Urban Politics (POS 4931)  
Fall 2022  
Dr. Sharon D. Austin  
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The University of Florida

**Office Information:** 203 Anderson Hall, (352) 392-0262, polssdw@ufl.edu

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:40am-1:40pm or by appointment

**Course Description:**  
  
This course will examine several political and public policy issues in urban cities. We will discuss issues such as downtown development, environmental justice, gentrification and urban housing issues, immigration, mayoral elections and governance, political incorporation theories, the city/suburbanization divide, the politics of urban education, urban policing, and urban revitalization efforts. The class has both an undergraduate and a graduate section. Also, I reserve the right to change the information included on the syllabus if necessary. Finally, keep in mind that we will discuss some very emotionally charged topics like the impact of the 2022 *Dobbs* decision (that overturned *Roe v. Wade* in cities, the 2022 Buffalo mass shooting, the 2022 Uvalde school shooting, crime, and police brutality. All opinions are welcome.  
  
**Course Objectives:**

1. Examine the major challenges local political officials encounter in urban cities.
2. Detail the manner in which urban political actors pursue economic development while at the same time maintaining neighborhoods.
3. Analyze the manner in which urban cities operate (i.e., their governance).
4. Examine significant political and policy issues in urban America.

**The Three Required Textbooks:**

Sharon D. Wright Austin.2018. *The Caribbeanization of Black Politics: Race, Group Consciousness, and Political Participation in America* New York: State University of New York Press.

Evelyn Simien, editor. 2022. *Historic Firsts in U.S. Elections: Trailblazing Candidates in Gubernatorial, Congressional, and Mayoral Campaigns* New York: Routledge.

Candis Watts Smith and Christina M. Greene, eds. 2019. *Black Politics in Transition: Immigration, Suburbanization, and Gentrification* New York: Routledge.

**The Reserve Articles** can be found on the Course Reserves link on canvas.

**Your Grade will be Based on:**  
  
**1) Class Participation (10%)**

Class participation and attendance are extremely important in this seminar. Each student is expected to read the assigned materials before class and participate in class discussions. After three unexcused classes are missed, you will not receive the percentage points for class participation.  It is your responsibility to sign an attendance roster that will be given out at the beginning of each class session.  If you forget to, sign it during the next class. Also, please try to get to class on time.

**2) Papers (60% or 20% each)**

You must write four minimum eight-page papers on the topics we cover in class. This paper will require an analysis of the assigned readings, lectures, and other class materials on this topic and answer the questions that are listed on canvas. Please don’t forget to include citations in your paper. Use parenthetical citations in the paper that include the person’s last name, year of publication, and page number-i.e., (Wright, 2020, 20).  Then, include a Bibliography page at the end of the paper that lists your sources.  The sources can be formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style, M.L.A., or the American Psychological Association (A.P.A.) format.  See the sources in the textbooks for examples.  As indicated on the rubric for the papers, you will be expected to indicate your knowledge of the readings. Your grade will be primarily based on the number of citations to the assigned materials. You will not be graded on your opinions, but on your abilities to cite the materials to support your opinions on papers on the following topics:

* Mayoral Leadership, Urban Cities, How Do Cities Operate **(due October 4th)**
* The Role of Governors in Urban Politics, Housing Policies, Environmental Justice **(due October 25th)**
* Immigration and Multicultural Cities, Urban Crime and Poverty, Urban Education **(due November 29th)**

**3) Issue presentation analysis paper (15%): November 8th**

Each graduate student in our course will give an issue presentation that examines an urban political issue of their choice. All students must attend class and take notes during each of these presentations so that you will have a deeper understanding of these issues. Your analysis must answer the following questions: Why is this issue important for our understanding or urban politics? How should urban political actors address it? What did you learn from the presentation(s) about this issue? The analysis should be approximately five pages (not including a bibliography) and follow the guidelines included on canvas.

**4) City research project analysis paper (15%): Due December 13th**

Each graduate student in our course will give a presentation that analyzes the politics and public policies of an American city of his or her choice. The goal is for you to receive information about the historical, physical, cultural, political, and economic characteristics of the chosen city, along with current issues, challenges, and initiatives. You must attend class and take notes during each of these presentations. Your minimum five-page paper must provide a brief summary of one of the presentations by answering the following questions: What is the city’s history and current political structure? Also, what major issues/conflicts confronting the city in the modern era (since the 1970s) and how successful were they? Finally, what did you learn from the presentation about urban politics?

**Feedback:**

I will grade each assignment and record your grade on canvas within a week after it is completed. I will also provide information each week about your class participation.

**Grading Scale:**  
94-100 A 90-93 A- 87-89 B+ 84-86 B 80-83 B- 77-79 C+

74-76 C 70-73 C- 67-69 D+ 64-66 D 60-63 D- Below 60 E

A C- will not be a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, Gordon Rule or College Basic Distribution credit.

**Classroom Behavior:**

In the past, several of my students have forgotten to turn off their cell phones in class. I am asking you to please turn off your phones before our class begins. If your phone rings more than once during the semester, five points will be deducted from your highest test grade. Remember, a student who takes his/her work seriously will make sure that his/her phone is off during class meetings. Also, if you engage in behavior such as texting, browsing the internet, napping, loud yawning, or any other behavior that I consider to be disrespectful to me or to your classmates, you may not receive all of the percentage points for class participation.

