



## **SOC 470: Space, Culture, and Inequality in Gentrifying Neighborhoods**

Classroom: University Hall Y03-3350

Time: Tuesday and Thursday: 12:30-1:45

**Professor:** Dr. Sofya Aptekar

Email: [sofya.aptekar@umb.edu](mailto:sofya.aptekar@umb.edu)

Office location: Wheatley 04-007

Office Hours: Tuesdays 2-4 (or by appointment)

**Teaching Assistant:** Julie LaBagnara W-04-150C

Email: [Julie.LaBagnara001@umb.edu](mailto:Julie.LaBagnara001@umb.edu)

Gentrification is a complex social process. There are many debates about gentrification, but a general agreement exists that gentrification means re-investment of capital into poor neighborhoods; in-migration of more affluent residents and displacement of old-timers; and social, economic, cultural, and physical transformation of space. Urban planners, anthropologists, economists, geographers and other scholars study gentrification. In this course, we approach gentrification primarily as sociologists, with a focus on structures of inequality and the interplay between structure and agency, as well as on the uses of space and the role of culture in gentrification.

We will read and discuss classic texts on gentrification, as well as a broad range of recent research to explore such questions as what are the causes and consequences of gentrification? Who benefits and who is hurt by gentrifications? How do old-timers and gentrifiers experience gentrification in everyday life? How do people fight against gentrification? What happens with schools, policing, and housing in gentrifying neighborhoods? What is the role of universities, including our own, in driving gentrification? Throughout, we will discuss how sociologists measure and study gentrification. Students will have a chance to engage in their own mixed-methods research project investigating gentrification in UMass Boston's neighborhood or a neighborhood of their choice. At the end of the semester, we will celebrate these projects in a research showcase.



Vanessa Renwick

The course has a broad geographic focus, from the very local to the global. We will learn about gentrification processes in UMass Boston's own neighborhood of Columbia Point, as well as other Boston neighborhoods. We will explore cases of gentrification in the region, cities across the US, and places across the globe. The course features multiple guest speakers and film screenings.

## Course objectives

This senior seminar is the culminating experience for students in the sociology department. Students will pull together what they have learned in their previous courses and integrate this knowledge to demonstrate their understanding of the discipline, including its core concepts, questions, theories, and methods. The objective of the course is to hone students' abilities to think critically, present empirically grounded arguments, formulate research questions, apply appropriate methods of analysis, and draw theoretical, policy, and practical implications from their work.

## Required Materials:

The required readings are available free of charge through the class Blackboard site. I encourage you to print out the readings and bring them to class as much as possible. Multiple research studies have shown that reading and marking up a text on paper leads to better retention of material than reading on a screen.

## Course components (detailed instructions available separately)

Nico Avina



### Class meetings

Attendance and meaningful participation in class discussion are crucial for success in this senior seminar. Life happens, and you can miss up to two classes without any effect on your grade. In most classes, we will have short writing assignments and/or quizzes. Their purpose is to help you build your knowledge base and make connections to class material.

### Readings

Students are expected to keep up with the reading. Class discussions and assignments are centered on examinations of issues, theories, and research questions that come out of our readings. Although you each have something uniquely important to add

to our class discussions, your opinions should be used to reflect on the issues discussed in our readings. A reading response journal entry is due on blackboard prior to most classes. You can miss up to two without a penalty.

### Syllabus Quiz

This short online quiz will test your understanding of the requirements for this class.

### **Film response mini-paper**

A 2-page, double-spaced mini-paper connecting a documentary to gentrification theory and research.



Seth Tobocman

### **Midterm**

The in-class midterm exam is a tool to help you recall facts and theories that we learn in the first half of the course. It will be a combination of multiple choice and short answer questions.

### **Quantitative mini-paper**

You will create maps and tables for a neighborhood and write up a summary of gentrification trends. This assignment will become part of the final paper.

### **Research report**

This report will be based on qualitative data collection and will include analysis of walkalongs, interviews, and photographs you take. This assignment will become part of the final paper.

