NYU Madrid

SCA-UA 9890 / SOC-UA 9690

Current Social, Political and Urban Challenges to European Cities

Instructor Information

- Name: Andrés Walliser PhD
- Office hours: Monday 15:00pm
- Email address: aw85@nyu.edu

Course Description

This course is an introduction to socio-political evolution of cities in Europe. It is designed to provide the student with practical and theoretical tools to understand and critically analyze European cities. We will take a close look at the social, political and urban challenges these cities are currently facing.

Urban concepts, as well as pertinent theories in the field, will be studied in order to better comprehend the ever-changing urban fabric of metropolitan centers across Europe. We will pay special attention to Madrid, and how this city is responding to issues such as gentrification, social exclusion, immigration, racial and spatial segregation, political participation and social movements, public spaces, creative industries, environmental policies, sustainability and local economic development. Specific case studies will provide concrete examples of participatory and bottom-up initiatives.

Other European will be look at such as Paris, Berlin or Barcelona.

The course has a emphasis on an experience in the city. We will do at least two visits during the course to Malasaña (March 15th) and Vallecas (April 29th). Malasaña is a neighbourhood in the city centre. Most buildings were built between the C18th and the C19th and is undergoing a strong process of gentrification, although still keeps a strong personality. We will also visit the City Museum and an old market.

Vallecas is a district in the south east of Madrid. It used to be a village until 1950’s and now it has undergone a big expansión with new neighbourhoods. We will visit the limits of the city of Madrid and asses how a 4 million inhabitants city expands.
During the course we will watch some documentaries or sections of them.

The instructor might do during class time a small test to assess the extent to which students have prepared the day’s and previous readings.

- Co-requisite or prerequisite: N/A
- Class meeting days and times: 4:30pm-7:20pm

**Desired Outcomes**

**Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:**

The goals of this course are the following:

- To understand the complexity of cities in Europe from multiple points of view: social exclusion, social movements, tourism, urban policy, governance and social innovation.

- To provide the students with skills to observe and analyze urban phenomena and problems from different points of view and related to different disciplines.

- Students will have an approach to European cities connecting them with their social and political history and current global political affairs such as globalization, touristification, immigration, policy strategies to tackle poverty or social rights.

- The main question to be answered in this course is: What are the main current challenges for some of the main cities of the world and what are the strategies to cope with them?

- The learning target is to integrate urban policy and urban governance in the knowledge background of students from different academic and professional origins from a multidisciplinary and comparative perspective: social, political and urban.

**Assessment Components**

**Class Participation (10%):** Students should participate in class both spontaneously
and at the requirement of the instructor. They are expected to be updated with week readings and be able to answer and take part in any of the debates that will be held at the beginning of each class regarding the topics covered by these texts. Each session students will introduce the session with a brief 3 minute summary of each reading. A list for discussants will be arranged during the first week of class.

**Midterm Paper (20%)**: students should answer one research question related with the readings and class discussions of the first half of the semester. Length: four pages (**Due March 18**

**Class presentation (20%)** Students must do a class presentation of 15 minutes in teams of three maximum. This presentation will consist on a comparison of the current processes two cities (at least one from Europe) regarding any of the topics included in the course. More information about the content of this presentation will be given in class. During the first two weeks of class students must present a topic and a calendar of presentations will be set. Besides, each student should act as a discussant of one presentation. Feedback will be given to help students to know how they can improve their work.

**Problem-solving paper (20%)**: individual paper discussing possible/alternative political and social interventions regarding the topics developed in the plot of *L´Haine* (1996) More information about the content of this paper will be given in class. **Paper due by March 4**

**Final Project (30%)**: it consists on an original paper in which the students must delve into at least two of the main topics of the course. To this aim, the students have to link the readings we will discuss in class with at least two examples of cities where there are relevant dynamics regarding the topics they choose. In this regard, they will be required to obtain significant data and to properly contextualize the cases through relevant references. The students will be encouraged to take advantage of the support of the professor to find these resources. In previous courses, students have developed inspiring final projects about different topics such as the social history of European cities; the differences between the urban segregation patterns in American and European cities; the role of the local governments in gentrification processes; the cultural expression of social conflicts within the city; etc. An **abstract should be presented by March 11**(350 words at most). Individual papers will have eleven pages, references included. **Project due by May 5**

Every written work submitted should be in Arial, 12pt, 1,5 paragraph.
Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component will result in failure of the class, regardless of grades achieved in other assignments.

