

**Wayne State University
Department of Urban Studies & Planning**

US 2000: Introduction to Urban Studies

Instructor	Patrick Cooper-McCann (cooper@wayne.edu)
Course info	Winter 2026, Section 7, CRN: 24330, 4 credits
Cross listings	GPH 2000 = HIS 2000 = PS 2000 = US 2000
Class sessions	10:30 am to 12:10 pm, M & W, in 1209 State Hall
Format	Lecture

Office Hours

I'm available to discuss the class, the Urban Studies and Planning department's degree programs, Detroit, or your career. Please email me to arrange a time to talk. I'm available most afternoons, in person or on Zoom. I'm also available to talk right after each lecture.

Course description

This course introduces the interdisciplinary field of urban studies. This course is also designed to help students make sense of metropolitan Detroit. In the first half of the course, students will study the evolution of American cities and suburbs over the past two centuries, including why cities like Detroit declined and how their metropolitan areas became so racially divided. In the second half of the course, students will study and debate strategies to make metropolitan areas more equitable, sustainable, and inclusive for people of different backgrounds. By taking this course, students may satisfy either of two Gen Ed requirements: Social Inquiry and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Inquiry.

Learning objectives

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Explain the development of metropolitan America over the past two centuries, including the evolving relationship between central cities and their suburbs.
- Comprehend the urban landscape of Detroit, as a city and region, and explain the particular challenges and opportunities that Detroit faces as a "legacy city."
- Compare the built environments of different places in terms of urban design.
- Analyze how the experience of urban life varies by identity (race, income, gender, etc.) and discuss the factors that make some places more inclusive than others.
- Discuss strategies for making metropolitan areas more equitable and sustainable.

This course also satisfies two General Education requirements. With respect to the Social Inquiry (SI) requirement, students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Explain the behaviors, practices, institutions, and/or systems that define a society or social group.
- Explain concepts or methods that are used in analyzing societies or social groups.
- Explain social institutions and social interactions.

For the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Inquiry (DEI) requirement, students will:

- Explain current diversity, equity, or inclusion issues within the context of U.S. history, institutions, practices, or policies.
- Explain how cultural values and prejudices influence individual or group behavior.
- Explain the ethical and moral issues related to diversity, equity, or inclusion present in complex domestic (U.S.) situations.
- Explain strategies that promote diversity, equity, or inclusion at the local or national level.

Required readings

All readings will be posted on Canvas as PDFs. There is no required textbook.

Attendance policy

This is an in-person course, and in-person attendance is required. However, all lectures will be recorded and posted to Canvas as a resource for studying. The recordings may not be downloaded or shared with anyone outside of the class. Students should also be prepared to meet on Zoom if necessary due to a snow day or if the professor is ill. To participate on Zoom, students will need a computer with reliable internet access and a camera, microphone, and speakers. For assistance with technology issues, contact the C&IT Helpdesk at 313-577-4357 or helpdesk@wayne.edu.

Graded requirements

1. Participation = 10%

Participating in class will improve your learning. It also gives your classmates and the professor the chance to learn from your insights and experiences. Participation will be graded based on attendance and the quality of your engagement in class discussions. During most sessions, we will discuss the day's readings in small groups and as a class. You therefore must complete each day's readings prior to the start of class and come prepared to talk about them. While all lectures will be recorded, listening to class on Zoom does not count as a substitute for in-person attendance because it's not possible to fully engage in discussion. Students may be absent from class twice without penalty.

2. Assignments = 6 assignments x 5% each = 30%

Students will complete six short assignments throughout the semester. A penalty of 4% per day will be applied to any assignments submitted after the deadline.

3. Exams = 2 exams x 30% each = 60%

Each in-person exam will test one half of the course, including material covered in readings, lectures, and discussions. The exams are not cumulative, but students will need to master the material in the beginning to fully understand the material later in the course.

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+: 67-70, D: 63-67, D-: 60-63, 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.

