

Urban and Environmental Policy 101 Environment & Society - Winter 2021

Class Sessions

Tuesday and Thursday 10:15am - 11:40 am PT

Zoom Link: <https://occidental.zoom.us/my/nlambrouoxy>

Office Hours

Nicole Lambrou

Tuesdays, Thursdays 9:15am - 10:15am PT and by appointment

nlambrou@oxy.edu

Course Overview: What is this course about?

This course is an introduction into issues at the intersection of “urban” and “environment.” It is for those interested in learning more about these concepts and the path forward towards creating more just and equitable environments and cities. This course introduces students to the political, economic, and social aspects of the environment with a focus on the role of government, policy, and social change. This course explores the intersection of race, poverty, and inequity in the environment and introduces how issues of race, class, gender, and workers’ rights interact with the natural and built environments.

The course is designed for students considering a UEP major and provides foundational concepts to be explored in more depth through other UEP courses. The course is also intended for non- UEP majors who are interested in the topics and examining the urban and environmental linkages to other disciplines. The course is an opportunity for students to interact with others interested in asking and answering complex questions about our cities, the natural world, and our global context and exploring solutions for critical urban and environmental challenges.

Classroom Community

This course is intended to provoke discussion and new understandings of the urban environment we live in. Toward this end, the course will grapple with discussions about inequity, power, race, class, and gender. We expect our class times and discussions to be a productive space for open, honest, and thoughtful discussion that recognizes and respects differences and acknowledges the broad range of knowledge we bring to the classroom and discussion. Please remember that our focus in this course is the issues, texts, course materials and presentations themselves, and not the personalities, identities, or opinions of other participants in the discussion.

The professors and students share the responsibility of creating the space and stimulating enthusiasm for learning. The professors are responsible for structuring and facilitating a space for learning and achieving course goals. Students are responsible for attending and participating in class, completing assignments in a timely manner, being prepared to discuss readings and material in class, and contributing to a robust learning environment and community. With this goal, students are also responsible for engaging in respectful, open, and thoughtful discussion with each other and the professors.

Course Objectives

The goals of this course are to examine the idea of “environment” and how it relates to the urban context. Through readings, films, class exercises, and discussions, students will:

- Gain insights and critical thinking about cities, urban and environmental issues as well as understand the role of policy, organizing, and social movements in addressing these conditions.
- Develop analytic skills to make connections between the economic, political, social, and spatial aspects of cities and the environment, particularly related to jobs, health, economic development, housing, transportation and the built environment, neighborhood and regional planning, and community development.
- Progress in active reading, critical thinking, analytical writing, and discussion skills through the synthesis of sources, including lectures, videos, and discussion in class and with peers.

Course Components

Mode of Instruction

This course will be offered via remote instruction that includes various modes of engagement as detailed below. The academic component requires a minimum of 12 hours of work per week.

Remote: All interactions between faculty, MSI Mentors, and students will be done through online conferencing

Asynchronous: Online instruction that happens without real time interaction will include pre-recorded lectures and Moodle platform discussions and activities.

Synchronous: Online instruction that happens with real time interaction with faculty will include discussion sections. Faculty will also hold office hours, which we encourage you to attend.

Contact hours per week: 3 hours total in synchronous class discussion.

Workload: 12-15 hours per week– course readings, videos, podcasts, and faculty presentations (lectures, power points, etc.)

Course Activities Schedule

Asynchronous Components:

Readings and any prerecorded lectures must be completed by class meeting times. These will be posted on our Moodle class page. Due to intellectual property and copyright concerns, any lecture videos can only be streamed and not downloaded. Please complete readings and watch any videotaped lectures for the day they are assigned. Readings will largely follow the syllabus but are subject to some changes. Please pay attention to the Moodle site for any changes to the schedule and/or the readings.

