

METRO SEMINAR: DIVERSITY AND INEQUALITY IN GLOBAL CHICAGO

Instructors: Rebecca Burwell (February-April 2nd)

Katie Bolinder Sanford & Cynthia Bowman (April 9-30th)

Contact Information: 312-922-3243/ext #14, rebeccab@chicagosemester.org

Course Description

In this course, we will explore the rich diversity of urban life in the city of Chicago. In particular, we will spend time visiting, observing, and learning from diverse urban communities that shape life in Chicago today. Through this cross-cultural lens, we will study the various manifestations of urban social, cultural, political, and economic life, including the history of urbanization; immigration patterns; race and ethnic relations; community building and organizing; and issues such as displacement, racism, poverty, and homelessness, among others. While we will focus on the Chicago experience and the metropolitan area, we will also examine larger global processes that shape urban areas.

Course Objectives

- 1) To introduce students to urban issues and cross-cultural experiences.
- 2) To examine the impact of race, ethnicity, and gender on the urban environment and how various communities use their social capital to create neighborhood vitality.
- 3) To uncover the linkages between global processes and local phenomena as they pertain to urban communities.
- 4) To examine issues of displacement, immigration, racism, and poverty from the perspective of those most intimately impacted by these struggles.

Learning Outcomes

- 1) Students will examine their own cultural identity and articulate how that identity is expressed.
- 2) Students will compare and contrast various conceptions of race and culture and will articulate their own understandings of race and culture in dialogue with class readings, trips, and discussions.
- 3) Students will use ethnographic tools for learning about a community different from their own.
- 4) Students will examine urban issues and social institutions such as racism, sexism, and classism and articulate frameworks for transforming institutional discrimination.

Course Requirements and Policies

At the beginning of the semester, each student will pick a neighborhood around which you will center much of your research, reflection, and observation over the course of the semester. For example, if a student is interested in the Latino community and Latin America, they will spend time researching and visiting a community such as Pilsen, Little Village, or Humboldt Park, to name a few. You will be asked to spend time in that particular community, above and beyond any time you spend there in practicum group.

In addition, students will be responsible for these assignments:

- 1) **Class Participation and Attendance.** Class participation is very important as well as regular attendance. In order to gain a better understanding of the subject matter, you need to be willing to engage in class discussions. You should be prepared to discuss questions pertinent to each session's readings, such as: What is the author's main point? How did what you read resonate with your own experience? Do you agree with the author's main ideas? **Class participation and attendance are worth 20% of your final grade.**
- 2) **Weekly writing Assignments.** See description of various writing assignments below. **Writing assignments are worth 20% of your final grade.**

- a. **Reaction Essays.** These are short essays, assigned at the beginning of class with 2-3 questions related to one of the readings. You will have 10-15 minutes at the beginning of class to do the essay. *There will be two essays during the semester on 2/20 and 3/12.*
 - b. **Submission of Discussion Questions for Field Trips and Guest Speakers.** On days when we have field trips and/or guest speakers, we will not have reaction essays. Instead, you will be asked to submit via email by 12noon of that day, 2 discussion questions to have ready for the guest speaker or person giving us a tour on the field trip. These discussion questions are designed to get you thinking about the subject matter about which the guest lecturers(s) will be speaking. *Discussion questions are due on 2/13, 2/27, 3/5, and 3/26.*
- 3) **Paper #1 – Immersion Experience.** For this paper, you will be asked to either 1) visit a cross-cultural church service or 2) take part in a community event (such as the Chinese New Year Festival or African-American Arts Event, or fiesta at El Zocalo), or 3) visit a community based cultural museum or center. The students will then be asked to reflect on a series of questions about the experience. More details about this paper will be handed out in class. **Paper #1 is worth 30% of your final grade. The paper is due on April 2nd.**
 - 4) **Paper #2 - Neighborhood Analysis.** You will pick a neighborhood for which you will be responsible to research, visit, and present on the culture, assets, resources, and other issues of that particular neighborhood. More details on this paper will be handed out in class. **Paper #2 is worth 30% of your final grade. This paper is due May 7th the last day of class.**

Papers, Academic Integrity, and Other Issues:

- 1.) All papers and assignments must be typed and double-spaced.
- 2.) Deadlines are important. Late papers will be dropped ½ letter grade each day that they are late, unless you have made previous arrangements with me or there is some emergency.
- 3.) Finally, students are expected to honor the standards of academic integrity at all times. Cheating or plagiarism will not be tolerated and may result in an **F** for the course.

