



**Vancouver.** Downtown peninsula, looking West, June 2008 (Elvin Wyly).

## THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



**Geography 350:  
Introduction to Urban Geography**

**Department of Geography**  
#217-1984 West Mall  
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1Z2

### **Geography 350: An Introduction to Urban Geography**

September-December 2011, 3 credits

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00-3:30, Geography Room 200

Elvin K. Wyly, Associate Professor, Chair, Urban Studies Program

Office: Geography Room 252 Office hours: Tuesdays, 8:00 AM - noon

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Course Web Page: <http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/g350.html>

*Short course description: City systems and theories of urban location; internal spatial structure of the city; commercial and industrial location; social areas; neighbourhood and land use change; urban trends and public policy.*

*A bit more detail: We live in a rapidly urbanizing world: half of the world's population now lives in cities, and all trends point to the rise of scores of multi-million "megacities" and a dramatic increase in urban populations across Asia, Latin America, and Africa. The roster of urban regions with more than twenty million inhabitants now includes Tokyo-Yokohama, Seoul,*

Mexico City, New York, Mumbai (Bombay), Delhi, and Sao Paulo.<sup>1</sup> In China, ten million people move to existing cities each year, while the government plans to build more than 300 entirely new cities. China's rapid urbanization will continue for a generation or more: only 41 percent of the population currently lives in cities -- half the urban share of the United Kingdom, Brazil, the United States, and Canada.<sup>2</sup> On a recent visit to India, UBC President Stephen Toope met with China's Minister of Human Resources, who told him that the current pace of economic expansion would require the creation of about 800 new universities over the next decade -- each with 60,000 students or more. "That is 800 new UBCs with 48 million new student spaces," Toope reflects, in a rapidly developing and urbanizing society where the ambition is "breathtaking ... and ... the striving, the competitiveness, is insistent."<sup>3</sup>

The world's fastest-growing city -- Lagos, Nigeria -- is expected to double its population within the next five years, to more than 22 million.<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, urbanization has nearly leveled off across most of Western Europe and North America, where the modern era of industrialization first created fully urbanized societies more than a century ago. In some cases, urbanization seems to have slipped into reverse. In 1950, the population of Detroit, Michigan topped 1.8 million; decline set in during the 1950s, however, and has continued ever since. Now the city is down to 912 thousand, and loses almost five thousand people every year -- even as the broader metropolitan region, with its ring of wealthy and middle-class suburbs surrounding the distressed central city, continues to grow at a modest pace.<sup>5</sup>

Cities highlight the best and worst of everything. They also reveal the most remarkable contradictions of our time. Globalization blurs the old borders of nation-states with transnational flows of money, people, goods and ideas. Yet urban centers are becoming *more* important in the face of globalization, either as control points in complex networks of capital investment and trade, or as meeting-points for upwardly-mobile immigrants, destitute refugees, footloose investors, maverick entrepreneurs, and tourists in search of a good time. Dot-com moguls and venture capitalists travel between Toronto, New York, London, Tokyo, Silicon Valley, and Las Vegas to attend lavish conferences celebrating technologies that hold out the promise of eliminating the hassle of traveling to expensive, congested cities (like Toronto, New York, London, Tokyo ...) for face-to-face meetings. Meanwhile, central bankers and trade ministers travel from city to city to meet in fortified hotels to discuss the need for open borders for free trade and investment, while on the other side of the barricades alliances of activists march in the streets to protest corporate power, the destruction of labor rights, and environmental degradation. So now any city that hosts international trade meetings must also host armadas of police, intelligence, and security officials who keep watchful eyes and comprehensive files on the protests and the protesters.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mitchell Beazley (2008). *Snapshot*. London: Octopus Publishing Group, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> Beazley, *Snapshot*, p. 32, 34, 36.

<sup>3</sup> Stephen Toope (2010). "There's No Room for Complacency in Today's World." *The Vancouver Sun*, Op/Ed, June 12, p. C5.

<sup>4</sup> Beazley, *Snapshot*, p. 34.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census (2009). *American Factfinder*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce, available at <http://factfinder.census.gov>; also Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (2002). Historical Population 1990-2000 by Minor Civil Division. Detroit: SEMCOG.