Moodle Forum Discussions: Forum discussions allow for online discussion with your colleagues via the forum board on Moodle. Faculty will provide a guiding prompt focused on the set of readings the Forum follows and you are free to comment on any relevant point/theme/topic. This format allows for asynchronous discussions about concepts covered in lectures and readings with your peers. The forum builds a safe learning community where students can take time to develop ideas before sharing a post or reply and practice in-depth reflective responses. Forums give all students a voice, especially those who tend to be quieter during synchronous discussions. *You must contribute one original post and reply to one post by your colleagues per forum. Each post should be limited to 250 words max.*

Synchronous Components

Class Meeting Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:15-11:40 am PT. In-class lectures and discussion. Office Hours: Faculty will hold weekly office hours via Zoom. Links for office hours sign-ups are above. We strongly encourage you to meet with faculty during the semester

Course Requirements

Participation (35% of grade): You are expected to do all of the course readings and videos for the date they are assigned and keep up with readings and assignments. This is a reading intensive seminar where synchronous (in class) discussions and online forum discussions are key. As such attendance and preparation is required. Your participation in class will also be evaluated based on your ability to contribute productively to the discussions and class exercises. Be mindful of your own contribution but also the overall discussion dynamic. Listen attentively to others, recognize when to “step up” and “step back” so that all class members can participate meaningfully. Focus on quality over quantity when participating. Your participation grade consists of the following:

- **Large class discussions (15%):** Engagement in class discussions and full class synchronous meetings
- **Small group discussions (10%):** Small group discussions will be conducted during class time via zoom break out rooms, and guided by specific prompts. Groups will track discussion via a shared google document that you set up with members of your break out room.
- **Moodle Discussion Forums (10%)** Moodle forum discussions will take place on Fridays of weeks 3, 6, 9, and 11. Discussion prompts will be posted on Moodle.

Assignment #1: Your Local Neighborhood Observation Paper (20% of grade): There is one paper assignment based on your observation walk in your community. Paper prompts will be passed out in class. Paper is to be **posted on Moodle by the Friday of Week 4.**

Midterm Exam (15% of grade) You will have a midterm exam to cover materials through Week 7. Midterm must be **posted to Moodle by the Friday of Week 8.** More details will be discussed in class closer to the date.

Assignment #2: Film Reflection Paper (10% of grade): We will be watching the film *Come Hell or High Water*. We will provide you with additional information on dates and formats for viewing the film. You will write a 3-4 page Reflection Paper based on the film and how it relates to class readings and discussions. **All film papers must be posted to Moodle by the Friday of Week 13.**

Final Paper (20% of grade): Final papers are **due on Tuesday of Finals Week (05/04, 5pm PT).** You must submit upload your paper to Moodle. Papers should be between 5-7 pages, double-spaced, 12 point font. A paper prompt and grading rubric will be passed out and discussed in class

Class Schedule, Readings, and Assignments

Readings and course materials should be completed for discussion for classes listed below. Please note that readings may change; check Moodle for the latest reading assignments. Although the reading links have been tested; some links may no longer work. When this happens, look up the title of the document. Often times there are “snapshots” of the sites still accessible.

Also, review [this video instruction](#) to allow you to use Google Scholar and directly access Oxy Library holdings including online journal databases such as Proquest. This will allow you to get behind paywalls and access full texts of articles. Once you click on the video link, use the password oxycdla (caps sensitive). Follow the instructions. This significantly increases access to journal articles online in all fields, including full text pdfs for download.

Course Details

Week 1: Tuesday, 01/19: Introduction to the Course

Week 1: Thursday, 01/21: Environmental Overview and Context

William Cronon. “The Trouble with Wilderness or Getting Back to the Wrong Nature”.

Jenny Price. “13 Ways of Seeing Nature in Los Angeles” 2006. pgs. 1-26

o Part 1: <https://believermag.com/thirteen-ways-of-seeing-nature-in-la/>

o Part 2: <https://believermag.com/thirteen-ways-of-seeing-nature-in-la-2/>

Michael Brune – “Pulling Down Our Monuments” (July 22, 2020)

[English version](#) and [En Español](#) :

Hop Hopkins – [“Racism is killing the planet”](#) (June 8, 2020)

Week 2: Tuesday 01/26: Environmental Understandings

Lynn White, Jr. “The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis” in *Science*. Vol. 155, No. 3767 (March 1967), pgs. 48-54

Winona LaDuke. “Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Environmental Futures”. The Winona LaDuke Reader. Voyageur Press. 2002. Pgs. 78-88.