Honors Option

Please reach out to the professor if you would like to earn Honors credit for this class.

Student Disability Services statement

If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services (SDS) for coordination of your academic accommodations. Please visit <https://studentdisability.wayne.edu> to register your condition. Once you have accommodations in place, please inform your instructor. Student Disability Services’ mission 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 WSU. SDS supports students with a variety of conditions, such as mental health disorders, learning disabilities, chronic health conditions, etc.

Statement on academic misconduct

Academic misconduct is any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the institution or undermine the education process. Such activity may result in failure of a specific assignment, an entire course, or, if flagrant, dismissal from Wayne State University. Examples of academic misconduct include:

- **Plagiarism:** To take and use another's words or ideas as your own without appropriate referencing or citation.
- **Cheating:** Intentionally using or attempting to use or intentionally providing unauthorized materials, information, or assistance in any academic exercise. This includes copying from another student's test paper, allowing another student to copy from your test, using unauthorized material during an exam and submitting a term paper for a current class that has been submitted in a past class without appropriate permission.
- **Fabrication:** Intentional or unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation, such as knowingly attributing citations to the wrong source or listing a fake reference in the paper or bibliography.
- **Other:** Selling, buying, or stealing all or part of a test or term paper, unauthorized use of resources, enlisting in the assistance of a substitute when taking exams, destroying another's work, threatening, or exploiting students or instructors, or any other violation of course rules as contained in the course syllabus or other written information.

Please note: The use of any artificial intelligence (AI) content creation tool/system such as ChatGPT is not permitted in this course. Using AI in any form is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and may subject you to charges of academic misconduct.

Schedule of Readings

Part I. Urbanization and Inequality

1. January 12 – Course Overview

Richard T. LeGates, “Prologue: How to Study Cities,” in Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader*, 7th edition (New York: Routledge, 2020), 3-7. You can skip the final section, “Organizations and Journals Devoted to the Study of Cities.”

2. January 14 – Analyzing Urbanism

Michael Ratcliffe, Charlynn Burd, Kelly Holder, and Alison Fields, “Defining Rural at the U.S. Census Bureau,” ACSGEO-1, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2016. Please read through page 5 only. You can skip pages 6 to 8.

Look at two maps: 1) a map of the Urbanized Area of Metro Detroit as of the 2010 Census and 2) a map of all Urbanized Areas of the United States as of the 2020 Census

Wayne State is closed on January 19 for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

3. January 21 – Urbanism Before Industrial Capitalism

Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, “Introduction to Part One,” Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader*, 7th edition (New York: Routledge, 2020), 11-18.

Catherine Cangany, “The Flammability of Colonial Detroit,” *Frontier Seaport: Detroit's Transformation into an Atlantic Entrepôt* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2014), 141-143.

-- Assignment #1 will be due by midnight on Thursday, January 22 --

4. January 26 – Urbanism After Industrialization

Friedrich Engels, “The Great Towns,” in Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader*, 7th edition (New York: Routledge, 2020), 60-69.

Howard Frumkin, Lawrence Frank, and Richard J. Jackson, “The Evolution of Urban Health,” *Urban Sprawl and Public Health: Designing, Planning, and Building for Healthy Communities* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2004), 46-57 only.

5. January 28 – Making Industrial Cities Livable

Sam Bass Warner, “Evolution and Transformation: The American Industrial Metropolis, 1840-1940,” in Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader*, 5th edition (New York: Routledge, 2011), 55-60 (read through “The Segregated City”).

Jon A. Peterson, “Introduction: Urban Planning in the American Past,” in *The Birth of City Planning in the United States, 1840-1917* (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 2003), pages 12-21 only.

6. February 2 – Immigration, Ethnicity, and Ethnic Enclaves

Jordan Stanger-Ross, “Ethnicity and US Neighborhoods,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History*, December 2018. Read to the end of page 6.

