

Planning and Public Policy Program, Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, Rutgers University

Urban Management, 10:762:317:01, Fall 2016, 3 credits

Thursday, 9:15-12:15, Food Science Building, Room 101, Cook Campus

Instructor is Frank J. Popper, Civic Square Building, Room 356, College Avenue Campus, 848-932-2790, fpopper@rutgers.edu, fpopper@princeton.edu. My website is policy.rutgers.edu/faculty/popper, where you can find more copies of this syllabus.

Office hours: Monday morning or by appointment, also meetings before or after class. I am usually at Princeton on Tuesdays.

Readings: Dennis R. Judd and Todd Swanstrom, City Politics (9th edition, 2014) and Robert Curvin, Inside Newark: Decline, Rebellion, and the Search for Transformation (2014), both at the Rutgers University/Barnes & Noble Bookstore in New Brunswick. There may be further short readings as needed.

This course, intended for advanced undergraduates who need not be Bloustein School majors, offers an introduction to how municipal government actually works, especially in large and mid-sized cities. The course emphasizes the political, economic, social, and demographic settings that cities and their governments find or create for themselves and where they must operate. It focuses primarily, but not exclusively, on American cities over about the last century and a half, roughly since the end of the Civil War.

The course aims for you to understand local government and its place in the larger American polity and society. Three-fifths of civilian government employment is at the local level. About the same proportion of civilian government spending occurs there, although much of the money comes from the federal government or to a lesser extent state government. Local government tends to have more daily contact with the population than the other levels do. Hence local government remains continually important and interesting.

Judd and Swanstrom take an overall view of American cities: their histories, current issues, and prospects. Curvin explores specifically how such themes play out in Newark, New Jersey's signature and largest city. Thus the readings and the course move through variously historical, practical, theoretical, and predictive phrases.

Most course sessions will consist of my presentations and then class discussions. You will do two take-home exams, plus a paper at the end of the course. The paper may be on any topic relevant to the course that the instructor approves. You will find no lack of material from which to choose topics or approaches. I want you to use your imaginations to find adventuresome analytic--not merely descriptive--subjects and treatments. The paper should be 8-10 double-

spaced pages, not counting notes, references, and graphics. Before the first exam I will send you a starter bibliography of urban sources.

20 percent of your grade comes from each of the two take-home exams, 30 percent from the paper, 10 percent from its proposal, and 10 percent from its class presentation. The exams and the paper must use sources beyond the texts and my class presentations. 10 percent of your grade comes from class participation and general conscientiousness.

Some of the class discussion will deal with sensitive matters—race and ethnicity, economic disparities and fairness, gender and sexuality, or simply varying ways of life, like urban and suburban or straight and gay. Let's make the class a safe place to talk about these often-vexing concerns. We should be civil to each other. There are and always have been nasty public models of behavior about these subjects. We shouldn't follow them. Let's do our good-faith best to learn from each other and our legitimate differences.

To help class communication and cohesion, especially apart from Thursday mornings, I've formed a closed Facebook group, "Urban Management, Popper, Fall 2016," which you should join. Please go to the site and ask me to let you in. If you have a reason not to join, perhaps because you are uncomfortable with Facebook, please let me know, and we'll make other arrangements. But if not, please post to the group and/or react to others' posts at least once a month.

I expect all written work to meet advanced-undergraduate standards of writing and will lower the grade if it does not. If your first language is not English, I may not hold you to this standard.

I expect you to attend all classes, do all the work for them carefully ahead of time, and be ready to discuss it. If you must miss a class, please let me know as soon as you can.

Because the class is relatively small and conversational, your preparation will quickly become clear, so don't stint on it. A warning: as past students note on Rate my professors, I rarely recap the day's reading. If I do, the recap is short. You should expect unpredictable, often improvised jumps and digressions. Trust me that they all have a point somewhere. The best way to prepare for them is to have is to know the reading and have thought about it.

Wikipedia, other encyclopedias, and dictionaries are good places to begin research and terrible places to end it. Use them only as jump-off points. Please do not cite them. If you do, I have to assume your work went no deeper or further and grade it accordingly.

I expect your exam, proposal, and research paper to be original products written for this course only. I, the Bloustein School, and Rutgers take plagiarism and other academic dishonesty seriously. For proof, see the pages on them on the Bloustein and Rutgers sites. See only plagiarism.org. The penalties for academic misconduct range from a failing grade on a paper or exam to expulsion from Rutgers. I've seen students, knowingly or unknowingly, take these risks and get caught. You don't want to be like them, ever.

If you have questions about the standards, please get in touch with me. As a rule of thumb, if you think you may be approaching academic dishonesty, you are probably are because your conscience and/or sense of safety is telling you so. To avoid plagiarism, do good, original work.

Schedule

- September 8 Introduction.
- September 15 The nineteenth-century setting: Judd and Swanstrom, Preface and Chapters 1-4
- September 22 The twentieth-century explosion: Judd and Swanstrom, Chapters 5-8.
- September 29 The uneasy resolution: Judd and Swanstrom, chapters 9-11.
- October 6 The uneasy resolution II: Judd and Swanstrom, chapters 12-15. First take-home handed out.
- October 13 First exam due at class, which will discuss the approaches you took to it.
- October 20 Newark's past: Curvin, Preface, Introduction, Chapters 1-3. Shortened class.
- October 27 Newark's explosion: Curvin, Chapters 4-7.
- November 3 No class: instructor away.
- November 10 Newark moves on: Curvin, Chapters 8-9 and Conclusion. Second take-home exam handed out.
- November 17 Proposal for paper due at class, which will discuss the approaches you took to it. Shortened class.
- November 22 Second exam due at class, which will discuss the approaches you took to it. Note: this is a Tuesday.
- November 24 Thanksgiving: no class.
- December 1 Presentations of papers.
- December 8 Presentations of papers.
- December 15 Paper due at noon.