Week 2: Thursday, 01/28: Urban Framing

David Harvey. 2008 “The Right to the City” New Left Review p.23-40. <https://newleftreview.org/issues/II53/articles/david-harvey-the-right-to-the-city>

Jane Jacobs 1958 “Downtown is for People” in *The Exploding Metropolis*, pp.140-168

Soja, Edward. 1989. “It All Comes Together in Los Angeles,” Chapter 8 in *Postmodern Geographies*. Pp.190-221.

Week 3: Tuesday, 02/02: Reading the Urban and Environmental Landscape

James Rojas. 2013 “The Enacted Environment of East Los Angeles” in *Places*

Lipsitz, George; *How Racism Takes Place: Introduction to Race, Place, and Power*

Week 3: Thursday, 02/04: Urbanization and Growth

Harvey Molotch. (1976). The city as a growth machine: Toward a political economy of place. *American Journal of Sociology*, 82(2), 309-332.

Michael Bader, “L.A. is Resegregating -- And Whites are a Major Reason Why,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 1, 2016; <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-bader-resegregation-los-angeles-20160401-story.html>

Week 3: Friday, 02/05 - Moodle Forum #1

Week 4: Tuesday, 02/09: Inequality and the Environment

Boyce, James; *The Environmental Cost of Inequality*; *Scientific American*; November 2018
Watch the news clip; [The Real News Network](#)

Michele Morrone and Geoffrey Buckley. 2011. Chapter 1 in *Mountains of Injustice*. Columbus, OH: Ohio University Press. pgs. 3-31

Ma, Michelle; *Racism in Cities Harms Animals and the Environment, Too*; August 17, 2020; <https://www.futurity.org/systemic-racism-cities-biodiversity-2423582-2/> (This article references new study that you can read [here](#) if you'd like to see the full peer-reviewed paper by Schell et al in *Science*- optional)

Week 4: Thursday, 02/11: Current Issues in Housing and Where we Live

“The State of the Nation’s Housing 2019” Harvard Joint Center for Housing Policy. Pp. 1-37
[Skim]

Rebecca Solnit, “Gentrification’s Toll: It’s You or the Bottom Line,” The Guardian, May 13, 2016
<http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/may/03/gentrification-climate-change-sierra-club-san-francisco>

Southern California Association of NonProfit Housing (SCANPH).

- o Out of Reach (2018): Los Angeles (1 page)
- o Out of Reach (2018): Los Angeles County (1 page)
- o Housing Needs Report 2018: Los Angeles County (4 pages)

M.J. Aboelata, R. Bennett, E. Yañez, A. Bonilla, & N. Akhavan. Excerpts from Healthy Development Without Displacement: Realizing the Vision of Healthy Communities for All. pgs 9-17. Prevention Institute. 2017

Peter Marcuse. “The Housing Change We Need” Shelterforce. Winter 2008. December 22, 2008.

Week 5: Tuesday, 02/16: Your Neighborhood Walking Exercise

Walking observation exercise. Refer to the prompts for the walk and for the associated readings. This assignment is due on Friday. We will share and discuss these observations in class next Tuesday, time permitting.

Week 5: Thursday, 02/18: Movements for Environmental Justice/Race and the Environment

Luke Cole and Sheila Foster. “Introduction” in From the Ground Up: Environmental Racism and the Rise of the Environmental Justice Movement. NYU Press. 1991 pgs. 19- 33

Laura Pulido. 2000 “Rethinking Environmental Racism: White Privilege and Urban Development in Southern California” Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 90(1), 2p. 12–40]

Yale Environment 360 Interview with Sacoby Wilson, “Connecting the Dots with Between Environmental Justice and the Coronavirus; <https://e360.yale.edu/features/connecting-the-dots-between-environmental-injustice-and-the-coronavirus>