### **Research showcase**

Each student will present their research projects to the class at the end of the semester.

### **Final paper**

This research paper is the culmination of your undergraduate work. You will examine gentrification in a specific neighborhood while fulfilling the sociology department capstone project requirements. The quantitative mini-paper and the research report become part of the final paper. The total length is 12-15 pages, excluding references, tables, charts, and appendices.



## **CONDOS DESTROY NEIGHBORHOODS**

Paul Kjelland

### **Extra Credit**

For extra credit, you can attend an event that relates to class. Find such an event yourself and run it by Prof. Aptekar before you go or ask Prof. Aptekar for suggestions. Options are available for people with tight schedules. Extra credit must be turned in before the last day of class.

## CLASSROOM COMMUNITY

The discussions that we have in this class will often engage with events taking place off-campus and around the world. It is almost certain that many of the conversations we have will be charged, as they should be. We will debate, disagree, and likely become upset by the material, and possibly even the views expressed by the authors, guest speakers, and each other. This is the core of academic exchange.

What I ask of you in this class is not blind acceptance of everything you read. But I do ask that we adopt an etiquette of mutual respect and strive to create a space where we all feel safe to engage in the material, bring to the table our individual experience, but also the theories and empirical evidence presented by the readings, and an intentional recognition of our own power and privilege in these matters and in the context of a classroom.

My goal in this class is that all my students feel that they are able to engage. I want us all to be respectful of each other and strive to express our thoughts in a way that is inclusive and mindful of other points of view, identities, and lived experiences. However, your right to share your perspective does not supersede another student's right to feel safe and respected. Therefore, know that in this class:

Black lives matter.

Native lives matter.

Muslims are not terrorists.

Latinx are not rapists or criminals.

Undocumented students have every right to safety as their documented counterparts.

We respect people with all gender identities and expressions.

When and where needed, we accommodate disabled people so they can succeed in this class.

\* Adapted from Professors Shannon Gleeson and Els de Graauw's syllabi

MAKE-UPS AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS	COMMUNICATIONS
<p>Make-up midterms will only be given in cases of excused absences. Excused absences include, but are not limited to: serious illness, death in the immediate family, required University activities, required court appearance, and immigration-related appointments. You are expected to take the exam immediately after the circumstances have passed. I must be notified <i>prior</i> to missing an exam for me to consider giving you a makeup unless it is something you did not know was going to happen.</p> <p>Late assignments will incur a penalty of half a letter grade reduction (A to A-; A- to B; etc.) for each day that it is late. A “day” is 24 hours from the due date. This includes weekends and holidays.</p>	<p>Check your email regularly, preferably daily, for updates. The email that you check must be the UMass Boston account that is connected to our Blackboard site. I will respond to your communications with me in a prompt manner, although please do not expect instantaneous responses. Questions that could be answered by referring to the syllabus will not be answered (e.g. when is the paper due?). Please observe basic civility when emailing (e.g. write “Dear Professor Aptekar” instead of “Hey, prof.” or no salutation; sign with your full name).</p>
DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS	ATTENDANCE
<p>Your success in this class is important to me. If there are circumstances that may affect your performance in this class, please let me know as soon as possible so that we may work together to develop strategies for adapting assignments to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. The Ross Center for Disability Services at UMass Boston (CC UL 211, <a href="http://www.umb.edu/academics/vpass/disability">www.umb.edu/academics/vpass/disability</a>, <a href="mailto:ross.center@umb.edu">ross.center@umb.edu</a>, 617.287.7430) provides resources for students with disabilities. You will need to provide documentation of disability to them in order to receive official university services and accommodations.</p>	<p>If you anticipate having to miss class, be late, or leave early please communicate with me as soon as possible, preferably via email. You may not email me or the TA to ask “What did I miss in class?” It is my responsibility to teach the class material in class and to help you understand it during office hours. Your responsibility is to find out from another student what happened in the class that you missed.</p>

