

Syllabus
Political Science 390
URBAN POLITICS
Fall 2003

Dr. John Pelissero
Damen Hall 903
773-508-3066
E-mail: jpeliss@luc.edu

Office hours:
Mondays: 9:30-11:30
and by appointment
at Water Tower or Lake Shore

Course Description:

This course will be a study of political forces that are shaping urban America at the start of the 21st century. We will study the actors and institutions of city government, political behavior, and the process of urban policy development. This course will focus on a major aspect of urban politics: how the politics, demography, and socioeconomic environments of U.S. cities are changing. We will examine changes in population, political power, political culture, public policies, and moral issues in cities. The course follows a “systems approach” in studying urban politics from a comparative perspective, in which we will examine information from cities across the United States.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. demonstrate knowledge about the key features of urban government and politics.
2. provide explanations for contemporary urban politics.
3. utilize appropriate tools to conduct research on an urban political topic.

Course Requirements:

1. **Tests.** 3 take home exams, each worth 25%. Drop lowest grade50%
2. **Papers.** 3 developmental stages of an urban research project:
essays, each worth 15%. Drop lowest grade60%
3. **Class participation.**10%
Quality of contributions to discussion and frequency of participation are important.

No extra credit work will be assigned.

Final grades will be determined as follows:

90-100 = A	70-74 = C
85-89 = B+	65-69 = D+
80-84 = B	58-65 = D
75-79 = C+	0-57 = F

Academic Honesty:

See the attached departmental policy; consult with the instructor if you have any questions about the policy.

Required Texts:

Browning, Rufus, Dale Rogers Marshall, and David Tabb (eds.), Racial Politics in American Cities, 3rd ed., Longman, 2003.

Pelissero, John P. (ed.), Cities, Politics, and Policy: A Comparative Analysis. CQ Press, 2003.

Sharp, Elaine B., ed. Culture Wars and Local Politics, University Press of Kansas, 1999.

Course Schedule and Readings:

Week

Topic

I. Introductory Perspectives

Jan 18 A. The Study of Urban Politics
Pelissero, John, "The Political Environment of Cities in the Twenty-first Century," Chap. 1.
Rich, Michael, "The Intergovernmental Environment," in Pelissero, Chap. 2.

Jan 25 B. Racial/Ethnic Change and Cultural Change in Cities
Browning, Marshall, and Tabb, pp. 3-14
Sharp, Chapter 1

Jan 27 Paper 1 due

II. Urban Political Institutions

Feb 1 A. Forms of Municipal Government/City Councils

Feb 8 B. Mayors and Urban Leadership

Feb 15 C. Managers and Bureaucrats

Feb 17 Test 1 due

III. Political Culture Change (Sharp book)

Feb 22 A. Abortion Politics
Woliver (Ch. 2)
Clarke (Ch. 3)

Feb 29 B. Gay and Lesbian Politics and Issues
Rosenthal (Ch. 4)
Button, Wald, and Rienzo (Ch. 5)
Reinzo, Button, and Wald (Ch. 6)

DeLeon (Ch. 7)

Mar 2 Paper 2 due

Mar 6-10 Spring Break

Mar 14 C. Culture War Issues
Haider-Markel and O'Brien (Ch. 8)
Musser (Ch. 9)
Kirp and Bayer (Ch. 10)
Schumaker (Ch. 11)

Mar 16 Paper 3 due

IV. Political Behavior and Racial/Ethnic Change in Urban Politics

Mar 21 A. Community Power and Interest Groups

Mar 23 Test 2 due

Mar 28 B. Political Parties, Machines, and Municipal Elections

Apr 4 C. Political Incorporation
Browning et al., Chapter 1, Chapters 2 (Los Angeles),
3 (Philadelphia), 4 (New York), and 5 (Chicago)

Apr 6 Paper 4 due

Apr 11 D. Latino Politics
Browning et al., Chapters 10 (Miami) and 11 (Denver/Pueblo)

Apr 15 Tax Returns due

Apr 18 E. Coalitional Politics
Browning et al., Chapters 6 (San Francisco), 7 (Atlanta),
8 (Birmingham/New Orleans), 9 (Baltimore)

Apr 20 Paper 5 due

Apr 25 F. Assessing Political Participation and Coalitions
Browning et al., Chapters 12-14

May 9 Test 3 due

Discussion questions for Browning, Marshall, and Tabb, RACIAL POLITICS IN AMERICAN CITIES.

