. Earthscan, London and Sterling, 2003, chapters 8 & 9. Retrieved from [http://www.aq.upm.es/habitabilidadbasica/docs/recursos/monografias/the_challenge_o_f_slums-\(2003\).pdf](http://www.aq.upm.es/habitabilidadbasica/docs/recursos/monografias/the_challenge_o_f_slums-(2003).pdf).

CITIES AND DIVERSITY: MIGRATION AND THE GLOBAL CONNECTIVITY OF CITIES

- Brettell, Carolyn. 1999. "The City as Context: Approaches To Immigrants and Cities." In Proceedings, Metropolis International Workshop, Lisbon, Sept. 28-29. Luso-American Development Foundation.
- Cano, G. (2004). Urban and Transnational Politics in America: Novus Ordo Seclorum? Paper prepared or delivery at the 2004 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, September 2-5, 2004.
- Saunders, Doug: *Arrival City*, Knopf Canada, Toronto, 2011
- Smith, M.P. (2005). Transnational urbanism Revisited. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (March).

CITIES AS OBJECTS AND SUBJECTS OF PLANNING AND DESIGN

- Avermarte, Tom; Gosseye, Janina: *Urban Design in the 20th Century: A History*, 2021
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- Simpson, Deane; Jensen, Vibeke; Rubing, Anders (eds): *The City between Freedom and Security: Contested Public Spaces in the 21st Century* 2017

- 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

CITIES AT RISK: SAFETY AND SECURITY ISSUES

- De Sherbinin, A., Schiller, A., & Pulsipher, A. (2007). The vulnerability of global cities to climate hazards, *Environment and Urbanization* 19,1, pp.39-64.
- Foreign Affairs, Canada. (2006). Freedom from fear in urban spaces: Discussion paper. Available at <http://humansecurity-cities.org> (See publications page)
- Graham, S (ed.). *Cities, War, and Terrorism: Towards an Urban Geopolitics*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004.
- Humansecurity-cities.org. (2007). Human security for an urban century: Local challenges, global perspectives. Available at <http://humansecurity-cities.org>
- Marcuse, P. "Urban Form and Globalization After September 11th: The View From New York." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 26 (2002): 596-606.
- McCarney, P. (2003). Confronting Critical Disjunctures in the Governance of Cities Chapter 2 pp 31- 55 in Patricia McCarney and Richard Stren (eds.) *Governance on the Ground: Innovations and Discontinuities in Cities of the Developing World* (Johns Hopkins University Press.
- McCarney, Patricia L. and Richard E. Stren —Metropolitan Governance - Governing in a City of Cities Paper prepared for United Nations- Habitat for State of the World's Cities Report 2008 Revised Draft (June 23rd 2008)
- Mike Davis, "Fortress Los Angeles: the militarization of urban space", in Michael Sorkin (eds), *Variations on a theme park*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1992
- Moser, C. —Urban Violence and Insecurity: An Introductory Road Map|. *Environment & Urbanization* 16; 2(2004): 3-16.
- Neil Smith, "Which new Urbanism? New York and the Revanchist 1990s" in Robert Beauregard, Sophie Body-Gendrot (eds.) *The Urban Moment*. Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: Sage 1999
- Sancton, A. (2008) —Boundaries for Municipal Corporations| Ch 3 in *The Limits of Boundaries* (McGill-Queen's University Press)
- UN-Habitat. —Cities at Risk|. *Habitat Debate* 7; 4 (2001):1-32. <http://unhabitat.org>

CITIES AND GOVERNANCE

- Clark, C. (2003) "The Future Urban World" in *Urban World / Global City*, 2nd Edition London: Routledge, pp. 191-216.
- Cronin, Thomas and Michael Genovese. (2012) *Leadership Matters. Unleashing the Power of Paradox*. Boulder: Paradigm.
- Daniel Kubler, D. (2007). Intergovernmental relations and international urban strategies:

- constraints and opportunities in multilevel polities. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, volume 25, pages 357- 373.
- Freire, Mila, and Richard Stren, eds. 2001. *The challenge of urban government: Policies and practices*. Washington, DC: The World Bank Institute.
 - Good, Kristin. (2009) *Municipalities and Multiculturalism. The Politics of Immigration in Toronto and Vancouver*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
 - Grindle, M.S. (2007). *Going Local: Decentralization and the promise of good governance*. Princeton University Press
 - Jouve, B. (2007). Urban societies and dominant political coalitions in the internationalization of cities, *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, volume 25, pages 374- 390
 - Keil, R. (1998) 'Globalization makes states: perspectives of local governance in the age of the world city', *Review of International Political Economy*, 5(4): 616-646.
 - McCarney, P. ed. (1996). *Cities and Governance: New Directions in Latin America, Asia and Africa*. Centre for Urban and Community studies, University of Toronto.
 - Neptis Foundation's analysis of the Growth Plan see: http://www.neptis.org/library/show.cfm?id=83&cat_id=11
 - O'Flynn, Patrick and Tim Mau (2014) "A demographic and career profile of municipal CAOs in Canada: Implications for local governance" *Canadian Public Administration* (March) 154-70.
 - Ontario Growth Plan_ http://www.placestogrow.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=53&Itemid=65
 - Owusu, D. & Wunsch, (J.S. 2004). *Local governance in Africa: The challenges of Democratic decentralization*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
 - Saito, A., & Thornley, A. (2003). Shifts in Tokyo's world city status and the urban planning response. *Urban Studies*, 40(4), 665–68