Kim Parker, Juliana Menasche Horowitz, Rich Morin, and Mark Hugo Lopez, “Race and Multiracial Americans in the U.S. Census,” *Pew Research Center*, June 11, 2015. You may stop reading after “Possible New Combined Race-Hispanic Question.”

7. February 4 – Race and Racial Segregation

W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Negro Problems of Philadelphia,” “The Question of Earning a Living,” and “Color Prejudice,” in Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader*, 5th edition (New York: Routledge, 2011), 110-116.

Read page 1 of the handout for an example of a racially-restrictive property deed

-- Assignment #2 will be due by midnight on Thursday, February 5 --

8. February 9 – The Car and Suburbanization (1920s-1960s)

Conrad Kickert, *Dream City: Creation, Destruction, and Reinvention in Downtown Detroit* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2019), read from the bottom of page 90 (the paragraph that starts “More pragmatic planning efforts ...”) to page 101.

Kenneth T. Jackson, “The Drive-In Culture of Contemporary America,” in Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader*, 5th edition (New York: Routledge, 2011), 65-74.

Watch the 2-minute video: “The Rise and Fall of Downtown Detroit”

9. February 11 – Zoning and Urban Planning (1940s-1960s)

June Manning Thomas, “Postwar Planning,” in *Redevelopment and Race: Planning a Finer City in Postwar Detroit*, revised edition (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2013), 35-52.

10. February 16 – Redeveloping the Central City (1940s-1960s)

June Manning Thomas, “Eliminating Slums and Blight,” in *Redevelopment and Race: Planning a Finer City in Postwar Detroit*, revised edition (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2013), 53-81.

11. February 18 – The Urban Crisis (1960s-1970s)

Thomas J. Sugrue, “Introduction,” *The Origins of the Urban Crisis* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 3-14.

-- Assignment #3 will be due by midnight on Thursday, February 19 --

12. February 23 – The Suburban Metropolis (1970s-2020s)

Robert Fishman, “Beyond Suburbia: The Rise of the Technoburb,” in Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader*, 5th edition (New York: Routledge, 2011), 75-83.

Myron Orfield, “How the Suburbs Gave Birth to America's Most Diverse Neighborhoods,” *Citylab*, July 20, 2012, <https://www.citylab.com/equity/2012/07/how-suburbs-gave-birth-americas-most-diverse-neighborhoods/2647/>.

Look at two maps: 1) ethnic and racial diversity in Metro Detroit in 2010 and 2) job clusters in the Detroit-Warren-Dearborn, MI Metropolitan Statistical Area

13. February 25 – The Post-Industrial Economy (1970s – 2020s)

Chloe E. Taft, “Deindustrialization and the Postindustrial City, 1950–Present,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History*, June 2018. Read to page 10.

Alan Mallach and Lavea Brachman, *Regenerating America’s Legacy Cities* (Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, 2013). Read pages 2-10.

Optional 7.5-minute video: “NYC’s Tech Economy”

14. March 2 – Exam 1

Students will complete Exam 1 during class on Monday, March 2.

Part II. Equitable, Inclusive, and Sustainable Urbanism

15. March 4 – Urban Form and Social Life

Lewis Mumford, “What Is a City?,” in Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader*, 5th edition (New York: Routledge, 2011), 91-95.

Clarence Perry, “The Relation of Neighborhood Forces to the Larger Community: Planning a City Neighborhood from the Social Point of View,” in *Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1924), 415-421.

16. March 9 – Planning Vibrant Streets and Public Spaces

Jane Jacobs, “The Uses of Sidewalks: Safety,” in Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader*, 5th edition (New York: Routledge, 2011), 105-109.

William H. Whyte, “The Design of Spaces,” in Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader*, 7th edition (New York: Routledge, 2020), 548-556.

17. March 11 – Guest Lecture: Kelsey Maas, Preservation Planner, City of Detroit

Readings to be announced.