1. Did (CITY) have a history of mobilization and protest? If so, what was the nature of this and what were its goals?
2. How has access to government changed in the city?
3. What has been the nature of electoral mobilization in (CITY)?
4. What is the current state of political incorporation and representation of racial and ethnic minorities in (CITY)? How much power do blacks and/or Latinos have in this city?
5. Has the city become more responsive to minority interests in politics or policy?
6. What does the future hold for racial and ethnic politics?

Instructions for Papers

Paper 1

The paper should be 2 to 3 pages, typed, double-spaced.

Evaluate the arguments advanced in the introductory chapters of Elaine Sharp's book on culture wars (Chapter 1) and Browning, Marshall, and Tabb's book on racial politics, pp. 3-14. Sharp argues that cities have been experiencing a change in culture that leads to conflict; Browning et al. argue that racial and ethnic change has caused more conflict to develop in cities.

Summarize the arguments of each book. Compare the arguments in terms of strengths and weaknesses. Which type of change do you believe leads to more conflict in cities? Explain why you believe this to be true.

Papers 2 - 5

Prepare an abstract (organized summary) and critique of an assigned chapter, using this format to prepare an abstract of the chapter assigned. Each should be typed, double-spaced. Normal abstracts will be 2-3 pages. Include 5 sections in your paper: (1) Thesis (author's objectives), (2) Argument (as developed), (3) Results (as demonstrated), (4) Conclusion (implications), (5) Discussion (your critique). Sample appears below.

John Pelissero

Paper 1, January 19, 2000

Clarence N. Stone, "Toward An Urban-Regimes Paradigm," Urban Politics and Urban Policy Newsletter 1 (Spring, 1987): 7-13.

1. **Thesis:** The contemporary paradigm of urban politics, derived from Paul Peterson's City Limits, is an insufficient model of city politics, policy, and power today. Stone will make the case for an urban regime paradigm that emphasizes the continuing importance of city governments as conflict-mediators among competing interests in cities.
2. **Argument:** Paul Peterson's theory is directly challenged as it applies to the "limits" of city politics. Peterson suggests that all cities follow a cooperative, non-conflictual process of adopting development policies, while conflict, bargaining, and group activities take place only when there is an absence of economic competition. Cities appear to act much like business firms in Peterson's theory, while politics and conflict are emphasized in the alternative regime theory. Stone specifically objects to Peterson's policy analysis that purports to show that developmental

policies are the basis of all other city policies because economic competition exists and economic growth is in all cities interests.

3. **Results:** Stone reviews literature critical of Peterson's thesis about developmental policy showing that it cannot be validated empirically. Stone's analysis and theory building are also based upon empirical research articles in the edited volume by Stone and H.T. Sanders (The Politics of Urban Development, 1987). Key points:

- a. Urban regimes--communities' governing coalition--act as a mediating force between community groups/politics and the policy outputs of the city.
- b. Politics matters in all city policy areas--including developmental policies.
- c. Peterson has some valid points, but his paradigm is too limiting.
- d. Policies are not self-labeling; actors in the city political system have different views of what might constitute a developmental, allocational, or redistributive policy.
- e. Developmental policies cannot be adopted on the sole basis of efficiency.
- f. Political arrangements are of prime concern in understanding urban political outcomes.

4. **Conclusion:** Stone effectively argued that it is time to consider a new model of urban politics. Because cities have changed and power systems have been modified, new governing coalitions appear to dominate or shape major policies in large cities.

5. **Discussion:** I found Stone's argument to be well supported in his article. Specifically, I believe that he is right for the following reasons.....[your critique]

Or: I was not persuaded by Stone's argument. Atlanta is not a typical city when it comes to the distribution of political power. The problems that I find in this article include.....[your critique]