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Eric Lichtblau (2003). "F.B.I. Scrutinizes Antiwar Rallies." *New York Times*, November 23, A1, A18. See also some of the press coverage of the June 2010 G8 and G20 conferences in Toronto: United Press

How do we make sense of this dizzying blur of city stories? This course provides an introduction to theories of urban processes and urban change. We begin with theories of the origin, growth, and development of cities, and then we study their contemporary economic functions, spatial structure, and socio-cultural characteristics. We then turn our scrutiny to several current urban debates and public policy controversies. Throughout the course, we will examine the interplay between established or 'classical' theories of the city, and new efforts to understand new processes, new problems, and new opportunities. Most current issues have an explicitly urban dimension; many debates are impossible to comprehend without some appreciation of basic urban theory.

### **Schedule and Recommended Readings**

Below is a tentative schedule of lectures. For the most recent schedule updates, lecture notes, and suggested additional readings, you should keep an eye on the private section of the course website. Access details will be announced in class. See the "schedule" tab, or go directly to

<http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/Private/g350schedule.html>

[Tuesday, September 6: UBC Imagine Day, all courses cancelled.]

Thursday, September 8. Course Introduction.

Read before class (rbc): notes on teaching, guidelines for written projects, a bragsheet for a few of the students who've taught me, and the course syllabus.

Saturday, September 10, or Sunday, September 11. An Introduction to Vancouver.

Optional walking tour. Further details will be announced a few days in advance, when the weather forecast is available.

Tuesday, September 13. How Geographers Approach the City.

rbc: Bunting, Chapter 1, or Knox & McCarthy, Chapter 1.  
and

A Short Historiography of Urban Geography.

Thursday, September 15. Urban Origins and Historical Processes of Urbanization.

rbc: Bunting, Chapter 1, or Knox & McCarthy, pp. 21-33.

Tuesday, September 20. Guest Lecture: Professor Chris Friedrichs, UBC Department of History. "City Walls and Urban Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe."

Thursday, September 22. Renaissance Urbanization, Design, Planning.

rbc: Knox & McCarthy, pp. 34-45.

Tuesday, September 27. The Industrial City.

rbc: Bunting, Chapter 2, or Knox & McCarthy, pp. 46-50.

Thursday, September 29. Detroit case study (film), no written lecture notes.

Tuesday, October 4. Theories of Urban System Development.

rbc: Bunting, Chapter 2, or Knox & McCarthy, pp. 65-76.

Thursday, October 6. Midterm examination.

Tuesday, October 11. Short-term Changes in the Canadian Urban System.

rbc: Bunting, Chapter 16.

Thursday, October 13. Canadian-U.S. Contrasts in Urban Development.

rbc: Bunting, Chapter 10.

Tuesday, October 18. Analyzing and Interpreting Metropolitan Economies.

rbc: Bunting, Chapter 6, or Knox and McCarthy, Chapter 4.

Thursday, October 20. Model to Plan to Market: State-Socialist and Post-Socialist Urban Systems.

Tuesday, October 25. Urbanization in the Global South.

rbc: Knox & McCarthy, Chapter 7.

Thursday, October 27. Globalization and World Cities.

rbc: Bunting, Chapter 4, or Knox & McCarthy, Chapters 4 and 6.

Tuesday, November 1. Mapping Global Firms and World Cities.

Thursday, November 3. The City as a Real-Estate Growth Machine.

rbc: Bunting, Chapter 13, or Knox & McCarthy, Chapter 11.

Tuesday, November 8. Housing Markets and Neighborhood Change.

rbc: Bunting, Chapter 20, or Knox & McCarthy, Chapter 13.

Thursday, November 10. Chicago, Los Angeles ... Vancouver? Schools of Urbanism.

rbc: Bunting, Chapter 8 or 9, or Knox & McCarthy, pp. 311-318.

Tuesday, November 15. Social Area Analysis: Classical and Contemporary.

rbc: Bunting, Chapter 8 or 9, or Knox & McCarthy, Chapter 12.

Thursday, November 17. Race, Housing, and the Urban 'Underclass.'

rbc: Bunting, Chapter 22, or Knox & McCarthy, Chapter 15.

