Wayne State University
Department of Urban Studies & Planning

UP 6680: Neighborhood Decline and Revitalization

Instructor  Patrick Cooper-McCann (cooper@wayne.edu)

Course Info  Winter 2018, CRN: 22382, 3 credits

Class Sessions  5:30 to 8 pm on Tuesdays in 202 Kresge

Format  Lecture/seminar

Office Hours
I am available to meet on Thursdays between 2:30 and 4:00 pm. My office is 3185 Faculty Administration Building (at the end of the hallway, inside the Department of Urban Studies and Planning). Please email me in advance to make an appointment. I’m also available to talk over the phone, by Google Hangout, and before and after class.

Course description
This course offers an overview of social scientific scholarship on neighborhood change. It examines why neighborhoods sometimes decline and how plans and policies can be specified and implemented for neighborhood improvement. Students will consider what neighborhoods are, what functions they play, why they can change in terms of income levels, racial composition, physical conditions, commerce, public services, and social interrelationships, and how the livability of neighborhoods changes in response. Based on this analysis, students will evaluate a variety of policy options for dealing with neighborhood income segregation, racial segregation, and physical deterioration. The focus will be on developing analytical frameworks that will permit the student to understand the origins and consequences of neighborhood change and offer powerful prescriptions for revitalizing neighborhoods and forestalling their decline.

Core Principles
The course is founded on conveying six core principles of why and how neighborhoods change and how plans and policies for stemming decline and promoting revitalization can be most efficaciously specified. The six principles are as follows:

- **Principle of Externally Generated Change:** Most forces causing neighborhoods to change originate outside the boundaries of that neighborhood, often elsewhere in the metropolitan area.

- **Principle of Coded Signals:** Modest, often subtle changes in a neighborhood environment can lead to major alterations in behavior of residents, owners, and investors because the signals are encoded with future predictions about the neighborhood.

Revised 2/16/18 – final version
• **Principle of Threshold Effects:** Changes in neighborhoods typically progress in non-linear, even discontinuous fashion once they exceed a critical point.

• **Principle of Inefficiency:** Decision-makers in neighborhoods usually undertake an inefficient amount of activities of various sorts due to externalities, strategic gaming, and self-fulfilling prophecies. *Externalities:* most decisions in neighborhoods regarding mobility, upkeep, etc. have impacts on neighbors which typically are not considered by the decision-makers; *Gaming:* expected payoffs perceived by some decision-makers will be influenced by uncertain actions of other decision-makers in the neighborhood; *Self-fulfilling Prophecies:* if many individual decision-makers share the same expectations about the neighborhood they will behave collectively in a manner that brings about their expectation.

• **Principle of Inequity:** Lower socioeconomic status households and property owners typically bear a disproportionate share of the financial and social costs of neighborhood changes.

• **Principle of Policy-Induced Zero-Sum Game:** Many neighborhood policies improve one neighborhood but thereby set in motion forces that cause the decline of other neighborhood(s), resulting in zero net gain for the city.

**Learning objectives**
One set of learning outcomes will be specific to the substantive content of the course. By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the forces that affect the vitality of neighborhoods and the various policy options for responding
- Understand the six core principles of neighborhood dynamics (see above)
- Understand and apply the basic housing submarket model to elucidate causes and processes of neighborhood change

These outcomes will be assessed via take-home exercises and a final exam. The second set of learning outcomes relate to the team policy project. All students who successfully complete the course should achieve:

- Improved understanding of the circumstances and behaviors that promote collaborative problem-solving, goal achievement and team satisfaction, and those that inhibit productive group performance;
- Stronger skills in interacting effectively in working groups of different sizes;
- Increased proficiency in identifying tasks, data, analyses, and modes of presentation that are tailored to the goals of the assignment.

These outcomes will be assessed via the team policy project itself and written self-assessments submitted at the end of the term.
Required readings
All readings will be posted on Canvas and are listed in preferred order of reading. Some readings are assigned more than once. Others are marked optional. There are two textbooks for the course. Both books are available for free as PDFs on Canvas:

Marcus Pollock and Ed Rutkowski, *The Urban Transition Zone: A Place Worth a Fight* (Baltimore, MD: Patterson Park Community Development Corporation, 1998).