Week 5: Friday, 02/19: Assignment #1 Due (Your Local Neighborhood Observation Paper)

Week 6: Tuesday, 02/23: Topics in Environment Health

What are Toxic Air Pollutants?": See the American Lung Association Website <https://www.lung.org/clean-air/outdoors/what-makes-air-unhealthy/toxic-air-pollutants>

Friedman, Lisa; New Research Links Air Pollution to Higher Coronavirus Death Rates; *NY Times*; April 7, 2020; <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/07/climate/air-pollution-coronavirus-covid.html>

Week 6: Thursday, 02/25: Workers and the Environment

Gordon, Robert; "['Shell No!': OCAW and the Labor-Environmental Alliance](#)"; *Environmental History*; October 1998; Vol.3, No.4; pp. 460-487

Hailey Branson-Potts, Alejandra Reyes-Velarde, Matt Stiles, Andrew J. Campa, "The Price of Being "Essential": Latino Service Workers Bear Brunt of Coronavirus," *Los Angeles Times* May 17, 2020: <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-05-17/latino-essential-workers-coronavirus>

Week 6: Friday, 02/26 - Moodle Forum #2

Week 7: Tuesday, 03/02 - The Case of Environmental Health and Salon Workers

Ami Zota and Bhavna Shamasunder. (2017). The environmental injustice of beauty: Framing chemical exposures from beauty products as a health disparities concern. *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*. 217. 10.1016/j.ajog.2017.07.020.

Maslin Nir, Sarah; "Perfect Nails, Poisoned Workers"; May 8, 2015; <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/11/nyregion/nail-salon-workers-in-nyc-face-hazardous-chemicals.html>

Julia Wong. "US Nail Salons: the challenge to protect workers from toxic chemicals"; *The Guardian* November 28, 2017; <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/nov/28/us-nail-salons-the-challenge-to-protect-workers-from-chemicals>

Week 7: Thursday, 03/04 - The Case of Exide Technologies

Pending Confirmation - Guest speaker: Angelo Logan, co-founder of East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice

Exide Technologies: A History

<https://timelines.latimes.com/exide-technologies-history/>

Unsettled: The Exide Story (22 minute video); <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BmC1L070eZg>

Mid-Semester Evaluation / Check-In

Access midterm prompt on Moodle!

Week 8: Tuesday, 03/16 - Midterm Due by 5pm

Week 8: Tuesday, 03/16 - Global Trade and the Environment

Andrea Hricko, “Global Trade Comes Home: Community Impacts of Goods Movement” *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 116 (2), Feb, 2008, pp.78-81.

Lydia DePillis, “It’s Amazon’s World. We Just Live in It”. *CNN Business*. Read also the related links in the article. October 4, 2018. <https://www.cnn.com/2018/10/03/tech/amazon-effect-us-economy/index.html>

Week 8: Thursday, 03/18 - Global Trade and the Environment

Karen Robes Meeks. “Los Angeles, Long Beach port truck drivers move nation’s goods” *Long Beach Press Telegram* May 16, 2015.

Michael Sainato. “The Ruthless Reality of Amazon’s One Day Shipping” *Gizmodo*. June 14, 2019.

Week 9: Tuesday, 03/23 - Plastics and Waste

LAANE, Don’t Waste LA: Cleaning Up Waste and Recycling Management and Securing the Benefits, July 2015: <https://laane.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Cleaning-Up-Waste-1.pdf>
And watch this video: <https://www.pbsocal.org/shows/socal-insider-rick-reiff/clip/socal-insider-rick-reiff-trash-tussle>

Break Free From Plastic at <https://www.breakfreefromplastic.org/> (look at)

Week 9: Thursday, 03/25 - Plastics and Waste

Sintana E. Vergara and George Tchobanoglous, "Municipal Solid Waste and the Environment: A Global Perspective," Annual Review of Environment and Resources, Nov. 2012, <http://www.annualreviews.org/doi/full/10.1146/annurev-environ-050511-122532>

