

CEP 303: Social Structures and Processes

Spring 2020

Instructors: Dan Abramson and Jess Zimbabwe

Class meetings: MW 8:30–10:20am via Zoom at <https://washington.zoom.us/j/759520333> (Links to an external site.)*Sessions will be recorded for reviewing by students later, so please read [this Privacy/FERPA Statement](#) for information about how your participation may be viewed and heard.

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For a quick-and-easy summary of the entire course schedule, download this document, [revised as of May 19: CEP303 Schedule 2020-05-19-revision.docx](#)

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Overview and Objectives

The title of this course, *Social Structures and Processes*, refers to the entire range of topics covered by all the social sciences combined. That's obviously too much to cover in ten weeks. To make the class more manageable, we have narrowed our focus to one particular form of social structure: the urban neighborhood. Neighborhoods are both products of social structures and processes and sites in which many different kinds of social structures and processes occur. Because of this, as well as their relatively small geographic size, they are useful microcosms for us to study. They are also appropriate subjects of study for a major rooted in planning.

In some respects, this course brings together the two themes addressed in CEP 301 and 302: Community, and Environment. Neighborhoods are both communities and environments. Our investigations this quarter will be focused around some basic but surprisingly complex questions: What is a neighborhood? How is a neighborhood formed, maintained, and changed? What is the relationship between neighborhood and community? And, to return to a central theme raised in CEP 301, what is a *Good* neighborhood, and who defines it?

Much of our examination of these questions will be done through readings and in-class discussions, but we will also draw on a more experiential way of knowing, through direct observation and engagement with people and spaces in an actual neighborhood in Seattle: the University District and Lake City neighborhoods. This empirical work is meant to ground the more general or theoretical readings and discussions by giving you a chance to observe, apply, and test the issues and lessons first hand. You will also

learn and practice methods and skills of research and engagement that you will use in your senior year. Note, however, that these are introductions to the methods, enough to get you started with your field evaluations, but not meant as substitutes for more rigorous methods courses.

Moreover, *this year*, Spring 2020, we have an unprecedented challenge and opportunity to consider the relationship between the definition and construction of community on one hand, and the forms and uses of neighborhood space and the physical public realm of the city on the other hand. We are faced with a pandemic that has forced us into spatial isolation, preventing us from gathering and using most of the spaces that support community life in the city and on our own university campus. We will try to meet these challenges by exploring new ways of forming community as a class online, and by exploring new ways of understanding the city remotely, through online tools. We will surely discover some of the limits of ["Community without Propinquity" \(Webber 1963\)](#)

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. Let us take advantage of this unprecedented -- and hopefully short-lived -- opportunity to appreciate anew our community's gathering spaces!

Overall, our broader goal is to introduce you to some foundational concepts and techniques that you can take with you beyond this course. In this manner, just as with 301, the ideas we explore in this class are meant to "travel". Though there is inherent value in learning about and contributing to the University District and Lake City neighborhoods, we recognize that for most students the value of the course will be in its 'generalizability' – that is, its ability to equip you with knowledge, conceptual frameworks, and ways of doing that can be extended well beyond the limits of this single class.

We have several specific goals for this course:

- Develop a deeper understanding of the substantive course subjects, including the concept of "neighborhood" and its common constitutive parts - form, place, community, culture, institutions, and collective action – and how these parts are inter-related.
- Develop an understanding of a Seattle neighborhood and the city, including its history, form, social structure, political processes, and relationship to the course subjects.
- Develop skills in observation, directed inquiry, and data analysis; improve analytical, critical, and comparative thinking; strengthen reading, writing, listening, visual presentation and speaking ability.
- Continue to produce a viable and sustainable learning community by further developing effective deliberation, decision-making, and leadership skills in a variety of contexts.