Tuesday, November 22. Gentrification.

rbc: Bunting, pp. 236-238, 269-272, 349-352, or Knox & McCarthy, pp. 370-374.

Thursday, November 24. Homelessness.

rbc: Bunting, pp. 435-440, or Knox & McCarthy, pp. 434-438.

Tuesday, November 29. The Road Away from Home: Policy and Power in Post-Katrina New Orleans. Guest Lecture, Emily Rosenman, Doctoral student in Geography.

Thursday, December 1. Future Urban Geographies. Guest Lecture, Alan McConchie, Doctoral Candidate in Geography.

## Quotus Urbanus

**quote** (kwōt), v. to cite a passage from; to refer or repeat (a passage), esp. as authority or illustration; to cite; to name (the current price of anything, as a commodity, stock, or bond); to set off by quotation marks. (fr. M.L. *quotare*, to divide into chapters and verses, fr. L. *quotus*, of what number).

**urban** (ūr'bān), adj. characteristic of, constituting, or pertaining to, a city or town. (fr. L. *urbanus*, belonging to the city or town, refined, polished, fr. *urbs*, *urbis*, a city).<sup>7</sup>

“The ancient city was primarily a fortress, a place of refuge in time of war. The modern city, on the contrary, is primarily a convenience of commerce, and owes its existence to the market place around which it sprang up. Industrial competition and the division of labor, which have probably done most to develop the latent powers of mankind, are possible only upon condition of the existence of markets, of money, and other devices for the facilitation of trade and commerce.”<sup>8</sup>

“The city of everyday life survives. It survives because life reproduces the city even under the most difficult and harsh conditions. But the fact remains that power can be effectively countered only with power, and the power of civil society becomes actual only through organized resistance to the power brokers of the city.”<sup>9</sup>

“...anyone with notions of ‘cleaning up’ the area has met, in the financiers of the street’s drug market, a powerful equal: an economic mirror that is entrenched, liquid, and largely immune to economic vagaries. The globalization of capital hasn’t just benefited the corporate industries bankrolling civic redevelopment and real estate speculation. The success of the Hastings drug market is because of outsourced labour, diversified supply bases, and a growing, hungry market

<sup>7</sup> G. & C. Merriam Co. (1943). *Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary, Fifth Edition*. Springfield, MA: G. & C. Merriam Co., Publishers, p. 817, 1100.

<sup>8</sup> Robert E Park (1925). “The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior in the Urban Environment.” In Robert E. Park, Ernest W. Burgess, and Roderick D. McKenzie, eds., *The City*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 12.

<sup>9</sup> John Friedmann (2002). “The City of Everyday Life,” in *The Prospect of Cities*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 101-102.

looking to buy a cut-rate product. The Hells Angels have learned every lesson from their Downtown corporate cousins, and are as mercenary, globalized, and ruthlessly expansionist.”<sup>10</sup>

“The False Creek redevelopment represented the major achievement of livable city planning, demonstrating what could be accomplished on public land by creative political initiatives. ... Where its control was more limited and constraints were greater livable city planning was far less successful, however. This was particularly the case in the private housing market. The promotion of the culture of consumption, the quality of urban life, had unfortunate side effects. In an era when amenity is a significant factor not only of personal migration but also of industrial and office location, [the] livable city strategy helped to inflate housing demand pressures in center city while at the same time its development policies and those of the provincial and federal governments contributed to limiting housing supply. Property owners and developers capitalized on this bottleneck and land prices sky-rocketed....”<sup>11</sup>

“The city, for the first time in its long history, is destructible. A single flight of planes no bigger than a wedge of geese can quickly end this island fantasy, burn the towers, crumble the bridges, turn the underground passages into lethal chambers, cremate the millions. The intimation of mortality is part of New York now; in the sounds of jets overhead, in the black headlines of the latest editions.”<sup>12</sup>

“...that has always been the story of the greatest cities: earthly utopias they were not, places of stress and conflict and sometimes actual misery they certainly were. ... places for people who can stand the heat of the kitchen: places where the adrenaline pumps through the bodies of the people and through the streets on which they walk; messy places, sordid places sometimes, but places nevertheless superbly worth living in, long to be remembered and long to be celebrated.”<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Reid Shier (2002). “Introduction.” In Shier, Reid, and Stan Douglas, *Every Building on 100 West Hastings*. Vancouver: Contemporary Art Gallery/Arsenal Pulp Press, 16.

