

OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE
UEP 302: HOUSING & COMMUNITIES
SPRING 3023

Instructor: Jan Breidenbach, PhD

Time and Classroom: Tuesdays, 1:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Seminar Room, UEP department office (to right from entrance)

Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:30 until class, and by appointment

I do not have a regular on-campus office. I will be at the UEP building during office hours

Contact: jbreidenbach@oxy.edu. 213-500-2935 (text)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a course that explores the history of our national housing delivery system. We will look at how the idea of the “American Dream” of a single-family, detached house came to be, how and why suburbia has been the dominant form of family housing, the relationship of tenants and owners, and more. We will work to understand the challenges of renters in the US, the present crisis of homelessness; particularly with attention to what is happening in Los Angeles as our housing policies may change over the next year..... and more. Additionally we will discuss how not only does “housing matter”, but how “neighborhoods matter.

CLASS EXPECTATIONS

Students are responsible for attending and participating in class, completing assignments in a timely manner, being prepared to discuss readings and material in class. Students are also responsible for engaging in respectful, open, and thoughtful discussion with each other, the professors and community partners. In order to ensure open, honest, thoughtful, and respectful learning, teaching, class and community discussions please:

- Inform me in advance when you may have to arrive late or leave. We will have guests in a number of classes; all guest lectures are mandatory. If you are absent for these classes, an alternative assignment must be discussed ahead of time.
- Engage in active and courteous listening to other students and community partners and contribute respectfully to class and community discussions.
- * Students must abide by all College rules and regulations including, but not limited to, rules in the applicable course syllabus/outline, the Student Code of Conduct Policy, the Policy on Sexual Harassment and Discrimination, as well as any applicable laws. Any violation of these rules may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the College, and/or legal action.

GRADING

Grading in the course is based on three assignments. The percentages are:

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|------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Reading Questions & Attendance: | 30% |
| 2. Research Paper | 35% |
| 3. Image & Narrative | 35% |

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

ASSIGNMENT #1: READING QUESTIONS & ATTENDANCE – 30%

Reading Questions. In this course, class readings are a combination of academic articles, book chapters, videos and reports. They are in an electronic reader and posted weekly to Moodle. From time to time a new report

or article is published that is more pertinent to our topic so the syllabus may change slightly. *The readings that are posted for the week are the readings you are responsible for.* In addition, other material may be posted, such as power points, video links, etc. so make sure you pay attention to Moodle.

I take time with the reading material and I expect students to read it. This is why responses to the weekly reading questions is about one-third of your grade.

With each class session's readings are specific questions for you to answer. These are questions that I consider important to understand what the readings/videos/etc are trying to make the reader/viewer understand.

Post your answers to these questions to Moodle no later than 12:00 NOON PM BEFORE EACH WEEK'S CLASS.

The point of posting them on time is to assure that you are better prepared for class discussion. If they are submitted after 12:00 noon, I don't review them and no credit is given.

Attendance. I take attendance in class, it is 5% incorporated into the reading assignment grade. You are allowed **three** excuse-free absences, a bit more than 10% of the whole semester. After these three, any unexcused absences are added up and deducted from your final grade. If you have three already and yet find yourself ill or with some other appropriate excuse, you must notify me of the reason and provide some verification of the absence.

ASSIGNMENT #2: RESEARCH PROJECT – 35%

Students will do a short research project focused on a housing-related topic addressed in our course. Requirements for the project are:

- * The topic must be related to the course material but not duplicate it. Example of a course-related topic might be the analysis of a local housing or homeless policy in your home city (e.g., rent control or homeless housing); or the history of a housing project in a major city.
- * It must be at least **2500** words. It can be **double-spaced or 1.5-spaced, not single-spaced.**
NOTE: The number of pages doesn't interest me, so don't write with wide margins or lots of information I don't need at the top of the first page. I go by word-count, NOT number of pages.
NOTE: 2500 words is about seven (7) pages double-spaced or four (4) pages single-spaced, using Times New Roman (which you do NOT have to use).
- * Your paper must include at least **7 references**. Ideally these would all be original sources you have found, but **no more than four** can be from our reading. The list of references is NOT counted in the word count.
- * Incorporate graphs, charts or other materials that further explain your topic.

You must have your **topic** to me no later than **Tuesday, 2/7**. Bring it to class or email me.

I will approve it no later than the following weekend.

Your research paper is due no later than **5:00 pm on Sunday, March 19 (end of Spring Break).**

Upload it to Moodle in **WORD** - **NOT as a PDF or Apple Pages. Only WORD AND BRING A HARD COPY TO CLASS**

Criteria for grading:

Relevance: Is the paper connected to the course, without being repetitive?