## University policy on academic dishonesty and plagiarism

Plagiarism is representing the work of others as your own, including copying other students' work or using Internet resources without proper citation. All work that you submit is assumed to be your own unless you cite source material. If you use words (either exact or paraphrased), facts, or ideas from another document (including course materials and web pages), you must cite them. Not doing so is considered plagiarism, and the result will be a zero on the assignment. If you are at all unsure about what you should be doing, please talk to me immediately. Students are required to adhere to the University Policy on Academic Standards and Cheating, to the University Statement on Plagiarism and the Documentation of Written Work, and to the Code of Student Conduct as delineated in the Catalog of Undergraduate Programs. The Code is available online at:

[https://www.umb.edu/editor\\_uploads/images/life\\_on\\_campus/Student Code of Conduct \(1.19.18\).pdf](https://www.umb.edu/editor_uploads/images/life_on_campus/Student_Code_of_Conduct_(1.19.18).pdf)

## Grades

Grade component	Maximum points	My points
Attendance and participation	10	
Syllabus quiz (Feb.1)	1	
Film response mini-paper 1 (Feb. 19)	4	
Midterm Exam (March 7)	15	
Quantitative mini-paper (March 28)	10	
Research report (April 25)	10	
Research showcase (May 9)	10	
Final paper (May 24)	20	
Reading responses	10	
In-class quizzes and assignments	10	
Extra Credit	2	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	

94-100 = A    90-93 = A-    87-89 = B+    84-86 = B    80-83 = B-    77-79 = C+  
74-76 = C    70-73=C-    67-69=D+    64-66=D    60-63=D-

## Course Schedule\*

1	January 29 (Tue)	<b>What is gentrification?</b> Introductions, no readings required
	January 31 (Thu)	<b>What is gentrification?</b>  Required reading: Glass. "Aspects of Change" Smith. "Building the Frontier" and "A Short History of Gentrification"
<i>Syllabus quiz due end of day, Feb 1</i>		
2	February 5 (Tue)	<b>What is gentrification?</b>  Required reading: Zukin. <i>Landscapes of Power</i> . Alexandri. "Unraveling the Yarn of Gentrification"
	February 7 (Thu)	<b>Causes and consequences of gentrification</b>  Required reading: Smith. "Toward a Theory of Gentrification." Perez. "Gentrification, Intrametropolitan Migration, and the Politics of Place"
3	February 12 (Tue)	<b>Gentrifiers</b>  Required reading: Brown-Saracino. <i>A Neighborhood That Never Changes</i> Schlichtman. <i>Patch and Hill Gentrifier</i> . Mary Patillo. <i>Black on The Block</i> .
	February 14 (Thu)	<b>Displacement</b>  Required reading: Freeman. <i>There Goes the 'Hood</i> . Newman and Wily. "The Right to Stay Put, Revisited."
4	February 19 (Tue)	<b>Gentrification near and far</b>  Required reading: Acolin and Vitiello, "Who Owns Chinatown" <b>Film Response Mini-paper due by 12:30</b>
	February 21 (Thu)	<b>Gentrification in Boston</b> Guest speaker: Celina Miranda, Executive Director Hyde Square Task Force  Required reading: Anguelovski, "Healthy Food Stores.." Kroll, "Gentrification Anxiety"

\* **The schedule may change** as we accommodate snow days, speakers, and research. Always check Blackboard for the most up-to-date version of the syllabus.