<sup>11</sup> David Ley (1980). “Liberal Ideology and the Postindustrial City.” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 70(2), 238-258, quote from p. 255.

<sup>12</sup> E.B White (1949). *Here is New York*. New York: Harper and Row.

<sup>13</sup> Peter Hall (1998). *Cities in Civilization*. New York: Pantheon, p. 989.



**Hong Kong, Central**, with Bank of China building in center and lower left, March 2010 (Elvin Wyly). "...the Bank of China engaged I.M. Pei -- a native of China whose father was himself a prominent banker -- to design a new seventy-floor tower on Garden Road behind the old building. It was completed in 1989 and opened for business in 1990. At 1,209 feet (including its two masts) it was the tallest building in Hong Kong and in all of Asia until the Central Plaza building in Causeway Bay was completed in 1992. ... Its reflective glass on the back side is said to hold the image of Government House (the official abode of the governor) in captivity. In the 1990s, as the handover of Hong Kong loomed, the political symbolism of this Chinese bank towering over [the] bastions of British colonial power was hard to miss." Loe Ou-fan Lee (2008). *City Between Worlds: My Hong Kong*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, p. 47-48.

**City Rules.** Kowloon Park, Hong Kong, February 2010 (Elvin Wyly).

The rest of this syllabus specifies various policies and procedures. I am very sorry for all the detailed regulations: if rules are rabbits, UBC is a bunny farm. The University has numerous policies and procedures, and one requires instructors to provide as much information as possible on the policies and procedures used in a course. So, on the following pages you'll find the City Rules used in this course.



## Textbook

I strongly recommend that you acquire one of the texts listed below. They are both excellent books, but they are also very different. Knox and McCarthy is a comprehensive, sophisticated and wide-ranging overview of the entire field of urban geography -- but with no attention to Canada. Bunting, Filion, and Walker offer in-depth analysis of Canadian cities -- but the book is an edited collection of chapters by different authors, rather than a traditional textbook with a consistent viewpoint from start to finish.

Paul Knox and Linda McCarthy (2005). *Urbanization: An Introduction to Urban Geography, Second Edition*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall. ISBN-10: 0131424505. ISBN-13: 9780131424500.

Trudi Bunting, Pierre Filion, and Ryan Walker, editors (2010). *Canadian Cities in Transition: New Directions in the Twenty-First Century, Fourth Edition*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press Canada. ISBN-13: 9780195431254.

Textbook purchase is recommended, not mandatory. Even with the very best textbook, I've never been able to teach a course by marching straight through the chapters of a book written by someone else. I wish I could do that -- it would make things so much easier. But for better or worse, I have to make the material my own -- which means writing out lecture notes in full. These lecture notes are freely available to you. I'll certainly be reading through Knox and McCarthy, and Bunting, Filion, and Walker -- and several other excellent urban geography textbooks -- as I write my lecture notes. So I recommend you get at least one of these textbooks; but this is not an absolute requirement.

## Evaluation and Marks

Course marks are based on three items:

1. Mid-term examination (multiple choice)	20 percent
2. Independent written projects	40 percent
4. Final examination (multiple choice and essay)	40 percent

The mid-term examination consists of multiple-choice questions based solely on my written lecture notes. The final examination consists of two sections: 1) a non-cumulative section of multiple-choice questions based solely on the lecture notes, and 2) a cumulative essay section. The essay section allows you to choose from a list of topics that will be announced in advance, and then asks you to write an essay that analyzes the issue from a variety of perspectives. Your essay should draw on whatever information you find most compelling and convincing from the textbooks and from other readings I'll suggest and make available. This means that you need to prepare for the examinations (and the written projects) with two very different approaches. For the simple, straightforward "right/wrong" mode of multiple-choice questions, all you need to do is review my written lecture notes, alongside your own notes taken during class. For the written project, and for the essay section of the final examination, you should choose a topic that interests you, and *read widely*. Read relevant sections from one or both of the textbooks.