**Disabilities Statement:**

Students requiring accommodations must first register with the Dean of Student’s office, Disability Resource Center. The Dean of Student’s office will provide documentation, which the student will then give to the instructor. For more information, see [HTTP://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc](https://mail.ufl.edu/OWA/redir.aspx?C=2cb007bd128b47548756116534ed7741&URL=HTTP%3a%2f%2fwww.dso.ufl.edu%2fdrc)  

**Academic Dishonesty:**  
  
UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code can be accessed at the link below and specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. [<https://archive.catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/1617/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>]

**Counseling Services:**

For help from the university counseling services and mental health services, call (352) 392-1575, see <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, or call the University Police Department [(35) 392-1111] or 9-1-1 for emergencies. You can also find help at the U Matter We Care site [<https://umatter.ufl.edu/>].

**Course Evaluation:**

At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals.

**Class Schedule:**

Introduction: Mayoral Leadership

8-25 Introduction to the Class

8-30 Reserve Reading:

Shifting Boundaries and Splintering Movements Abortion Rights in the Feminist and New Right Movements

9-1 Reserve Readings:

A Buffalo Saber to the Socialist Heart

Watch MOVE Bombing Documentary (55 minutes): The 1985 MOVE Bombing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9IHYZYc_38>

9-6 Reserve Readings:

The Philadelphia Move Incident as an Anomaly in Models of Mayoral Leadership

9-8 Textbook Reading:

*The Caribbeanization of Black Politics*, chapter 3 (Chicago Politics chapter)

9-13 NO CLASS (American Political Science Association Meeting in Montreal)

Urban Policing

9-15 **Today, we will meet online at the same link that I use for online office hours which is [**[**https://ufl.zoom.us/j/5186400829**](https://ufl.zoom.us/j/5186400829)**].**

Reserve Readings:

Accountable Autonomy: Toward Empowered Deliberation in Chicago Schools and Policing

I Will Be Out There Every Day Strong: Protest Policing and Future Activism Among Ferguson and Baltimore Protesters

Seattle and Portland Protests Highlight Generational Tensions in Black Lives Matter Movement

How Do Cities Operate?

9-20 Textbook readings:

*The Caribbeanization of Black* Politics, chapter 5 (New York City chapter)

*Black Politics in Transition*, chapter 2

Reserve Readings:

From Encampments to Hotspots: The Changing Policing of Homelessness in New York City

9-22 Textbook reading:

*Historic Firsts*, chapter 5

Reserve Readings:

Governing Without Government: Nonprofit Governance in Detroit and Flint

9-27 Reserve Readings:

The Significance of Race in Urban Politics: The Limitations of Regime Theory

The City as a Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place

Urban Development and the Growth with Equity Framework: The National Football League Stadium in Downtown Los Angeles

The Role of Governors in Urban Politics

9-29 Textbook Reading:

*Historic Firsts*, chapter 2

Reserve Readings:

Searching for a New Brand: Reimagining a More Diverse Orlando

The Importance of the Death and Life of Great American Cities

DeSantis vs. Disney Q&A

10-4 **First Paper Is Due Tonight**

NO CLASS (Study Abroad Fair is on the North Lawn of the Reitz Union)

10-6 Reserve Readings:

Governors and the Development Regime in New Orleans

The Failure of the Nonregime: How Katrina Exposed New Orleans as a Regimeless City

Housing Policies

10-11 Textbook Readings:

*Black Politics in Transition*, Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8

10-13 Textbook readings:

*Historic Firsts*, chapter 6

Reserve Readings:

Growth Control and Electoral Politics: The Triumph of Urban Populism in San Francisco

Environmental Justice

10-18 Reserve Readings:

Anatomy of Environmental Racism and the Environmental Justice Movement

Asian American Politics in Oakland: The Rise of Mayor Jean Quan

Politically Unhealthy: Flint’s Fight Against Poverty, Environmental Racism, and Dirty Water

The Battle Over Liquor Stores in South Central Los Angeles

Immigration and Multicultural Cities

10-20 Textbook readings:

*Historic Firsts*, chapter 3

*Black Politics in Transition*, chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4

10-25 **Paper Is Due Tonight**

Issue Presentations by Graduate Students

10-27 Issue Presentations by Graduate Students

11-1 Issue Presentations by Graduate Students

Urban Crime and Poverty

11-3 NO CLASS (Meeting in Toronto)

11-8 **Issue Presentation Analysis Due**

Today, we will meet online at the same link that I use for online office hours [<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/5186400829>]

Textbook readings:

*The Caribbeanization of Black* Politics, chapter 4 (Miami chapter)

Broken Windows and Crime in Development Challenged Urban Areas: Evidence from Jackson, Mississippi

11-10 Reserve readings:

Policing the Future, Disrupting Urban Policy Today. Predictive Policing, Smart City, and Urban Policy in Memphis, Tennessee

Urban Education

11-15 Textbook Readings:

*The Caribbeanization of Black* Politics, Chapter 2 (Boston chapter)

*Historic Firsts*, chapter 4

Reserve Reading:

After state report, Mayor Wu drafts plan for ‘immediate’ changes for BPS through DESE partnership

Public Opinion About Gun Control Post-Sandy Hook

The Uvalde, Texas School Shooting Massacre

11-17 Discussion Continued of Urban Education readings

11-22 NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Holiday)

11-24 NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Holiday)

11-29 **Paper Is Due Tonight**

City Research Project Presentations by Graduate Students

12-1 City Research Project Presentations by Graduate Students

12-6Evaluate Class

City Research Project Presentations by Graduate Students

12-13 **City Research Project Analysis Due**