Altman, Rebecca; "American petro-topia"; Aeon; March 11, 2015; <https://aeon.co/essays/plastics-run-in-my-family-but-their-inheritance-is-in-us-all>

Week 9: Friday, 03/26 - Forum #3

Week 10: Tuesday, 03/30 - Food Systems

Pending confirmation - Guest Speakers: Sharon Cech, Rosa Romero, UEPI

Haynes-Maslow, L., Stillerman, K. P., & Yates, J. (2016). Fixing food: Fresh solutions from five U.S. cities. Retrieved from the Union of Concerned Scientists website: ucsusa.org/food-agriculture/expand-healthy-foodaccess/fixing-food-fresh-solutions-five-us-cities-2016#.WYEnIIWcE2w

Patel, R. (2012). Survival pending revolution: What the Black Panthers can teach the U.S. food movement. Food First Backgrounder, 18(2), 1–4. Retrieved from Food First website: https://foodfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/BK18_2-2012_Summer_Survival_Pending_Revolution.pdf

Megan Horst, Nathan McClintock & Lesli Hoey (2017) The Intersection of Planning, Urban Agriculture, and Food Justice: A Review of the Literature, Journal of the American Planning Association, 83:3, 277-295.

Week 10: Thursday, 04/01 - Food Systems

Gripper, Ashley; *We don't farm because its trendy; We farm as resistance, for healing, and sovereignty: Farming is not new to Black people*; Environmental Health News; May 27, 2020; <https://www.ehn.org/black-farming-food-sovereignty-2645479216.html>

Hoover, Elizabeth; *Native Food Systems in the Time of COVID-19*; <https://gardenwarriorsgoodseeds.com/2020/05/03/native-food-systems-in-the-time-of-covid-19/>; May 3, 2020. See also a peer reviewed version of the same research ([PDF link here](#)).

Week 11: Tuesday, 04/06 - Building a Healthy and Just City

Workshop with James Rojas, Founder of PLACE IT! (Ph.D. Urban Planning, MIT) Sponsored by the Remsen Bird Fund.

Susan Fainstein. "Planning and the Just City" (in Marcuse, ed., Searching for the Just City: Debates in Urban Theory and Practice, 2009)

Lerner, Jaime. "How to Build a Sustainable City" New York Times. December 7, 2015 <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/07/opinion/how-to-build-a-sustainable-city.html>

James Rojas. "How An Outsider Found Identity And Belonging In The Intangible Shared Spaces Of A Redlined City" LAist. October 23, 2020

Week 11: Thursday, 04/08 - Climate Justice

Alexander Zaitchik. "After the deluge: building climate justice from the wreckage of Hurricane Katrina". The New Republic June 25, 2015

Brentin Mock. "Greens who want results should take lessons from the grassroots." Grist Jan 22, 2015

[From Mississippi to California, Communities Interlink with 'Come Hell or High Water'](#). KCET.

Week 11: Friday, 04/09 - Forum #4

Week 12: Tuesday, 04/13 - Energy

Mikel González-Eguino "Energy poverty: An overview" Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews Volume 47, July 2015, Pages 377-385; <https://www.sciencedirect-com.oxy.idm.oclc.org/science/article/pii/S1364032115001586>

J. Mijin Cha, "Unnatural Gas: How Government Made Fracking Profitable (and Left Renewables Behind)", Dissent, Jun 27, 2013 http://www.dissentmagazine.org/online_articles/unnatural-gas-how-government-made-fracking-profitable-and-left-renewables-behind

Week 12: Thursday, 04/15 - Climate Challenges

National Research Council of the National Academies; “Climate Change: Evidence, Impacts, and Choices; Read part 1 on ‘Evidence’”; pp. 1-18; <https://nas-sites.org/americasclimatechoices/more-resources-on-climate-change/climate-change-lines-of-evidence-booklet/>

EPA, “Understanding the Link Between Climate Change and Extreme Weather” <https://19january2017snapshot.epa.gov/climate-change-science/understanding-link-between-climate-change-and-extreme-weather.html> (read through all of the extreme weather issues)

