

RCPL 5033 / SOC 5033
Sociology of Housing
Spring 2018, Gould 345
Tuesday, 1:30-4:15

Dr. Joseph Pierce

Offices: Gould Hall 266 / Sarkeys Energy Center, Room 638

Office Hours: Wednesday 11:30-1:00 (Gould) or by appointment

Email: jpierce@ou.edu (subj. line begins: "STUDENT REQUEST:")

Course Description

This course is intended to help you understand the financial, social, political, and physical dynamics of housing and its provision. This means that at the end of the semester you should have sufficient knowledge and understanding to have preliminary answers to the following questions:

- 1) **What is housing, and to whom?**
- 2) **Who decides [what] about housing, and by what mechanisms?**
- 3) **How is housing paid for, by whom, and when?**
- 4) **Who benefits, and in what ways, from various models of housing? Who is harmed?**
- 5) **What practicable options are available today and in the future for housing in the U.S.?**

In addition to having your own answers to these questions, you will be expected to understand various competing perspectives on housing; to defend them (at least provisionally); and to be able to argue for and against them.

In addition to being able to answer these sorts of questions, there are some important kinds of embodied knowledge that the course is designed to help you continue to develop. The sorts of library work, reading, writing, presentation, and discussion in which you will engage this semester are sometimes designed to be usefully uncomfortable rather than maximally efficient. In addition to the substantive content of the course, we will spend some time discussing the use (and production of) social science research regarding housing.

Required Readings

There are four required texts for this course:

- Lewis, Michael, 2010. *The Big Short*.
- Duneier, M. 1999. *Sidewalk*.
- Desmond, Matthew. 2017. *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*.
- Massey and Denton. 1993. *American Apartheid*.

Books will be extensively supplemented by additional readings. Readings will generally *not* be made available via course website. **You are expected to act as scholars and find the appropriate cited texts via journal access and the library system.** (You may want to work together on collecting the readings for each week, but that is your business.) Note that some texts may be out of print and/or not in the local library; you would be well served to stay about a month ahead of the course schedule in case you need to request an Inter-Library Loan.

Assignments and Grading

All written assignments should use the following format: 12 pt Times New Roman, double spaced, no extra space between paragraphs, indent for new paragraphs, 1 inch margins, ragged right. Include a single-spaced heading that includes the assignment name, date turned in, your name, and the word count on the first line, with the title of the piece on the second, both lines aligned left. Really!

Course Segment Response Papers: Due *before* class begins the week following the end of a course segment. These papers should be a synthetic *response*, not a summary, of the readings from the previous segment. We will discuss in class. **You owe me two of these papers, after segments one and two, as indicated in the syllabus.** Papers should be roughly 2000 words—roughly 8-9 full pages—*plus* references.

CSRP Grade: 40% (20% per paper)

Housing Intervention Project: Position yourself as a specific actor in a specific city. Articulate an intervention that this actor can undertake to improve the city with regard to housing. Articulate the problem identified; other stakeholders and strategies to facilitate buy-in; what will actually happen; and the positive and negative outcomes for various individuals and communities. Include budgets as appropriate. Realism matters. Papers should be roughly 3250 words—roughly 12-14 full pages—*plus* figures and references. We will discuss further in-class.

HIP Grade: 30%

Ongoing Class Participation: Student participation in class discussions is critical to the function and success of this course. Being in class, on-time, prepared and in an appropriate head space to actively engage with your classmates is an important element of your evaluation. I expect you to have read all of the assigned readings each week; to have *opinions* about those readings beyond whether or not you liked them; regularly participate in discussion. **You cannot do well in this course if you do not participate productively and regularly in discussion. Simply showing up is not enough.** Some weeks, a subgroup of students will be assigned to digest and present the readings for that session. I cannot stress enough that this does not change each student's obligation to come to class prepared to discuss each and every reading.

Participation Grade: 30%

A word about grading: As is true for many of my colleagues, I try to guide students regarding what qualifies as good without setting an outer bound for what is excellent. We will discuss in further detail what I am seeking in each of these assignments as they approach, but what I value most is your creative engagement with reading materials and the various assignments as a vehicle for learning. I urge you to make assignments your own by *discussing with me* outside of class whether your proposed approach will satisfy the requirements of the assignment.