William Grigsby, Morton Baratz, George Galster, and Duncan MacLennan, *The Dynamics of Neighborhood Change and Decline* (New York: Pergamon Journals, 1987).

Course requirements and grading

1. *Problem Sets.* Several homework problems will be assigned that require students to work through numerical or graphic expositions of analytical models that have been presented in readings and class, thereby developing mastery of the material.

2. *Team Policy Project.* Multi-person teams will be constituted from the class, and will investigate, analyze and develop a comprehensive plan for preserving, enhancing, or restoring some aspect(s) of livability in a Detroit-area neighborhood. As a capstone exercise, the team will make an oral and written presentation of their analysis and suggested policy response. More detailed specifications will follow.

3. *Examination.* A short-answer/essay/problems exam will ask students to synthesize and reflect on overarching theoretical and conceptual elements of the course.

4. *Participation.* Full participation requires completing all assigned readings prior to class; arriving to class on time; taking notes on readings, lectures, and class discussions; and engaging in class discussion by posing thoughtful questions and comments. Office hours are optional, but students may also receive credit for discussing the course outside of class. Students may have one excused absence.

Grading
Final grades will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem Sets</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team Policy Project</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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The grading scale is as follows: A: 94-100, A-: 90-94, B+: 87-90, B: 83-87, B-: 80-83, C+: 77-80, C: 73-77, C-: 70-73, D: 60-70, F: 0-60.

A course grade of "Incomplete" will be granted only in exceptional circumstances and must be arranged, in writing, before the last class session.
### Schedule of Topics and Assignments

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Why Neighborhoods Matter</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1/16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Housing Submarkets and Neighborhood Change I</td>
<td></td>
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<td>1/23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Housing Submarkets and Neighborhood Change II</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Housing Submarkets and Neighborhood Change II</td>
<td>Assign. #1</td>
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<td>2/6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Indicators and Character of Neighborhood Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Interactions Among Neighborhood Decision-Makers</td>
<td>Assign. #2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mortgage &amp; Insurance Markets and Neighborhood Change</td>
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<td>2/27</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Causes &amp; Consequences of Neighborhood Racial Transition</td>
<td>Team Plan</td>
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<td>3/6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Causes &amp; Consequences of Neighborhood Class Transition</td>
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<td>3/13</td>
<td></td>
<td>No Class (Spring Break)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Introduction to Unresolved Policy Controversies</td>
<td>Assign. #3</td>
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<td>3/27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Challenges to Redeveloping Abandoned Neighborhoods</td>
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<td>4/3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>Final exam</td>
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<td>4/10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Challenges to Stabilizing Threatened Neighborhoods</td>
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<td>4/17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Challenges to Fostering Racial and Economic Diversity</td>
<td>Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Presentation of Team Policy Projects</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
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### Student Disability Services statement

If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Student Disability Services (SDS) office is located in the Adamany Undergraduate Library. SDS’s telephone number is (313) 577-1851 or (313) 577-3365 (TTD only). Once you have your accommodations in place, I will be glad to meet with you in office hours or at another agreed upon time to discuss your needs. The mission of Student Disability Services' is to assist the university in creating an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at Wayne State University. For more information about SDS, please see their website, [http://studentdisability.wayne.edu](http://studentdisability.wayne.edu).

### Statement on academic misbehavior

Academic misbehavior means any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the institution or subvert the education process. All forms of academic misbehavior are prohibited at Wayne State University, as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct ([http://doso.wayne.edu/codeofconduct.pdf](http://doso.wayne.edu/codeofconduct.pdf)). Students who commit or assist in committing dishonest acts are subject to downgrading (to a failing grade for the test, paper, or other course-related activity in question, or for the entire course) and/or additional sanctions as described in the Student Code of Conduct.