Explore the recommended readings I'll make available. Look for books published by reputable academic publishers. Search for articles on your chosen topic in a refereed<sup>14</sup> scholarly journal, such as *Urban Geography*, *Urban Studies*, the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, the *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, *Urban Affairs Review*, *City & Community*, *City*, and the *Journal of Urban Affairs*.

## Deadlines

There are four deadlines for the course. Three are optional but firm. The fourth is decided by official University policy, and I have no authority to extend it to a later time.

1. Mid-term examination: Tuesday, October 6, in class.
2. Project Submission Date: Thursday, October 27, 11:59 pm.
3. Project Submission Date: Tuesday, November 15, 11:59 pm.

**All first submissions must be submitted from a UBC email address, in a single file (either \*.rtf, \*.pdf, or \*.doc not \*.docx format) to paige.patchin@geog.ubc.ca. UBC and provincial regulations do not allow us to communicate about grades or other confidential matters to a non-UBC email address, so if you want comments you must send your paper from a UBC address.**

4. Final examination: December examination period. All projects not previously submitted should be submitted from a UBC email address, in a single file (\*.rtf, \*.pdf, or \*.doc format) to paige.patchin@geog.ubc.ca by 11:59 pm on the day of the final examination.

**Revised and resubmitted projects must be delivered in person at the final examination**, including the first version with TA comments as well as the new, revised version.

Mid-term. There are no make-ups for the mid-term. If you miss it, you should submit an additional written project instead. You can choose to miss the mid-term if you submit an additional project in its place; but the exam is pretty easy, so I don't recommend this option.

Final. The final course examination date announced by the University is firm and non-negotiable. Instructors are required to submit final course marks promptly after the examination, and instructors do not have authority to grant standing deferred. If you find yourself in impossible circumstances when the final arrives, talk to one of the dedicated professionals in your Faculty advising office. They have the authority grant standing deferred. I do not.

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<sup>14</sup> A 'refereed' journal is one where the articles have been through an extended process of review, revision, and eventual acceptance. Not all submissions are accepted and published, and indeed the most prestigious refereed journals get bragging rights by achieving the highest rejection rates. The referees are recognized experts with prominent national and/or international reputations in the subject area of the journal.

University policy allows for make-up final examinations in the case of documented schedule conflicts -- but in light of the parallel policy requiring speedy grade submissions, this means that makeup final examinations can only be scheduled earlier than the regular announced exam. Projects. Forty percent of the final course mark involves independent written work. You have considerable freedom in choosing project topics, but detailed advice and recommendations are currently available for five options: one involves an analysis of the changing occupational and/or industrial structure of a metropolitan area; one allows you to study population gains and losses among Canada's largest cities and smaller urban centers; one gives you an opportunity to study the connections between global cities; one allows you to compare and contrast urban conditions in Canada and the United States; and another gives you a chance to investigate the changing neighborhood patterns of social conditions in Vancouver neighborhoods. Guidelines for the projects will be discussed in class.

You should complete two projects. If you would like to spend more time on one topic, you do have the option to do a single, double-length project (with corresponding expectations of twice the length, depth, and quality of a regular project). If you choose this option, you should first talk with me to get advice on doing a double-length project; **you must also state clearly at the top of the first page of your submission, "This is a double-length project, submitted for 40 percent of the course mark."**<sup>15</sup>

The written project submission dates are optional but firm. If you'd like comments on the strengths and weaknesses of your thinking and writing, we're happy to provide detailed feedback and suggestions -- but only for those who meet the specified deadlines.

Our Teaching Assistant will provide detailed comments and criticisms on projects submitted on time. There is no penalty for submitting projects late. Submissions will be accepted any time until the course final examination. But late submissions will be graded late: anything received after the first project deadline will not be read until the second project deadline, and anything received after the second project deadline will not be read until the course final examination period, when all of the flurry of late submissions has been received. Late submissions will only be marked, and no detailed comments will be provided: if you want feedback, you must meet the deadlines specified above. There are no exceptions to this policy. Investments of time will be prioritized for those projects submitted on time and according to instructions. We cannot spend all of our time dealing with all the correspondence required to provide fair assessments of late penalties, to grant exceptions for individual hardships, and to keep track of all the details for the endless stream of late submissions that arrive in the hours, days, weeks, and months following every deadline.