Week 13: Tuesday, 04/20 - Climate Challenges

Sachs, Jeffrey. “A Bold Bid for Climate Justice”. Watch the 23 minute video and read the commentary article. January 11, 2018 <http://www.cnn.com/2018/01/11/opinions/new-york-city-bold-bid-for-climate-justice-opinion-sachs/index.html>

Althor, G., Watson, J.E.M., & Fuller, R.A. (2016). “Global mismatch between greenhouse gas emissions and the burden of climate change.” *Nature Scientific Reports*. 6, 20281. Pp.1-6.

Week 13: Thursday, 04/22 - Solutions, Connections and Intersections

Movement Generation. From Banks to Tanks. To Cooperation to Caring. A Strategic Framework for a Just Transition. http://movementgen.electricembers.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/JT_booklet_English_SPREADs_web.pdf

[From COVID-19 to the climate emergency: Lessons from this global crisis for the next one](#)

[Social Change Spectrum](#)

Week 13: Friday, 04/23 - Film Reflection Paper Due on Moodle

Week 14: Tuesday, 04/27 - Last Day: Reflections

Finals Week: Final Paper Due—Tuesday, 05/04 at 5pm PT

Course and College Policies

Student Support Services

Even in our remote learning environment, the College provides a wide range of [Student Academic Support Resources](#).

- If you'd like to take advantage of the **College's Academic Coaching resource**, which offers one-on-one sessions focused on supporting your time management skills, online

learning strategies, and other study skills, you may schedule an academic coaching meeting by sending an email to academiccoaching@oxy.edu. Share what you'd like to work on, and an academic coach will schedule an appointment with you within a few days.

- The **Center for Digital Liberal Arts (CDLA)** offers [library research consultations](#) and [discipline-specific peer tutoring for coursework](#) and [language learning](#). We also offer peer-to-peer [support for learning technologies](#) from Moodle and Zoom to Adobe, app making, and ProTools.
- The **Writing Center** offers opportunities to work on all forms of writing for any class or other writing tasks such as personal statements, senior comprehensives, etc. We offer peer-to-peer consultations with knowledgeable Writing Advisers and sessions with Faculty Writing Specialists. For fall 2020, all of our appointments will be remote: either synchronous virtual meetings or asynchronous writing feedback. See the [Writing Center website](#) for more information about our fall hours and how students can sign up for appointments. We will update our information again for spring 2021. Please contact the Writing Programs-Center Director, Julie Prebel (jprebel@oxy.edu; x1307) for more information on how the Center can work with you.
- [Emmons Wellness Center](#) also provides important support services and can help you address issues of stress, medical and mental health, and overall well-being. For more information, see their website at <https://www.oxy.edu/student-life/resources-support/emmons-wellness-center>. *Emmons can also help you locate resources out-of-state.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to comply with the Student Handbook, in particular the section on Academic Ethics. ([Link to the policy in the Student Handbook](#)). Whenever outside sources are used, they must be properly credited.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism consists of any form of passing off, or attempting to pass off, the knowledge or work of others as your own. It is a form of cheating. Examples of plagiarism include: unattributed quotations from a book, magazine, or article; copying from the notes or essays of others; the submission of work actually written or dictated by others; and unattributed use of other people's ideas. Remember, plagiarism includes information from books, newspapers, journals and the Internet. Plagiarism is grounds for failing the course and possible expulsion from the college. Students should consult Occidental's student handbook for information on academic misconduct policy at the college: <https://www.oxy.edu/student-handbook/academic-ethics/academic-misconduct>

Title IX statement, and statement of role of faculty member as a mandatory reporter ([Link to Title IX](#))

In the event that you choose to write or speak about having experienced sexual or interpersonal violence, including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, sexual exploitation or any other form of sexual harassment, as designated Responsible Employees, professors must notify the Title IX Office. They will contact you to let you know about accommodations and support services at Oxy and reporting options both on and off-campus.