Student Responsibilities

Your responsibilities mirror those of fall quarter. Among your responsibilities, one general one stands out:

- Students have a responsibility to one another and to one another's education. In this class and this major, you and your classmates will generate knowledge through discussion and deliberation. In order for the class to be successful, *you* must be an active participant in both teaching *and* learning. In class, each of you will participate by discussing and analyzing the material. Outside of class, each of you will participate by reading the material and preparing assignments carefully.

To meet this responsibility, you must meet several more specific expectations:

1. Contribute thoughtfully to each day's discussion and work;
2. Complete all individual and group assignments in a timely manner while ensuring that the work is of a consistently superior standard. No late work will be accepted;
3. Meet the agreed upon obligations of assigned work groups, insure that these groups function smoothly, and make real efforts to resolve internal disputes and differences among members;
4. Help facilitate class discussions and provide constructive feedback on peer work;
5. Write a narrative evaluation of your performance and progress in the course at the quarter's end and meet with the instructor to discuss it;
6. Meet the CEP Attendance Requirement: *Students may have a maximum of 3 excused absences from regularly scheduled (Mon & Wed) classes. Attendance will be taken at all scheduled meeting times; late arrivals will result in a loss of participation points. Students must also meet the CEP governance attendance requirements to get credit for this course.*
7. Academic Honesty: The University takes the offenses of cheating and plagiarism very seriously, and so do we. Cheating is taking advantage of the work of others. Plagiarism is representing the work of others as your own, without giving appropriate credit. If you are unsure what is OK or not OK, make sure to ask!

Instructor Responsibilities

Instructors play several vital roles in the class and can be relied upon to provide the following:

1. A safe and effective learning context: The instructor's first job is to set the learning context for the course, which includes developing the structure of the course, and putting in place the basic elements (calendar, assignments, readings) that will help students learn. Equally important, instructors will also insure that the learning environment is a safe and respectful environment for all CEP students. As a community, the class should maintain these standards by regulating itself, but if a student feels that these standards are not being met then he or she is strongly encouraged to speak with one of the instructors so that ways can be found to resolve the problem.

2. Timely feedback, advice, and instruction on course assignments and other course requirements: Students should expect instructors to provide timely and considered feedback on course assignments and projects. Instructors will also be available to answer questions, provide advice and information, and otherwise aid students in their learning in ways that are pedagogically appropriate.
- Assigning final credit for the course: Instructors are responsible for assigning final course credit and determining whether or not a student has met the course requirements. As part of the final assessment, the instructor will provide final evaluation of each student's performance and progress for the quarter.

Readings and Resources

Readings for discussion, and other resources to help with the assignments or understand more about the relevant communities, neighborhoods and plans, are provided online as noted in the syllabus class schedule or in the weekly [Modules](#). The instructor or facilitating students may elect to assign additional readings as appropriate for particular discussions or assignment tasks.

Assessment of Course Work

Your final assessment in this course will be based on the following assignments. Full descriptions of these assignments are found later in this syllabus and will be discussed in more depth during class time:

<i>Item</i>	<i>Percent/Points</i>	<i>Description</i>
Participation	10%; 40 points	Regular Attendance; active participation in class
Discussion Facilitation	10%; 40 points	One session per student in class
Reading Assignments	15%; 60 points	6 Reading assignment posts
Group Field Reports (3)	45%; 180 points	(30/75/75 pts)

Final Paper	20%; 80 points	Individual paper and Pechakucha presentation
Total	100%; 400 points	

To pass this course you need a minimum score of 80%, or 320 points.

Participation (10%)

You are expected to attend all classes and participate fully in class discussions and exercises and in field research teams. See Student Responsibilities for more information. Participation counts toward 10% of your final grade.

Short Reading Assignments (15%)

Though there are fewer reading assignments in this course than in past CEP classes, the readings are still important and will form the basis of our discussions of core neighborhood concepts. Consequently, it is very important that you complete all of the readings and be prepared to discuss them in class. To help with this, we are requiring short reading assignments most weeks, in the form of posts to the course's online Discussions section. All students in the class will be able to read them, and thus your contributions will be part of an online "conversation", which will continue during class time in the form of student-facilitated discussions (see below). The short reading assignments count toward 15% of your final grade. The rubric for posts on the readings is as follows:

0 points = assignment not posted

Some points = Answers the prompt(s) narrowly, vaguely or indirectly, with limited reference to the reading itself, little evidence that the entire reading was considered, and/or repetition (plagiarism!) of the text with little interpretation in your own words.