-- Assignment #4 will be due by midnight on Thursday, March 12 --

Spring Break = No class on March 16 or 18

18. March 23 – Social Inclusion and Exclusion

Ali Madanipour, “Social Exclusion, Space, and Time,” in Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader*, 7th edition (New York: Routledge, 2020), 206-216.

19. March 25 – Gender and the City

Claire Foran, “How to Design a City for Women,” *Citylab*, September 16, 2013, <https://www.citylab.com/transportation/2013/09/how-design-city-women/6739/>.

Three-part interview with Eva Kail on “gender mainstreaming” in Vienna

Angie Schmitt, “Single-Family Housing Upholds the Patriarchy and Hurts Moms,” *Streetsblog USA*, November 2, 2018, <https://usa.streetsblog.org/2018/11/02/single-family-housing-upholds-the-patriarchy-and-hurts-moms/>.

20. March 30 – Racial Integration

Mary Pattillo, “The Problem of Integration,” *The Dream Revisited*, New York University Furman Center, January 2014.

Patrick Sharkey, “Making Our Assumptions About Integration Explicit,” *The Dream Revisited*, New York University Furman Center, January 2014.

21. April 1 – Gentrification

Sharon Zukin, “Gentrification in Three Paradoxes,” *City & Community* 15, no. 3 (2016): 202-207.

Ingrid Ellen, “Can Gentrification be Inclusive?,” in Christopher Herbert, Jonathan Spader, Jennifer Molinsky, Shannon Rieger, eds., *A Shared Future: Fostering Communities of Inclusion in an Era of Inequality* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, 2018).

-- Assignment #5 will be due by midnight on Thursday, April 2 --

22. April 6 – Fiscal Equity Among Local Governments

Myron Orfield, “Metropolitics and Fiscal Equity,” in Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader*, 6th edition (New York: Routledge, 2015), 338-356.

23. April 8 – Public Transit and Equity

Joel Batterman, “Race, Class and Public Transit in the Motor City,” *Progressive Planning*, Fall 2011, no. 189, 16-19.

Jarrett Walker, *Human Transit: How Clearer Thinking About Public Transit Can Enrich Our Communities and Our Lives* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2011), 13-37.

24. April 13 – Sustainable Development

World Commission on Environment and Development (The Brundtland Commission), “Towards Sustainable Development” (1987), in Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader*, 7th edition (New York: Routledge, 2020), 407-412.

David Owen, “Green Manhattan: Everywhere Should Be More Like New York” (2004), in Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader*, 7th edition (New York: Routledge, 2020), 417-424.

25. April 15 – Urban Health and Environmental Justice

Susan C. Thomson, “Urban Health Care: Disparities Abound,” *Health Progress* (November-December 2011): 5-11.

Steve Neavling, “Communities of color are dumping grounds for toxic waste in Michigan,” *Metro Times*, September 16, 2020.

Optional: Linda Villarosa, “Pollution Is Killing Black Americans. This Community Fought Back,” *New York Times Magazine*, July 28, 2020.

-- Assignment #6 will be due by midnight on Thursday, April 16 --

26. April 20 – The Climate Crisis

“Executive Summary” and “Policy Solutions,” *Climate Change Impacts on the Great Lakes* (Chicago: Environmental Law and Policy Center, 2019).

Aaron Mondry, “Detroit’s Battle with Climate Change: Flooding, Asthma, and Infrastructure,” *Planet Detroit*, January 2021, <https://planetdetroit.org/2021/01/detroits-battle-with-climate-change-flooding-asthma-and-infrastructure/>.

27. April 22 – Repurposing Vacant Land

Alan Mallach and Lavea Brachman, *Regenerating America’s Legacy Cities* (Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, 2013). Read pages 24-29.

Detroit Future City, “Executive Summary,” *Achieving an Integrated Open Space Network in Detroit* (Detroit, MI: Detroit Future City, 2016), 5-11.

28. April 27 – Exam 2

Students will complete Exam 2 during class on Monday, April 27.