**Grading of Assignments**

The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments/Activities</th>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem solving paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final project</td>
<td>30%</td>
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**Course Schedule**

**Topics and Assignments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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| Session 2, February 11th | European cities in a globalized world: from the informational to the smart city | **Documentary:**
The Spirit of the 45 (2013) by Ken Loach

**Film suggestions:**
A room with a view (1985) James Ivory
Oliver Twist (2005) Roman Polansky

| Session 3, February 18th | What is urban governance? Actors, concepts and evolution. | **Video:** interview with Manuel Castells


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<tr>
<th>Session</th>
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<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Neate, R. (3 Jan 2014) Berlin’s Poor but Sexy appeal turning city into Silicon Valley. The Guardian. (1 page)</td>
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**Documentary:**  
La Grieta (2018) Yague & Garcia. This awarded film shows the experience of two families evicted from their social housing in Madrid. Alberto Garcia will introduce the film and participate in the debate.  
| Session 7, March 15th, FRIDAY | Visit to Malasaña |  
**Assignment:** L’Haine (1996). Students should watch the movie on their own and describe the main social and urban problem and potentialities shown in the film and suggest some policy measures to redress inequality. |
(Pp143-175)  
| Session 9, March 25th | Taking part: citizens, social movements and participation. | **Recommended reading:**  
**Documentary:**  
Barrios Bajos (2007) Walliser & Samuels|
| Session 11, April 8th | Poverty and Space: Social policies, inequality and urban exclusion in the | Paugam, S. (2012) What Forms does Poverty take in European Societies at the Beginning of the Twenty-first Century? In |
We will screen a short animation movie. *España, by Alex Saló (6’)* |
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<td>Session 13, April 29th</td>
<td>Visit to the fringes of the city: Villa de Vallecas</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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| Session 14, May 6th | Urban regeneration in deprived neighbourhoods : strategies and challenges  
Required Co-Curricular Activities

As indicated above, we have an educational field trip on Friday, March 15\textsuperscript{th} and on Monday, April 29\textsuperscript{th}.

Suggested Co-Curricular Activities

You are encouraged to attend the following activities:

Professor María López. Espacios latinos en Madrid (talk in Spanish)
Wednesday, April 3, 2:00-3:00pm, Rm 204

Professor María López. Malasaña y la Movida (talk and walking tour, in Spanish)
Wednesday, April 10, 2:00-3:00pm, Rm 204

Course Materials

Required Textbooks & Materials in Print Form

There are no required textbooks in print form.

Required Textbooks & Materials in NYU Classes


Affairs, 39:3, 323-334.


Neate, R. (3 Jan 2014) Berlin’s Poor but Sexy appeal turning city into Silycon Valley. The Guardian.


Jacobs, J. (1961) The Life and Death of Great American cities. Ch 7 The Generators of Diversity and Ch 8 The need for primary mixed uses (Pp143-177)

Kassovitz (1996) L´Haine, Film 98’


Loach, K (2013) The Spirit of the 45. Film 96


Yague, I. & Garcia, A (2018) La Grieta. This awarded film shows the experience of two families evicted from their social housing in Madrid. Alberto Garcia will introduce the film and participate in the debate.

Resources

- Access your course materials: NYU Classes (nyu.edu/its/classes)
- Databases, journal articles, and more: Bobst Library (library.nyu.edu)
- Assistance with strengthening your writing: NYU Writing Center (nyu.mywconline.com)
- Obtain 24/7 technology assistance: IT Help Desk (nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)

Course Policies

Attendance Policy

Study abroad at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is mandatory, and unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade for every week's worth of classes missed. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in harsher penalties including failure.

Unexcused absences affect students’ grades: In classes meeting once a week, a 2% deduction from the student’s final course grade occurs on the occasion of the first
unexcused absence.

Absences are excused only for illness, religious observance, and emergencies.

**Illness:** For a single absence, students may be required to provide a doctor’s note, at the discretion of the Assistant Directors of Academics. In the case of two consecutive absences, students must provide a doctor’s note. Exams, quizzes, and presentations will not be made up without a doctor’s note.

**Religious Observance:** Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. Students must notify their instructor and the Academic Office in writing via email one week in advance before being absent for this purpose. If exams, quizzes, and presentations are scheduled on a holiday a student will observe, the Assistant Directors, in coordination with the instructor, will reschedule them.

**Please note:** if you are unable to attend class, you are required to email your professors directly and notify them.

**Late Submission of Work**

One letter grade per day is deducted for late assignments. Oral presentations can only be made up if a student has an excused absence.

**Academic Honesty/Plagiarism**

At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community.

**Plagiarism:** presenting others’ work without adequate acknowledgement of its source, as though it were one’s own. Plagiarism is a form of fraud. We all stand on the shoulders of others, and we must give credit to the creators of the works that we incorporate into products that we call our own. Some examples of plagiarism:

- a sequence of words incorporated without quotation marks
- an unacknowledged passage paraphrased from another’s work
- the use of ideas, sound recordings, computer data or images created by others as though it were one’s own
- submitting evaluations of group members’ work for an assigned group project which misrepresent the work that was performed by another group member
- altering or forging academic documents, including but not limited to
admissions materials, academic records, grade reports, add/drop forms, course registration forms, etc.

- using language translation software.

For further information, students are encouraged to check [NYU Policies and Guidelines on Academic Integrity](https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/academic-integrity-for-students-at-nyu.html)

**Disability Disclosure Statement**

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosecsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance. For more information, see [Study Away and Disability](https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/students-with-disabilities/study-away.html)