5	February 26 (Tue)	<p><b>Gentrification and the university</b></p> <p>Required reading:            Angulu, “Expansion and Gentrification.”            Baldwin, “The 800-Pound Gargoyle.”</p>
	February 28 (Thu)	<p><b>Gentrification in our backyard</b></p> <p>Guest Speakers: Bryan Balvaneda, UMB Psychology and            Annetta Argyres, Labor Resource Center</p> <p>Required reading:            Sieber, Remarks on Columbia Point.            Sieber, Columbia Harbor Point History            Seasholes, Colombia Point History</p>
6	March 5 (Tue)	<p><b>Climate change and environmental justice</b></p> <p>Guest speaker: Rebecca Herst, Director of Sustainable            Solutions Lab</p> <p>Required reading:            Arena, <i>Driven from New Orleans</i></p>
	March 7 (Thu)	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>
<b>SPRING BREAK</b>		
7	March 19 (Tue)	<p><b>Meet in H-3-009F (Healey Library)</b></p> <p><b>Geographies of gentrification</b></p> <p>Required reading:            Brown-Saracino. A Neighborhood That Never Changes, Ch. 1</p>
	March 21 (Thu)	<p><b>Meet in H-3-009F (Healey Library)</b></p> <p><b>Geographies of gentrification</b></p> <p>No required reading. Work on your quantitative mini-paper.</p>
8	March 26 (Tue)	<p><b>Studying public space</b></p> <p>Guest speaker: Professor Sarah Mayorga-Gallo</p> <p>Required reading:            Mayorga-Gallo, “Whose Best Friend?”</p>
	March 28 (Thu)	<p><b>Walkalongs, interview, and picture methodologies</b></p> <p>Required reading:            Aptekar, “Looking forward, looking back.”            Kennelly and Watt, “Seeing Olympic effects” (optional)</p>

9	April 2 (Tue)	<p><b>NEW: Visit from Adesuwa Igbineweka from Career Services</b></p> <p>job search strategies, possible careers with degrees in sociology and social psych, what to expect after college, expectations at work</p> <p><b>New Deadline for the Quantitative Mini-Paper (by 12:30pm)</b></p>
	April 4 (Thu)	<p><b>Tourism and consumption</b></p> <p>Required reading: Zukin et al, “The Omnivore’s Neighborhood.” Wachsmuth and Weisler, “Airbnb and the rent gap.”</p>
10	April 9 (Tue)	<p><b>Gentrification and diversity</b></p> <p>Required readings: Tissot, “Loving diversity/controlling diversity”</p>
	April 11 (Thu)	<p>Film Screening: Gringo Favelado [Professor Aptekar presenting her research at the Boston College Global Migration Conference.]</p> <p>Required readings: Cummings, “Confronting Favela Chic”</p>
11	April 16 (Tue)	<p><b>Housing</b></p> <p>Required reading: Aalbers and Gibb, “Housing and the Right to the City.” Baiocchi, Brady and Carlson, “Beyond the Market” Ng, “Roxbury residents say they are being driven out.”</p>
	April 18 (Thu)	<p><b>Education</b></p> <p>Required reading: Billingham and McDonough Kimelberg, “Middle-Class Parents, Urban Schooling, and the Shift From Consumption to Production of Urban Space.”</p>
12	April 23 (Tue)	<p><b>Policing/social control</b></p> <p>Required reading: Branigin, “New report shows gentrifiers use police.” Laniyonu, “Coffee shops and street stops.”</p>

	April 25 (Thu)	<p><b>What's the Point? <i>Memories and Reflections on The History of UMass Boston and Its Relationship with Columbia Point/Harbor Point Housing</i> (campus event)</b></p> <p>Work on your research report, no readings</p>
13	April 30 (Tue)	<p><b>Gentrification and culture</b></p> <p>Required reading:  Hyra, "Black Branding" in <i>Race, Class, and Politics in the Cappuccino City</i>.  Hanser and Hyde, "Foodies Remaking Cities."  White, "Curating the Street."  Research report due</p>
	May 2 (Thu)	<p><b>Beyond the city</b></p> <p>Required reading:  Hines, "In Pursuit of Experience."</p>
14	May 7 (Tue)	<p><b>Resisting gentrification</b></p> <p>Required reading:  Nettling, "Organizing Against <i>Projet Gentrification</i>"  Curran, "Mexicans Love Red."</p>
	May 9 (Thu)	<p><b>Resisting gentrification</b></p> <p>Required reading:  Tobias, "The Amazon Deal Was Not Brought Down by a Handful of Politicians"  Oltermann, "Berlin's Rental Revolution"  Bates, "The Lessons NYC Activists Have for Those Fighting Displacement the World Over"</p>
15	May 14 (Tue)	<b>Research showcase</b>
	FINAL PAPER DUE MAY 24	