If you do not want the Title IX Office notified, instead of disclosing this information to your instructor, either through conversation or a class assignment, you can speak confidentially with the following people on campus:

- Marianne Frapwell, Survivor Advocate, Project SAFE (survivoradvocate@oxy.edu)
- Emmons Counseling (For appointments, call: 323-259-2657)
- Rev. Dr. Susan Young, Office of Religious and Spiritual Life (young@oxy.edu)

The sexual misconduct policy, along with additional resources, can be found at: <http://www.oxy.edu/sexual-respect-title-ix/policies-procedures>. If you would like to contact the Title IX Office directly, you can email Title IX Coordinator Alexandra Fulcher at afulcher@oxy.edu or call 323-259-1338.

Special Accommodations/Learning Differences

No matter the mode of course instruction, approved academic accommodations remain in effect. Students with documented disabilities and learning differences who are registered with Disability Services are required to present their accommodation letter to the instructor at the beginning of each semester, or as soon as possible thereafter. Any student who has, or thinks they may have, a physical, learning, or psychological disability may contact Disability Services at accessibility@oxy.edu to learn about available services and support. More information is available at <http://www.oxy.edu/disability-services>.

Accommodations for Reasons of Faith and Conscience

Consistent with Occidental College's commitment to creating an academic community that is respectful of and welcoming to persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that students should be excused from class for reasons of faith and conscience without academic consequence. While it is not feasible to schedule coursework around all days of conviction for a class as a whole, faculty will honor requests from individual students to reschedule coursework, to be absent from classes that conflict with the identified days. Information about this process is available on the ORSL website: <https://www.oxy.edu/office-religious-spiritual-life>

Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

We strive to foster an inclusive classroom environment. Consistent with College policy on [discrimination, harassment, and retaliation](#), we seek to maintain an environment of mutual respect among all members of our community. Please reach out to us with any concerns. You can also find more information on the website: <https://www.oxy.edu/student-handbook/general-college-policies/discrimination-harassment-and-retaliation>

Grading Rubric

The goal of the class is for you to become thoughtful, curious, and critical thinkers about the urban environment. The perspectives and skills you gain in the class in the long term matter more than any grade you receive. Grades however, are important indicators of your grasp of the course material. The following is a rubric for understanding what it takes to do well in the class.

Assignment-specific rubrics will be provided with assignments.

Grade: A: Sophisticated and thoughtful reflections on course material; excellent depth of critical analysis; accurate and creative interpretation of course readings; well-constructed arguments; cogent, clear, and persuasive speaking and writing

Participation—student participates frequently; demonstrates thorough preparation and a firm grounding in the course material; demonstrates an ability to analyze readings and to clearly articulate her analysis, an ability to understand the subtle logic of a range of positions, and an ability to synthesize course material over the semester. Student goes well beyond the requirements of the course.

Grade B: Good to Very Good reflection, analysis, and engagement with course ideas; accurate and creative interpretation of course readings; well-constructed arguments; solid speaking and writing skills

Participation—student participates regularly; demonstrates a good deal of preparation and a good handle on the course material; frequently offers interesting insights and intriguing interpretations of our sources; demonstrates an ability to connect readings/ideas across the semester student meets requirements of the course competently.

Grade C: Satisfactory; student can summarize course material and has made fair attempts at analysis; analysis and critique may require further development or coherence, thinking may still be a bit unnuanced, and/or ideas may be difficult to understand due to issues of speaking and writing

Participation—student participates regularly; demonstrates a good deal of preparation and a good handle on the course material; s/he can adequately summarize readings, but might not offer well-formed analysis and critique; every so often offers interesting insights.

Grade D: Unsatisfactory; student reads course material but does not understand it at a satisfactory level; student completes course assignments but they do not evidence adequate understanding, analysis, or preparation. Student often misses assignments and class discussions.

Participation—student participates occasionally, though s/he demonstrates inadequate preparation, makes comments that are not based in readings, and/or offers ideas with scant support. Student made some effort to meet minimum requirements.

Grade F: Student fails to meet the minimum requirements of the course Participation—little to no participation