**Cheating**: Intentionally using or attempting to use, or intentionally providing or attempting to provide, unauthorized materials, information or assistance in any academic exercise. Examples include: (a) copying from another student’s test paper; (b) allowing another student to copy from a test paper; (c) using unauthorized material such as a "cheat sheet" during an exam. (d) unauthorized access to a test from a previous semester.
also constitutes cheating.

**Fabrication:** Intentional and unauthorized falsification of any information or citation. Examples include: (a) citation of information not taken from the source indicated; (b) listing sources in a bibliography not used in a research paper.

**Plagiarism:** To take and use another’s words or ideas as one’s own. Examples include: (a) failure to use appropriate referencing when using the words or ideas of other persons. (b) altering the language, paraphrasing, omitting, rearranging, or forming new combinations of words in an attempt to make the thoughts of another appear as your own.

Other forms of academic misbehavior include, but are not limited to: (a) unauthorized use of resources, or any attempt to limit another student’s access to educational resources, or any attempt to alter equipment so as to lead to an incorrect answer for subsequent users; (b) enlisting the assistance of a substitute in the taking of examinations; (c) violating course rules as defined in the course syllabus or other written information provided to the student; (d) selling, buying or stealing all or part of an un-administered test or answers to the test; (e) changing or altering a grade on a test or other academic grade records.

**Course drop/withdrawal information**

In weeks one and two of the full term, students can drop this class and receive 100% tuition and course fee cancellation. In weeks three and four, students may drop but will not receive tuition cancellation. Courses dropped in weeks three and four will not appear on your academic record. Beginning with the fifth week of the term students who wish to drop the class can initiate a withdrawal request on Pipeline. You will receive a transcript notation of WP (passing), WF (failing), or WN (no graded work) at the time of withdrawal. No withdrawals can be initiated after the end of the 10th week; students enrolled in the 10th week and beyond will receive a grade. More information on this can be found at: [http://reg.wayne.edu/pdf-policies/students.pdf](http://reg.wayne.edu/pdf-policies/students.pdf).

### Schedule of readings

**Part I: Concepts and Theories of Neighborhood Change**

1. **January 9 – Why Neighborhoods Matter**


2. January 16 – Housing Submarkets and Neighborhood Change I

1. Investopedia: “Economics Basics: Demand and Supply."


3. January 23 – Housing Submarkets and Neighborhood Change II


4. January 30 – Housing Submarkets and Neighborhood Change III


5. February 6 – Indicators and Character of Neighborhood Change


Team Policy Project Meeting: Each assigned team will meet during the last part of class. Teams must submit a one-page summary by the end of February documenting: (1) how they plan to operationalize their “neighborhood” for study, (2) what action steps they plan on taking to gather information, and (3) their plans for assigning tasks to teammates. This document should also list any clarifying questions you have of me.


7. February 20 – Mortgage and Insurance Markets and Neighborhood Change

1. Marcus Pollock and Ed Rutkowski, The Urban Transition Zone: A Place Worth a Fight (Baltimore, MD: Patterson Park Community Development Corporation, 1998), pages 13-16 (section titled, “Traditional Homeownership: The Silver Bullet?”).


8. **February 27 – Causes and Consequences of Neighborhood Racial Transition**


4. Play “Parables of the Polygons” simulation game at [http://ncase.me/polygons/](http://ncase.me/polygons/).

9. **March 6 – Causes and Consequences of Neighborhood Income Class Transition**


2. William Grigsby, Morton Baratz, George Galster, and Duncan MacLennan, *The Dynamics of Neighborhood Change and Decline* (New York: Pergamon Journals, 1987). Read or re-read chapters 2, 7, and 8.

**PART TWO: NEIGHBORHOOD POLICY APPLICATIONS AND ANALYSIS**

10. **March 20 – Unresolved Policy Controversies**


11. March 27 – Challenges to Redeveloping Abandoned Neighborhoods


12. April 3 – Exam

13. April 10 – Challenges to Stabilizing Threatened Neighborhoods


14. April 17 – Challenges to Fostering Racial and Economic Diversity


15. April 24 – Project Presentations