There's another advantage to submitting your essay according to the deadlines and instructions noted above. If you are not satisfied with your mark, you may **revise and resubmit**<sup>16</sup> your essay

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<sup>15</sup> This means that you are not permitted to game the system by submitting a single project, and then attempting to claim double credit after the fact to avoid submitting a second project.

<sup>16</sup> Please do not overlook the first part of the phrase. In previous years, some students just re-submitted papers, without making any changes whatsoever, in the hopes that I would be an easier mark than the T.A. This is not a good idea. *Revise* your paper, considering the T.A.'s comments, questions, and recommendations. Teaching, learning, and scholarship can all be understood as forms of *conversation*.

at the course final examination for a second review. Scholarship is a process, and it's also a conversation. The detailed comments provided by the TA on your first submission, therefore, offer you the opportunity to revise your work -- to read and re-read the text or other sources to gain a better understanding of key issues, to re-think your analyses and interpretations, or to revise the writing and presentation.

Teaching Assistants read and mark all first submissions; I read and mark all re-submissions. If you re-submit a project, your mark will be the highest score of your first and revised submissions (i.e., your mark can only go up). If you choose to revise and resubmit, then **you must include the marked copy of your first submission when you turn in your revision, in person, typed on standard letter-sized paper, at the beginning of the final examination. Staple the first submission behind your revised, new submission.**

### **Other Policies and Procedures**

Here are some of the other specific policies the University encourages on course outlines. Regular attendance is expected. The last dates for withdrawal, with and without a W on your transcript, are listed in the screen capture from the calendar below.

Please do not make travel arrangements for December until the final examination schedule is announced by the University. The University accommodates students with disabilities who have registered with the Disabilities Resource Centre. The University accommodates students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance, submitting assignments, or completing scheduled tests and examinations. Please let the instructor know in advance, preferably in the first week of class, if you will require any accommodation on these grounds. Students who plan to be absent for varsity athletics, family obligations, or other similar commitments, cannot assume they will be accommodated. Please review the UBC Calendar "Academic regulations" for the university policies on academic dishonesty, and visit [www.arts.ubc.ca](http://www.arts.ubc.ca) for useful information on correct documentation and avoiding plagiarism. Do original work, and cite all sources you use: any plagiarism, recycling of old papers, papers for other courses, or others' work will result in a failing course mark. The University has detailed and comprehensive publications on these policies and procedures, which students are responsible for knowing and following.

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[GEOG 350 101 \(Lecture\)](#) [OUTLINE/SYLLABUS](#) [SAVE TO WORKLIST](#)

**Introduction to Urban Geography**  
City systems and theories of urban location; internal spatial structure of the city; commercial and industrial location; social areas; neighbourhood and land use change; urban trends and public policy.

**This course is eligible for Credit/D/Fail grading.** To determine whether you can take this course for Credit/D/Fail grading, visit the [Credit/D/Fail](#) website. You must register in the course before you can select the Credit/D/Fail grading option.

Credits: 3  
Location: Vancouver

**Term 1** (Sep 06, 2011 to Dec 02, 2011)

**Cr/D/F Grading Change Dates**  
Last day to change between Credit/D/Fail and percentage grading (grading options cannot be changed after this date): **September 20, 2011**

**Withdrawal Dates**  
Last day to withdraw without a W standing : **September 20, 2011**  
Last day to withdraw with a W standing (course cannot be dropped after this date) : **October 14, 2011**

Term	Day	Start Time	End Time	Building	Room
1	Tue Thu	14:00	15:30	Geography	<a href="#">200</a>

Instructor: [Wyly, Elvin](#)

**Seat Summary**

Total Seats Remaining:	<b>36</b>
Currently Registered:	<b>64</b>
General Seats Remaining:	<b>36</b>
Restricted Seats Remaining*:	<b>0</b>

**Course Schedule Listing**, showing withdrawal and grading change dates. Source: University of British Columbia (2011). *Course Calendar and Schedule, Vancouver, Winter Session 2011*. Vancouver: Office of the Registrar, University of British Columbia.