Chicago Semester will make reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students can alert us in the “Additional Information” portion of the Application Form prior to their coming, or they can notify the Director privately if necessary. Students should also alert their instructors during the first two weeks of class so that accommodations can be made. For further assistance, contact Clinton Stockwell at Clintons@chicagosemester.org.

Required Reading

Never a City So Real, by Alex Kotlowitz.

Reading Packet that includes articles to be handed out on through the semester.

Daily Reading of Chicago Newspaper (Chicago Tribune, Sun-Times, Red Eye, Chicago Defender, etc.),

You will be asked to talk about Chicago related issues at every class.

(FT) – This designates a day when we will be visiting various Chicago neighborhoods. On days we have field trips, it is possible that we will meet early (2:20pm) or will arrive back at the CS offices between 4:30-5pm.

Course Schedule

Week 1, Monday, February 4th - Introductions

Week 2, Wednesday, February 13th - (FT) TRP & Pilsen: Introduction to the Latino Community in Chicago (Article #1 on “This is Home Now” and Article #2 on “Lower West Side-Pilsen”)

- Week 3, February 20th** - Cross-Cultural Urban Issues: Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Culture (Read Kotlowitz Ch. 1-2 & Article #3 on race and culture).
- Week 4, February 27th** - *(FT) Pui Tak Center and Chinatown: Introduction to Asian Americans in Chicago (Article #4 on “Chicago’s Chinese Americans: From Chinatown and Beyond”)*
- Week 5, March 5th** - **Economic Restructuring in Chicago: Guest Speaker, Richard Longworth, Joint Class w/ all Metro Sections (Article #5, “New Blood for Cities”). Outline for Neighborhood Study Due to Rebecca via email by 5pm.**
- Field Trip: March 9th Sunday, - Visit to New Life Covenant Church, Humboldt Park, 11am, and visit to community murals.*
- Week 6, March 12th** - Abbreviated Class: Race and Gentrification in Humboldt Park (Read Kotlowitz, Ch. 5-6, Article #6).
- Church Visit w/ Sung Yeon Choi, Sunday, March 16th, church and time TBA. This is an optional trip for students that want to use this church visit for Paper #1.*
- Week 7, March 19th** - **Community Building: Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (Joint Class W/ Metro I - Article #7 “Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative”).**
- Week 8, March 26th** - **Race, Culture, Immigration and Art: The Immigrant Protests of 2006 and Black Cultural Perspectives (Joint Class w/ Metro III –Article #8 “Undocumented Workers and the Chicago Economy – Fact and Fiction”).**
- Week 9, April 2nd** - **Immigration and Citizenship: Guest Speaker from Logan Square Neighborhood Association (Article #9 “Sacred Refuge”). Paper #1 Due to Rebecca via email by 5pm.**
- Field Trip: Thursday, April 3rd, Dreamlandia, Teatro Luna, 7pm. Attendance at “Dreamlandia” is mandatory.*
- Week 10, April 9th** - Guest Lecturer: Katie Bolinder Sandford, topic and reading, TBA
- Week 11, April 16th** - Guest Lecturer: Katie Bolinder Sandford, topic and reading, TBA
- Week 12, April 23rd** – Guest Lecturer: Cynthia Bowman, topic and reading, TBA
- Week 13, April 30th** – Guest Lecturer: Cynthia Bowman, topic and reading, TBA
- Week 14, May 7th** – *No class; Final Paper Due to Rebecca via email by 5pm.*