Numeric grades on assignments will translate to letter grades on the following scale (final course grades whole letters only):

93 to 100.0% = A	77 to 79 = C+
90 to 92 = A-	73 to 76 = C
87 to 89 = B+	70 to 72 = C-
83 to 86 = B	60 to 69 = D
80 to 82 = B-	0 to 59 = F

Class Policies

Classroom Ground Rules: Every student deserves an academic environment in which they are free to intellectually explore and participate in discussion safely and comfortably. All students are expected to abide by basic ground rules and avoid disparaging or inflammatory comments to their classmates.

Classroom Technology: Mobile phones, texting, email, messaging, facebook, insta, etc.—that is, any personal communication or use of technology for non-classroom purposes—is not permitted. I reserve the right to prohibit the use of laptops, tablets, etc. in the classroom if I have concerns regarding focus and attention to class activities. Classroom technology is a privilege! Don't ruin it for your classmates.

Attendance Policy: Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not *arbitrarily* penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness. That noted, keep in mind that the decision to evaluate and accept or decline documentation of illness or crisis ultimately remains the right of the instructor.

Assignment Submission: All assignments should be submitted electronically *as PDF files*.

Late Work: Timely submission of assignments is key to the smooth functioning of the class. If a catastrophic injury (falling pianos, the aftermath of being tied to railroad tracks, etc.) forces your absence from class, I may consider your late assignment with substantial penalty *at my discretion*. Grade disputes must be addressed to the instructor

within two weeks of the grade being posted online; you are responsible for keeping up with your grades as they are posted to the course website.

Academic Integrity Policy: The University of Oklahoma Academic Integrity Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Integrity Policy, found at <https://integrity.ou.edu/students.html>.

Americans With Disabilities Act: Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) contact the Student Disability Resource Center; and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done no later than the first week of class. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

Syllabus Change Policy: Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

Syllabus continues with course schedule on the following page.

Course Schedule for Sociology of Housing

Each week we meet once except as interrupted by holidays. You are expected to have read all of the assigned material before that class session; any written assignments are due *before* the beginning of the session unless otherwise noted.

Some sessions, some students may be assigned responsibility to present specific readings or groups of readings. *Everyone* must still *complete and be prepared to discuss* all assigned readings.

SEGMENT ONE: The Material and Financial Characteristics of Housing

Week One: Introduction

Key Questions: What is on the syllabus? What is housing? What is the big picture here?

Week Two: The housing stock: what is here and who did it?

Key Questions: What is the condition of the housing stock in the U.S.? When was it built? How was it built? How is that regionally differentiated? How is it clustered/urbanized/etc.? What are the actors in housing development in the U.S.? What are the allowable parameters for residential construction? What is actually being built now? How is housing funded?

Readings:

- https://eaei.lbl.gov/sites/all/files/lest_we_forget_a_short_history_of_housing_in_the_united_states_lbnl-4751e.pdf
- Nelson, A., & Sanchez, T. (1997). Exurban and Suburban Households: A Departure from Traditional Location Theory. *Journal of Housing Research*.
- http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/jchs.harvard.edu/files/harvard_jchs_remodeling_report_2013_chap2.pdf
- <http://www.governing.com/topics/urban/gov-cities-old-housing-stock.html>

Week Three: Structural constraints upon the housing supply

Key Questions: What is the ‘rent gap?’ How does capital move through the housing supply over time? How has capital mobility changed over time? How does international speculative investment impact housing prices in the U.S.? To what degree is the housing market ‘local,’ ‘national,’ or ‘global’?

Readings:

- Smith, N. (1979). Toward a theory of gentrification a back to the city movement by capital, not people. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 45(4), 538–548.
- Harvey, D. (1978). The Urban Process Under Capitalism: a framework for analysis, 14.

- <https://www.economist.com/news/finance-and-economics/21695912-valuations-globalised-cities-are-rising-much-faster-their>
- <https://www.economist.com/blogs/dailychart/2011/11/global-house-prices>

Week Four: What happened before, during, and after 2008?

Key Questions: What does the 2008 crisis have to teach us about the basic dynamics of financialization and the housing market? Define “pro-cyclical.” Define “technologization.”