Now let's translate this bureaucratese. *My job* is play a small role in expanding your education in the Arts, by showing you a bit of the scope and significance of the field of urban geography, and by inspiring and revealing the brilliant urban geographer that can be found deep in your soul. *Your job* is to help me to do my job. Please do your best to get to class on time, and if you're late, come in quietly through the back door. Please turn off cell phones and other technological distractions. I love it when my lectures are interrupted by interesting questions by real, live human beings -- but I'm not so thrilled about all the electronic beeps and rings (especially when people actually stop listening so they can take the call...!) To cut through our information-saturated environment, I ask for your most valuable possession: your attention. I hope you're able to make it to class, and to pay attention in a thoroughly low-tech, non-distance-education

way. UBC is not an on-line university.<sup>17</sup> I will make a number of materials available on the course web site, but please do *not* regard these as substitutes for attendance. The best way to know what happened in class is to be there. The second-best way is to ask someone you know, and whose judgment you respect, who was there.<sup>18</sup>

Please read the general guidelines on written projects, at

<http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/guidelines.html>

Cite all ideas that are not your own.<sup>19</sup> Footnotes are not counted in any of the word limits for projects in this course, so it's always better to include a footnote if you have any doubts. I am committed to critical pluralism when it comes to choosing acceptable sources for use in urban scholarship. In other words, cast a wide net but be a very cautious, critical consumer of information, knowledge, perspectives, analyses, arguments, and assertions. Begin with "core sources" from scholarly authorities -- the textbook, the additional readings, books from academic publishers, and articles from refereed journals. Then, after you've built a foundation with recognized scholarly sources, you're free to add vivid empirical detail and illustrations from non-academic sources. Consider using and citing articles from reputable newspapers, urban-oriented think tanks, and similar sources. On certain topics you may find it helpful to scan through some of the resources I've assembled on these pages:

<http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/urban/resources/>

<http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/data.html>

But you are *not* permitted to use only Internet web pages, and you are *not* permitted to uncritically, unthinkingly<sup>20</sup> cite Wikipedia. There are many useful resources on the Web, but there are also many dangerous corners of what one critic once called the 'Infomercial Supersewer' -- and Wikipedia has been dissed by some of its own early pioneers and creative inspirations. The open-source creator Eric Raymond argues that Wikipedia is "infested with

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<sup>17</sup> Yet. Cf. <http://www.phoenix.edu>. The Vancouver division, established in 1998, is their first international campus. Their combination of on-campus and on-line resources is called FlexNet®. My combination of in-person interaction and on-line resources is called Common Sense, but I have not yet applied for trademark protection. Stay tuned. Be forewarned, however, if the University of Phoenix succeeds with its heavy advertising budgets in convincing you to pursue your studies there. Not long ago, John Sperling, Phoenix's chief executive, summed up their mission: "This is a corporation, not a social entity. Coming here is not a rite of passage. We are not trying to develop [students'] value systems or go in for that 'expand their mind' bullshit." Quoted in Terri A. Hasseler (2006). "Fomenting Dissent on Campus." *Academe*, May-June, 20-23, quote on p. 21.

<sup>18</sup> It is amusing to be approached by students who ask, "Did I miss anything in last class?" or, even more curiously, "Did I miss anything *important* in last class?" Turn to your left, and introduce yourself. Turn to your right, and introduce yourself. Share e-mail addresses. Build a small network (not a big listserv that will fill your inbox with spam, but just a small community of friends and colleagues), and if you miss class, ask them for notes, advice, and suggestions.