All or most points = Clear, relevant and concise. Goes beyond re-stating the ideas of the authors, to provide substantive insight or analysis. Answer to the prompt reflects understanding of the readings/concepts. Citations are made to page numbers and any repeated text from the reading is in quotation marks.

Discussion Facilitation (10%)

As always, student facilitation is part of the structure of this course. Most class sessions will be facilitated by teams of two students who will be responsible for leading discussions around class readings, weekly field work presentations, and guest panels. A facilitation sign-up sheet will be distributed week 1. Facilitation teams must present discussion plans to the instructors in advance, and can refer to the course file, [Techniques for Planning a Discussion](#)

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for ideas on what discussion formats might be most appropriate. The more prepared a facilitator is the better the discussion goes. **NOBODY** (not even your instructors) can successfully lead a class without lots of preparation. Facilitation will count towards 10% of your final grade.

The Rest of You: The work of the class facilitators is in **no way** an opportunity for the rest of the class to take it easy. The facilitators will guide the discussion, but they should by no means do most of the talking. Their role is to stimulate *you* to engage in an insightful discussion. Thus the rest of the class should digest the readings as usual and come prepared to participate fully along the lines laid out by the facilitating group. Your active participation will factor into your participation grade in the class.

Field Research (45%)

One of our goals this quarter is to provide you with the opportunity to work in/with a neighborhood, learning about that neighborhood and exploring key components and issues that relate to its social structures, physical environment and community dynamics. We have selected the Roosevelt Neighborhood, poised for significant growth and change with a new light rail station and the Othello Neighborhood which is working to strengthen its identity as one of the SE Seattle light rail stations and one of the city's most diverse neighborhoods.

Students will examine the neighborhood through several different "lenses" providing insight into the social structures, issues and initiatives of the community that inhabits, uses, or identifies with this neighborhood. Weekly assignments, beginning in week 2, outline the types of tasks and specific products expected for each week. We will discuss these projects more in class. Detailed instructions for each assignment will be distributed prior to undertaking the work.

The field research is a core element of the course and a primary source of learning for the class. The tasks will come rapidly and require considerable planning on your part to pull off successfully. We expect that they will stretch you, but by the end of the quarter we also hope you will have gained several new research tools, improved your ability to collectively complete significant work rapidly and professionally, and built a deeper understanding of the intricacies of neighborhoods and, more broadly, the social structures and processes that constitute them.

Collectively, the field research, including field task assignments, reports and presentations, count toward 45% of your final grade.

Final Paper (20%)

At the end of the quarter, each student will submit her/his own final paper, which is your opportunity to synthesize and reflect on the various field research findings and/or insights from the readings in a coherent interpretation of some aspect of the neighborhood and community you have been studying. This paper is likely to require you to do some additional reading and research into neighborhood-specific materials (plans, policies, histories, demographic data, etc.), but its primary function is to demonstrate your ability to make connections between the general points covered in the

reading, and the specific issues and facts you have discovered empirically in the neighborhood and community.

During the 6th week of the quarter, you must submit a topic for comments and suggestions by the instructors. The paper itself is due during the 10th week of the quarter. The paper counts towards 20% of your final grade.

Course Topics and Readings

Week 1 Mon April 1: Course Introduction

Course Overview

Introduce social structures

Lemert. 1997. "The Mysterious Power of Social Structures," chapter 8 in *Social Things*. Pp.123-145. (*Focus particularly on Chapter 8*)

Facilitated Discussion #0 (Instructors)

Week 1 Wed April 3: Social Structures in the Urban Environment

Reading Discussion Assignment #1

Lemert. 1997. "The Mysterious Power of Social Structures," chapter 8 in *Social Things*. Pp.123-145.