Readings:

- Lewis, Michael, 2010. *The Big Short*. Norton.
- GOTHAM, K. F. (2009). Creating Liquidity out of Spatial Fixity: The Secondary Circuit of Capital and the Subprime Mortgage Crisis. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 33(2), 355–371. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2009.00874.x>
- Wyly, E. K., Moos, M., Hammel, D. J., & Kabahizi, E. (2009). Cartographies of Race and Class: Mapping the Class-Monopoly Rents of American Subprime Mortgage Capital. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 33(2), 332–354.

Week Five: The role of land and ownership in housing markets

Key Questions: What is land? What is property? What is property in land? What are mineral rights? Why are these important questions with regard to houses?

Readings:

- Schmitz, D. (1999). The Institution of Property, 32. Excerpted from: *The Common Law and the Environment: Rethinking the Statutory Basis for Modern Environment Law*, Roger E. Meiners and Andrew P. Morriss, eds.) (1999).
- Gibbard, A. (1976). Natural property rights. *Nous*.
- Lehavi, A. (2009). How Property Can Create, Maintain, or Destroy Community. *Theoretical Inquiries in Law*, 28.
- Ronald W. Polston, Surface Rights of Mineral Owners - What Happens When Judges Make Law and Nobody Listens, 63 N.D. L. Rev. 41 (1987)

SEGMENT TWO: The Social and Relational Characteristics of Housing

Week Six: Homelessness and insights into housing

Key Questions: What does housing mean to the unhoused? Is homelessness a necessary function of the housing market? Can someone be housed but also homeless?

Readings:

- Duneier, M. 1999. *Sidewalk*.
- Wolch, J., Dear, M., & Akita, A. (1988). Explaining homelessness. *Journal of the American Planning Association* 54(4)

- Blomley, N. (2009). Homelessness, Rights, and the Delusions of Property. *Urban Geography*, 30(6), 577–590. <http://doi.org/10.2747/0272-3638.30.6.577>

DUE BEFORE CLASS BEGINS: First CSRP.

Week Seven: Housing precarity

Key Questions: What is housing precarity and why does it matter to the process of planning for housing? What systems produce precarity? What social patterns? What individual choices?

Readings:

- Desmond, Matthew. 2017. *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*.

Week Eight: Housing mobility, gentrification and the carceral

Key Questions: How do people evaluate what they want or need in housing? How much of what we call housing is really housing (and what else could it be)?

Readings:

- Schlichtman, J. J., & Patch, J. (2014). Gentrifier? Who, Me? Interrogating the Gentrifier in the Mirror. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 38(4), 1491–1508. <http://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12067>
- Davis, M. 1992. Fortress L.A. In *City of Quartz*.
- Low, S. M. (1997). Urban Fear: Building the Fortress City. *City & Society*, 9(1), 53–71. <http://doi.org/10.1525/ciso.1997.9.1.53>
- Hankins, K., & Walter, A. (2011). “Gentrification with Justice”: An Urban Ministry Collective and the Practice of Place-making in Atlanta’s Inner-city Neighbourhoods. *Urban Studies*.

Week Nine: Neighborhoods and transportation

Key Questions: Density, mixed use, and uniformity: are these positive or negative attributes? Why? What is this ‘new urbanism’ I’ve heard about? To what degree is housing density a function of transit decisions, or the inverse? What are trade-offs between individual preference and societal benefits in housing debates? Is walkability an important part of the conversation? How do we build to limit as well as permit mobility?

Readings:

- Blomley, N. 2011. Pedestrianism, and Civic humanism and the sidewalk. In *Rights of Passage: Sidewalks and the regulation of public flow*. Routledge.
- Pierce, J. and Lawhon, M.. Early online. The right to move: informal use rights and urban practices of mobility. *Urban Geography*.
- Fraser, J. (2008). Can Mixed-Income Housing Ameliorate Concentrated Poverty? The Significance of a Geographically Informed Sense of Community. *Geography Compass*, 18.
- Lees, L. (2008). Gentrification and Social Mixing: Towards an Inclusive Urban Renaissance? *Urban Studies*, 45(12), 2449–2470. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0042098008097099>

SPRING BREAK IS MARCH 21.