<sup>19</sup> Choose a recognized citation or reference style, be consistent, and use it extensively to cite everything that is not your own. I prefer footnotes in the style presented in this syllabus, but you can also use endnotes, the in-text Harvard style, or any other recognized citation format. Just be consistent. For further information, see "Plagiarism Avoided" available at <http://www.arts.ubc.ca/arts-students/plagiarism-avoided.html>

<sup>20</sup> This is simply a case of the rule that many rules can be broken, so long as you do so with knowledge, intention, sophistication, and hopefully a bit of flair. Consider my serial violation of the rule on split infinitives, and see William Strunk and E.B. White (1979). *The Elements of Style, Third Edition*. New York: Macmillan, p. 58, 78.

moonbats,” and one of the site’s early developers, Larry Sanger, described the recent evolution of content standards on the site this way: “Wikipedia has gone from a nearly perfect anarchy to an anarchy with gang rule.”<sup>21</sup> Politically contentious topics generate violent virtual wars of edits and counter-edits, and in an online community with unlimited combinations of interests and pet peeves, almost anything can become politically contentious. There have been multiple cases of fabrication, libel, and self-serving edits by politicians seeking to polish entries on themselves. And yet Wikipedia has become deeply influential in today’s online culture, becoming a latter-day version of the landmark reference work launched in 1768 (the *Encyclopedia Britannica*). Not long ago, the site became the seventeenth most popular site on the net -- site traffic has been doubling every four months, sometimes hitting fourteen thousand viewers per second.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, there’s a loophole to my prohibition on your use of Wikipedia for essays in this course: You are not permitted to *uncritically, unthinkingly* cite the site, but you can use it with a critical eye if you first read Stacy Schiff’s delightful analysis of its strengths, limitations, and curiosities.<sup>23</sup>

### Welcome to Urban Geography!

I think that’s all the detailed rules and regulations. If you’ve read this far, I am truly very sorry for all the bureaucratic and legalistic stuff. Really, honest, I am an easygoing person, and I just love urban stuff and hope to get you excited about it too. Urban geography is fascinating and engaging, and this class is pretty easy if we all do our jobs properly. The syllabus has become so detailed and strident because, over the years, stressed-out students have asked ever more detailed questions, or devised ever more creative excuses (“...but it was on time! I was on a plane, and we crossed the International Date Line, and ...”).

One more thing: the first five minutes of every lecture are yours, if you want them. Perhaps you’ve recently visited another city, and you took a photograph of something that illustrates one of the theories and processes we’re studying in class. Perhaps you’ve stumbled across a news

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<sup>21</sup> Quoted in Stacy Schiff (2006). “Know it All: Can Wikipedia Conquer Expertise?” *The New Yorker*, July 31, 36-43, quotes on p. 42.

<sup>22</sup> Schiff, “Know it All,” p. 36.

<sup>23</sup> Schiff, “Know it All,” op. cit. Jimmy Wales, the site’s founder, “is on a mission to ‘distribute a free encyclopedia to every single person on the planet in their own language,’ and to an astonishing degree he is succeeding. Anyone with Internet access can create a Wikipedia entry or edit an existing one. The site currently exists in more than two hundred languages and has hundreds of thousands of contributors around the world. Wales is at the forefront of a revolution in knowledge gathering: he has marshaled an army of volunteers who believe that, working collaboratively, they can produce an encyclopedia that is as good as any written by experts, and with an unprecedented range.” And yet this online community “is also no more immune to human nature than any other utopian project. Pettiness, idiocy, and vulgarity are regular features of the site. Nothing about high-minded collaboration guarantees accuracy, and open editing invites abuse. Senators and congressmen have been caught tampering with their entries; the entire House of Representatives has been banned from Wikipedia several times.” Schiff, ‘Know it All,’ p. 38. Reading press accounts about legislators tampering with their entries led a cognitive scientist who describes himself as a “disruptive technologist” to do something creative about it. Virgil Griffith, a visiting cognitive scientist at the Santa Fe Institute, spent two weeks in the summer of 2007 writing software for WikiScanner, at <http://wikiscanner.virgil.gr> The algorithm maps the relations between millions of Wikipedia entries and multiple networks of corporate IP addresses. Not surprisingly, quite a few dubious edits on topics related to large companies or corporate controversies can be traced to IP addressed from the companies’ own corporate networks. Is Wikiwashing the newest form of entrepreneurial public relations? Katie Hafner (2007). “Seeing Corporate Fingerprints in Wikipedia Edits.” *New York Times*, August 19.

story that merits discussion or raises questions. Let me know before class begins, and you can take a few minutes to share interesting items with everyone in the class.