Research: Are the sources used relevant to the writing?

Writing: Is the paper written with appropriate grammar, sentences, etc.

ASSIGNMENT #3: IMAGE & NARRATIVE– 35%

Students will write a narrative essay based on an image that reflects a topic addressed in the course. The requirements for the project are similar to those for the research paper:

- * The image must reflect some topic from the course. **The image cannot be a house or building.**
- * Write an essay that describes why your image represents and reflects the topic you've chosen. I will give you a couple of examples from prior courses that will help you look for interesting images.
- * The essay is the same format as the research paper.

The narrative essay/image is **due no later than the beginning of the scheduled final exam for this course.** Upload it to Moodle in **WORD - NOT either PDF or Apple Pages. Only WORD.**

We will discuss this in detail the first class after spring break. It will be due into Moodle at the time scheduled for the final exam.

The Criteria for grading is the same as for your research paper

Note on writing: Good writing does not come easily. I recognize that English is not everyone's first language, and that the English language is fluid and always changing. But this course is taught in English and requires good writing in English. **MAKE SURE** you use **Spell/Grammar check** in Word, as well as websites such as **Grammarly** to review your writing. There are wonderful editing sources that can turn bad writing into good writing. But note – they are not infallible, you are still responsible for the content of your writing.

Required Student Information

Plagiarism: "Students are responsible for knowing and using the correct procedures for acknowledging and identifying sources of borrowed material. Failure to properly credit sources in all or part of work presented in draft or final form to anyone is plagiarism, regardless of whether it occurs as a result of dishonest intent or carelessness and regardless of the course credit attached to it."

Contact number: (323) 259-2969

<http://www.oxy.edu/student-handbook/academic-ethics/academic-ethics>

Disability Services: "Through providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations, assisting students with self-advocacy, providing academic support and counseling, and ensuring adherence to state and federal disability laws, the Office of Disability Services is committed to enhancing students' academic development and independence."

Contact number: (323) 259-2969

Email: accessibility@oxy.edu; <http://www.oxy.edu/disability-services>

Wellness: Emmons Wellness Center is committed to providing the students of Occidental College with accessible, culturally sensitive, and high quality medical care, psychological counseling services, and student-driven wellness education.

24/7 Confidential Hotline: (323) 341-4141

Appointments: (323) 259-2657, Email: emmons@oxy.edu, <http://www.oxy.edu/emmons-wellness-center>

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

Week 1. Tuesday, 1/24: Introduction & Right to Housing

Introduction to the course and each other. What is your definition of “home”? What do you want to learn about housing? What is the most important housing policy to focus on in 2023?

Right to Housing:

What is a ‘right to housing’?

Is there a difference between a “right to housing”? and “housing justice”?

In class video & discussion: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1148&v=idJqpWbOPJk

Week 2. Tuesday, 1/31. Our Uniquely American Shelter Delivery System: Land & Property

Visit the website for the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development, based in Brussels, Belgium).

- * First, go to the main page on affordable Housing and watch the short video:

<https://www.oecd.org/housing/topics/affordable-housing/>.

- * Then move to the data page “compare your country:

<https://www.compareyourcountry.org/housing>

- * There are four categories across the top: Housing Tenure Distribution, Housing Conditions, Housing Allowances and Social Housing. Go through each of these categories and compare where the United States sits in the list of all OECD countries. We will go over this in class.

Krueckeberg, D. (1995) “The Difficult Character of Property: To Whom Do Things Belong?”

Journal of the American Planning Association (JAPA), 61(3), 301

Mackin, Anne (2006). Land, The Early Bird Special. In *Americans and Their Land: The House Built on Abundance*.

Beard, Rick (2012). Westward, Ho! *New York Times*. Accessed at:

<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/05/20/westward-ho-/?pagemode=print>

Covert, B (2018). The Deep, Uniquely American Roots of Our Affordable Housing Crisis. *The Nation*. (PDF)

Week 3. Tuesday, 2/7: Our Uniquely American Shelter Delivery System: Homeownership & Suburbia

Support for Suburbia

Jackson, Kenneth (1985). The Baby Boom and the Age of the Subdivision. *Crabgrass Frontier*.

Hanchett, Thomas (2001). The Other “Subsidized Hsg”: Federal Aid to Suburbanization, 1940s-1960s.

From Tenements to the Taylor Homes: In Search of an Urban Hsg Policy in 20th Century America.