Peattie, Lisa, Planning: Rethinking Ciudad Guayana (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), Chapter 6, "Representation," pp.111-152.

(Focus particularly on pp 111 - 118, 125 - 126, 147 - 152)

Optional reading: Vigdor, Jacob L, "The Perplexing Persistence of Race, Ch. 7, *Making Cities Work* by Robert P. Inman, Princeton Press, 2009

Facilitated Discussion #1

Week 2 Mon April 8: Why Plan -- and What is Planning?

Reading Discussion Assignment #2

Levy, John M., "Chapter 1&2, Overview; Contemporary Urban Planning, Edition 10, 2012

(Pay particular attention to Ch 2)

Baxamusa, Murtaza, Urban Planning without Social Equity is like Playing Chess without the Queen, San Diego UrbdeZine, December 12,

2015. <http://sandiego.urbdazine.com/2015/12/12/urban-planning-social-equity-chess-queen/> (Links to an external site.)

City of Seattle, DPD, Seattle 2035 Growth and Equity Report, May 2015 (*Skim this document, identifying key points*)

Facilitated Discussion #2

Neighborhood Fieldwork Signup (University District or Lake City Way)

Week 2 Wed April 10: What is a neighborhood? The concept of “neighborhood” and community.

Reading Discussion Assignment #3

Jacobs, Jane. 1961. “The uses of city neighborhoods,” chapter 6 in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (Vintage Books, New York). Pp 112-139.

(NOTE: READ KALLUS **OR** SAMPSON)

Kallus, Rachel and Hubert Law-Yone. 2000. “What is a neighborhood? The structure and function of an idea,” *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design*. 27: 815-826.

Sampson, Robert J.. 2010. *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*, Chapter 1, Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press.

American Planning Association, *APA Characteristics and Guidelines of Great Neighborhoods*, 2016 Great Neighborhoods.

(Skim this set of guidelines -- apply to your assigned neighborhood)

Facilitated Discussion #3

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Assign Field Task #1: Observing Physical Traces/First Impressions

Tentative Neighborhood Tours: To Be Scheduled (week 2 or 3)

Week 3 Mon April 15: Going Local: Observing Physical Traces

Reading Discussion Assignment #4

Trachtenberg, Alan, "From Image to Story: Reading the File" in Carl Fleischhauer and Beverly W. Brannan, eds., Documenting America, 1935-1943 (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1988), pp. 43-73.

Jacobs, Allan B. *Looking at Cities* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), "Clues," pp.30-83; "Seeing Change" and "Observing the Unknown," pp.99-132.

(Note: Skim the detailed physical observations; concentrate on the discussion and interpretation in both chapters)

Facilitated Discussion #4

Week 3 Wed April 17: Observing Physical Traces Part 2 -- Theory to practice

Skill building practice Campus/U District

Facilitation #5 (Facilitated Discussion on completed practice exercise)

Field Task #1A due on Canvas, Friday, April 13, 11:59 pm

Week 4 Mon April 22: Learning about Neighborhoods

TBD: Panel with community representatives from neighborhoods selected for field tasks.

Readings: Background readings on assigned Neighborhoods - to be posted

In class work session (small groups compile first impressions)

Week 4 Wed April 24: Field Report #1 Part II due

No reading assignment due this date.

In Class Presentations: Field Assignment #1

Week 5 Mon April 29: Introduction to Mapping the Community

Reading Discussion Assignment #5

Trell, Elen-Maarja, and Bettina Van Hoven, "Making sense of Place: exploring creative and (inter)active research methods with young people." FENNIA, 188-1 (2010), pp 91-103.

McKnight, John L. and John P. Kretzman, "Mapping Community Capacity", A Report of the Neighborhood Innovations Network, Program on Community Development, Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University, Revised 1996

Facilitated Discussion #6

Assign Field Task #2: Mapping Exercises

Week 5 Wed May 2: Neighborhood Mapping and Analysis

In-class skill building practice of 3 mapping methods

Asset Mapping “How To”

Creating A Mental Map of Your Community

Lynch Mapping

Field teams organize to carry out their assigned mapping.