Week Ten: Housing discrimination: race, class, age, and lifestyle

Key Questions: What level of neighborhood heterogeneity is: desirable? Actually extant? Possible without state intervention? Possible with state intervention? What are the policy goals associated with residential mixing?

Readings:

- Massey and Denton. 1993. *American Apartheid*.
- DeFilippis, J., & Wyly, E. (2008). Running to Stand Still: Through the Looking Glass With Federally Subsidized Housing in New York City. *Urban Affairs Review*.

SEGMENT THREE: Thinking about housing differently

Week Eleven: What socio-political choices are physically embedded in the housing stock?

Key Questions: What if we made very different tradeoffs between safety, durability, affordability, and ownership? Mexico, Amsterdam, and South Africa.

Readings:

- Govender, T., Barnes, J. M., & Pieper, C. H. (2011). Housing conditions, sanitation status and associated health risks in selected subsidized low-cost housing settlements in Cape Town, South Africa. *Habitat International*, 35(2), 335–342. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.habitatint.2010.11.001>
- <https://www.pri.org/stories/2014-01-09/mexicans-are-abandoning-their-suburban-dreams-and-their-birdcage-homes>
- <https://www.citylab.com/solutions/2016/02/netherlands-dutch-affordable-housing-amsterdam-smaller-apartments/470538/>
- Ronald van Kempen and Hugo Priemus. 2002. Revolution in Social Housing in the Netherlands: Possible Effects of New Housing Policies. *Urban Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 2, 237– 253.
- Uitermark, J. (2009). An in memoriam for the just city of Amsterdam. *City*, 13(2-3), 347–361. <http://doi.org/10.1080/13604810902982813>

DUE BEFORE CLASS BEGINS: Second CSRP.

Week Twelve: Alternative models: Community Land Trusts, Limited equity co-ops, and cohousing

Key Questions: Are there actually-existing examples that provoke very different thinking about what is possible in the U.S. housing market? What are the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches?

Readings:

- Thompson, M. (2015). Between Boundaries: From Commoning and Guerrilla Gardening to Community Land Trust Development in Liverpool. *Antipode*, n/a–n/a. <http://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12154>

- Englesman et al. (2016). Community Land Trusts: A Radical or Reformist Response to the Housing Question Today? *ACME*.
- DeFilippis, J., Stromberg, B., & Williams, O. R. (2017). W(h)ither the community in community land trusts? *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 00(00), 1–15. <http://doi.org/10.1080/07352166.2017.1361302>
- Lowe, J. S., & Thaden, E. (2015). Deepening stewardship: resident engagement in community land trusts. *Urban Geography*, 37(4), 1–18. <http://doi.org/10.1080/02723638.2015.1101250>
- Lawton, J.D. Limited Equity Cooperatives: the Non-Economic Value of Homeownership. *WASH. U. J.L. & POL'Y* 187 (2013).

Week Thirteen: Suburban futures: what does devalorized low-density housing look like?

Key Questions: What happens if suburbs become incrementally less desirable? Is there a tipping point for suburban housing values and conditions?

Readings:

- <https://www.brookings.edu/interactives/the-growth-and-spread-of-concentrated-poverty-2000-to-2008-2012/#/M12060>
- <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2008/03/the-next-slum/306653/>
- https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1977/07/30/will-saved-cities-mean-suburban-slums/462433b5-aa31-413e-b527-03cce51b44e3/?utm_term=.57608a553e8d

Week Fourteen: Urban futures and housing

Key Questions: What about drones? What about online shopping? What about self-driving cars? What about parking? What about wages?

Readings:

- <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S016604621630182X>
- http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future_tense/2016/10/self_driving_cars_effects_on_cities_depend_on_who_owns_them.html
- <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2017/11/life-in-a-driverless-city/545822/>
- <https://www.planetizen.com/node/84731/changing-nature-retail-impact-online-shopping-cities>
- <https://theconversation.com/heres-how-drones-will-change-cities-65385>

Week Fifteen: Planning, praxis, and housing

Key Questions: What pray tell shall we do? What actually-existing choices are possible, and who is situated to make them? What do we as planners want for housing?

- TBD, based on class discussion