Oliver, Mark (2020). The Racist Origins of America’s Suburbs and the Story of the First Black Family to Move In (PDF)

Axel-Lute, Miriam (2022) Increased Homeownership Won’t Close the Racial Wealth Gap

<https://shelterforce.org/2022/03/14/increased-homeownership-wont-close-the-racial-wealth-gap/>

Smith, Noah (2016). Zoning Laws Transfer Wealth in the Wrong Direction. *Bloomberg View*

www.bloombergview.com/articles/2016-01-12/zoning-transfer-wealth-in-the-wrong-direction

The Mystery of Housing Finance

No advance reading; but we’ll go over a brief outline of housing finance to better understand how it influences so much of our national housing system.

Week 4, Tuesday, 2/14: Our Uniquely American Shelter Delivery System: Renters

Birch, E. & Gardner, D (1981). *The Seven Percent Solution: A Review of Philanthropic Housing 1870-1910*. *Journal of Urban Housing* 7, 408-438. (PDF)

Baar, Ken (1882). The National Movement to Halt the Spread of Multifamily Housing, 1890 – 1926. *Journal of the Am. Planning Association (JAPA)*. 58(1) 39 – 48 (PDF)

Heskin, Allan (1984) The History of Movement & an Ideology. In *Tenants & the American Dream: Ideology and the Tenant Movement*. (PDF)

U.S. Rent Prices are Rising 4x Faster than Income (2022 Data).
<https://www.realestatewitch.com/rent-to-income-ratio-2022/>

Week 5: Tuesday, 2/21: Segregation & Fair Housing

Silver, Charles (1997). The Racial Origins of Zoning. In *The Shadows: Urban Planning & the African American Community* (June Manning Thomas & Marsha Ritzdorf, Eds). (PDF)

The Trial of Dr. Ossian Sweet (PDF)

Thompson, Cheryl, et al (2021). Racial covenants, a relic of the past, are still on the books across the country. *NPR Morning Edition (11/17/21)* (You can listen to this as well).
<https://www.npr.org/2021/11/17/1049052531/racial-covenants-housing-discrimination>

Rasmussen, Cecilia (2006). Family stood up to restrictive covenants. *LA Times* (PDF)

Where Does the American Dream Live? (film) (NY Times Retro Report). Available at:
<https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/100000004655947/where-does-the-american-dream-live.html>

“Seven Days” (2018) film from the website “fhact50.org”. (Fair Housing Act 50). <http://fhact50.org/sevendays/>

Goetz, Edward (2021). “The Fair Housing Challenge to Community Development. In *Furthering Fair Housing: Prospects for Racial Justice in America’s Neighborhoods* (PDF)

Week 6. Tuesday, 2/28 How Do We Subsidize Housing for Those Who Can’t Afford It?

Public Housing

Goetz, Ed (2013) Chap. 1. The Quiet Successes and Loud Failures of Public Housing. In *New Deal Ruins: Race, Economic Justice & Public Housing Policy* (PDF)

Watch “*The Pruitt Igoe Myth*” (on reserve in library and on YouTube)

Badger, Emily (06/15/2015). How Section 8 Became a “racial slur”. *Washington Post*. (PDF)

Section 8 (Housing Choice Vouchers)

Ballard, Lauren (2017). “I Hate Section 8: Discrimination Against Section 8 Voucher Households in the Antelope Valley (unpublished paper). (PDF)

CA Civil Rights Dept. Finds Widespread Housing Discrimination against Federal Hsg Choice Vouchers (2022).
<https://calcivilrights.ca.gov/crdnews/oct172022pr/>

Inclusionary (Mixed-Income) Housing

“Understanding Inclusionary Housing. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F85Hbr9eOEK>

We will discuss the tax credit program and others (LA linkage fee) in class

Week 7: Tuesday, 3/7: Without a Home

Warth, Gary (2022). Cause of Homelessness? It's not drugs or mental illness, researchers say.

San Diego Union-Tribune.

<https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/homelessness/story/2022-07-11/new-book-links-homelessness-city-prosperity>

Nat'l Academies Press (2018). Appendix B. The History of Homelessness in the United States. *Permanent Supportive Housing: Evaluating the Evidence for Improving Health Outcome Among People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness (PDF)*.

Week 8: 3/14. No Class, Spring Break – Research paper due no later than FRIDAY, March 17

Upload it to Moodle in **WORD – NOT as a PDF or Apple Pages, Only WORD**

BRING A HARD COPY TO CLASS ON TUESDAY, 3/21.