Final Paper Topic Due Thursday April 26th

Week 6 Mon May 6: Neighborhood as Social Spaces: Environmental Behavior Observation

Reading Discussion Assignment #6 Due

Whyte, William H. 1989. “The social life of the street,” chapter 5 in *City*, (Doubleday). Pp 188-203.

Zeisel, John, *Inquiry By Design* (New York: Cambridge University Press), Chapter 8, pp.111-136.

Jacobs, Jane. 1961. “The uses of sidewalks: safety,” Chapter 2 in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (Vintage Books, New York). Pp 29-54.

(Note: Skim Jacobs, identifying 3 key principles regarding the uses of sidewalks)

Bernard, H. R. Research Methods in Cultural Anthropology (Newbury Park, California: Sage, 1988), Chapter 7, “Participant Observation,” pp. 148-179

(Note: Skim Bernard, identifying three key ideas)

Facilitation #7 (Social Observation Practice/Discussion)

Week 6 Wed May 8: Neighborhood Planning

Reading Discussion Assignment #7 Due

Seattle Comp Plan, Neighborhood Plan Element

[Seattle DPD - Seattle Comprehensive Plan Neighborhood ... \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

(NOTE: Skim the Comp Plan elements; focus on the Neighborhood Plan section, identifying key policies/objectives)

Sterrett, Jill, et.al. editors, Planning in the Pacific Northwest, APA, 2015, Chapter 8, Seattle Neighborhood Planning (Wagoner and Curry)

Sirianni, Carmen, 2007. "Neighborhood planning as collaborative democratic design: the case of Seattle," *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Autumn. Pp.373–386

Manshel, Andrew M. 2009. "A place is better than a plan," *City Journal*, <http://www.city-journal.org/printable.php?id=5505> (Links to an external site.) (October, 2009)

Optional Readings:

Seattle Planning Commission, Seattle Transit Communities, 2009

Sucher, David. *City Comforts: How to Build an Urban Village*. Pp 6-17.

Facilitation #8 Neighborhood Planning Issues

Field Task #3 Assigned

Week 7 Mon May 13: Mapping the Community

Field Task #2 Presentations in class

Week 7 Wed May 15: Neighborhood Planning & Placemaking

Reading Discusstion Assignment #8

Gehl Architects. Neighborhoods for People, Seattle Toolkit 2010, (Joint publication Scan Design Foundation and UW Green Futures Lab)

Project for Public Spaces: Placemaking 101

DUSP, MIT, Places in the Making: How Placemaking Builds Places and Communities

Facilitation #9

Field Task #2 Reports Due

Week 8 Mon May 20: Community Engagement & Community Development

Reading Discussion Assignment #9 Due

City of Seattle, *Inclusive Outreach and Engagement Guide*, Race and Social Justice Initiative, 2008

Mathies & Cunningham, *From Clients to Citizens: Asset-based Community Development as a Strategy for Community Driven Development*, Occasional Paper Series, No. 4, 2002

Facilitation #10

Week 8 Wed May 22: Planning Issues -- TBD

No reading discussion assignment due this date

Facilitation #11

Week 9 Mon May 27: Memorial Day

Week 9 Wed May 29:

Social Observation and/or Neighborhood Planning Assessment

In-Class Presentations: Field Task #3

Written Field Report #3 due (7 pm)

Week 10 Mon June 3: Putting it All Together -- How planning tools and methods increase the quality of planning

Instructor facilitated Discussion (Assessing what we learned -- readings and field work)

Week 10 Wed June 5: Final Paper Presentations

In Class PechaKucha Presentations of Final Paper

Final Paper due Friday, June 7

Week 10 Tue June 11 : Final

In-Class Final Exercise

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER BREAK!