Week 9: Tuesday, 3/21. Rent Control & Tenant Protections

Keating, W. Dennis (1998). Rent Control: Its Origins, History & Controversies. In *"Rent Control: Regulation & the Rental Hsg. Market.* (PDF)

Gross, Larry (1999). West Hollywood Celebrates Its 25th Birthday.

<https://www.opednews.com/articles/West-Hollywood-City-Built-by-Larry-Gross-091125-271.html>

CA's New Rent Control Laws: what You Need to Know (2022).

<https://www.avail.co/education/articles/new-california-rent-control-laws>

Watch: How California is Defining Rent Control

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nliwrzY1P0>

Ludden, Jennifer (2022). Rent control expands as tenants struggle with the record-high cost of housing. *WGBH TV*

<https://www.wgbh.org/news/national-news/2022/11/28/rent-control-expands-as-tenants-struggle-with-the-record-high-cost-of-housing>

Class discussion: how to get around constitution property issue (back to the future?)

Week 10: Tuesday, 3/28 Eviction

The CA Tenant Protection Act of 2019 (AB 1482). <https://sf.gov/information/california-tenant-protection-act-2019-ab-1482>

PBS/Frontline: Facing Eviction <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/documentary/facing-eviction/>

King, Shelby (2023). *Tenant Protections 101* <https://shelterforce.org/2022/11/15/tenant-protections-101/>

Crime, Police & shelter

Smith, Leora (2020). When the Police Call Your Landlord. *The Atlantic*.

https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2020/03/crime-free-housing-lets-police-influence-landlords/605728/?utm_source=share&utm_campaign=share

Visit:

* The Ellis Act Evictions, at www.cesinaction.org.

* The Eviction Lab, <https://evictionlab.org/>

Week 11: Tuesday, 4/4 Housing Matters, Neighborhoods Matter. The Environment & Climate

Taylor, Alan (2014). The Urban Oil Fields of Los Angeles (24 photos). *The Atlantic*.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2014/08/the-urban-oil-fields-of-los-angeles/100799/>

Johnson, Jill & Shamasunder, Bhavna (2022). Urban oil wells linked to asthma and other health problems in Los Angeles. <https://theconversation.com/urban-oil-wells-linked-to-asthma-and-other-health-problems-in-los-angeles-160162>

Newburger, Emma (2023) Oil companies sue Los Angeles over ban on oil & gas drilling. *MSN*

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/money/markets/oil-companies-sue-los-angeles-over-ban-on-oil-and-gas-drilling/ar-AA16dXrX>

Albaladejo, Angelika (01/17/2023). Why California's climate change and housing crises hit women

hardest. *Yahoo News*. <https://news.yahoo.com/why-california-climate-change-housing-222716801.html>

Coleman, Zack (11/30/2020) How climate change could spark the next home mortgage disaster, *Politico (PDF)*

Sisson, Patrick (12/1/2020). In Many Cities, Climate Change Will Flood Affordable Housing. *City Lab*

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-12-01/how-climate-change-is-targeting-affordable-housing>

Week 12: Tuesday, 4/11. Housing Matters, Neighborhoods Matter. Slums & Alternatives

Howard, Miles (2022). Can We Prevent Slumlords from Buying More Buildings? *Shelterforce*

<https://shelterforce.org/2022/08/29/can-we-prevent-slumlords-from-buying-more-buildings/>

Wagner, David (2021) Is LA losing the Fight Against Slum Housing? *LAist*.

<https://laist.com/news/housing-homelessness/housing-code-enforcement-los-angeles-la-county-east-compton-public-health>

Perez, M.G. (2022). State money will fund affordable housing for community college students. *KPBS*.

<https://www.kpbs.org/news/local/2022/03/11/state-money-affordable-housing-community-college-students>

Axel-Lute, Miriam (2021). Understanding Community Land Trusts. *Shelterforce*

<https://shelterforce.org/2021/07/12/understanding-community-land-trusts/>

Visit the website of EcoVillage a <https://laecovillage.org>

Watch the film about the project: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FdQGozSavz8>

Week 13: Tuesday, 4/18. Housing Matters, Neighborhoods Matter. Housing & Community Development

READINGS TO BE POSTED

Week 14: Tuesday, 4/25. Organizing for Housing – and Housing Justice

TBA – presentation panel on ULA and other housing initiatives

Nat'l Low-Income Hsg Coalition (2023) Tenant Talk (new issue to be published February 2023)

Atlas, John (2022). Rise & Fall of the National Tenants Union

<https://shelterforce.org/2022/11/22/the-rise-and-fall-of-the-national-tenants-union/>