

Prof. Tony Affigne  
Department of Political Science  
316 Howley Hall

[affigne@providence.edu](mailto:affigne@providence.edu)

(401) 865-2569

Office Hours Tuesday 10:00-11:00 a.m.



Angel Taveras, Rhode Island's first-ever Latino mayor, celebrates victory in Providence's 2010 Democratic primary.  
*Photo by Frank Mullin. September 14, 2010.*

## Urban Politics in the United States

*Political Science 303/Black Studies 303 – Spring Semester 2015*

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:00 - 2:15 p.m., Feinstein Academic Center 209

### About This Course

*Urban Politics in the United States* is a survey introduction to political systems in urban regions of the United States. Topics include urban political organization, city governance, and public policy. The course fulfills the political science major's American Politics requirement, and is an elective for Black studies minors. For writing assessment students may choose either a take-home final exam, or several graded essays during the semester. Attendance is mandatory for all class meetings.

### Assessment Options

To accommodate diverse personal learning styles, academic schedules, and outside commitments, this course offers two different options for assessment and grading. You should choose the option which best suits your needs, but once chosen, your option may not be changed. You should make your selection no later than January 29. These are your choices:

1) Exam option. Most students will select this option. Includes an in-class essay exam at mid-semester, and a 12-20 page take-home final exam. Final exam questions will be distributed at the last class meeting on April 30, and completed exams will be due in the professor's office, 316 Howley Hall, between 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 9.

2) Unit essay option. This option includes four reflective research essays, corresponding to thematic units in the course. Essays will be 3-5 pages each, with due dates of Jan. 27, Feb. 24, Apr. 14, and Apr. 28. Each essay will identify the most important themes of the unit as they emerge from readings, lectures, and discussions; will incorporate findings from three or four outside sources; and will reflect on broader implications.

NOTE: All students will complete two field exploration essays—one reflecting on city neighborhoods, after an observational ride on RIPTA's "R-Line" (essay due Feb. 10) and the other after attending a meeting of the Providence City Council (essay due Mar. 17).

### **Reading Groups**

All students will be assigned to a Reading Group (A-E). Reading groups will be used for long reading assignments; from time to time, each group will be assigned to read a chapter, and at the next class, will lead class discussion of key themes in the chapter.

### **Field Explorations**

Each student will plan and conduct two field explorations; the first will be an observational visit through the downtown and South side of Providence, and the City of Pawtucket, using public transit (RIPTA). In a second, each student will attend a meeting of the Providence City Council, or of a Council committee. After each field exploration, you will write a brief (3 page) reflective essay, describing your observations in detail.

### **Grading System: Mid-Semester and Final Grades**

You will receive two grades in this course, one at mid-semester and a final grade when the course is complete. The mid-semester grade (40%) will reflect your attendance and effort, and any written work you've submitted to date. Your final grade for the course will merge the mid-semester grade with your work after mid-semester (60%), including class participation, effort, and written work.

### **General Policies**

You are expected to attend every class, participate fully in discussions, and follow all written and verbal instructions. Assigned readings are essential, and should be completed in full prior to each class. Due dates for written assignments are fixed; extensions are not allowed except in *extraordinary* circumstances. All written assignments must be submitted in printed form; electronic submissions are not acceptable. Attendance is mandatory; unexcused absences will earn compensatory writing assignments, and also lower your grades. Contact the professor *before* missing class, preferably by email, with your specific request for an excused absence.

## Academic Policies

Each student is expected to meet all requirements for class participation, attendance, and assignment deadlines, as outlined in this syllabus or as verbally instructed by the professor. In addition, you are expected to honor all of the College's general academic policies—including standards of academic integrity. See those policies here:

<http://www.providence.edu/Dean+of+Undergraduate+Studies/Academic+Policies/>

## Classroom Policies

Just as mutual respect is fundamental to racial understanding, respect for the classroom atmosphere, and shared responsibility for its maintenance, are fundamental to the learning experience. You demonstrate respect for fellow students, the professor, and the course material, by taking the following policies seriously:

- You should arrive on time; late entry disrupts the class, and requires that announcements (including assignments, events, and so on) be repeated.
- You should be attentive at all times, including when other students or guests are speaking, when videos are on-screen, and when the professor is lecturing or answering another student's question. Pay attention! Don't sleep, be rude, or talk out of turn.
- It is inappropriate to eat or drink during class. You should arrange your personal schedule so that breakfast, lunch, snacks, coffee, and water are consumed before class begins. We're working in here!
- Phone calls, texts, tweets, email, "Facebooking," etc. are not allowed during class. Cellphones, tablets, and laptops should be used only to record notes, conduct online research on a topic raised in discussion, or communicate with the professor.

## COURSE BOOKS, CHAPTERS ON RESERVE, VIDEO & MULTIMEDIA

### Required Books

Judd, Dennis R., and Todd Swanstrom. 2015. *City Politics: The Political Economy of Urban America*, 9<sup>th</sup> Edition. Boston: Pearson.

### Instructor's Reserve Chapters (see Class Schedule for details)

Stone, Clarence. 1989. "Atlanta's Urban Regime," "Rethinking Community Power: Social Production versus Social Control," and "Conclusion," from *Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta, 1946-1988*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas.

Pelissero, John P. 2003. "The Political Environment of Cities in the Twenty-First Century," "City Councils," in *Cities, Politics, and Policy: A Comparative Analysis*, John P. Pelissero, Editor. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Hunter, Floyd. 1953. "Introduction," "Location of power in regional city," and "What some leaders are like," from *Community Power Structure: A Study of Decision Makers*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

## CLASS SCHEDULE with READING and WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

### UNIT I • UNDERSTANDING THE STRUCTURE of URBAN POWER

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#### Recommended Reading:

- Who Governs?* Robert A. Dahl (Yale 1961).  
*Boss: Richard J. Daley of Chicago*. Mike Royko (Dutton 1971).  
*The Politics of Turmoil: Essays on Poverty, Race, and the Urban Crisis*. Richard A. Cloward and Frances Fox Piven (Vintage 1975).  
*City Limits*. Paul Peterson (Chicago 1981).  
*City Trenches: Urban Politics and the Patterning of Class in the United States*. Ira Katznelson (Chicago 1982).  
*Coleman Young and Detroit Politics*. Wilbur C. Rich (Wayne State 1989).  
*The Rascal King: The Life and Times of James Michael Curley, 1874-1958*. Jack Beatty (Addison-Wesley 1992).  
*City for Sale: The Transformation of San Francisco*. Chester Hartman and Sarah Carnochan (California 2002).

Jan. 13 – Course Introduction and Overview

Jan. 15 – **The Evolution of City Politics in America**

Read: *City Politics*, Chap. 1

Jan. 20 – **NO CLASS**

Jan. 22 – **The Legacy of America's Urban Past**

Read: *City Politics*, Chap. 2.

**INSTRUCTIONS: Unit Essays**

Jan. 27 – **Party Machines and the Immigrants**

Read: *City Politics*, Chap. 3.

**DEADLINE: Assessment option selection**

**DUE: Unit Essay #1: “Shadows of the past—Urban economy and urban machine”**

### UNIT II • THE CITY and ITS PEOPLE

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#### Recommended Reading:

- The Politics of Black Empowerment*. James Jennings, Wayne State University Press 1992.  
*Black and Multiracial Politics in America*. Yvette M. Alex-Assensoh and Lawrence J. Hanks, New York University, 2000.  
*Racial Politics in American Cities, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition*. Rufus Browning, Dale Rogers Marshall, and David Tabb, eds., Longman Press, 2003.  
*Fluid Borders: Latino Power, Identity, and Politics in Los Angeles*. Lisa Garcia Bedolla, University of California, 2005.

Jan. 29 – **The Fusion of Public and Private Power: Urban Regime Theory**

Read: (4) Chap. 9 “Atlanta’s Urban Regime,” (5) Chap. 11 “Rethinking Community Power: Social Production versus Social Control,” and (6) Chap. 12 “Conclusion,” from *Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta, 1946-1988*, by Clarence Stone (1989).

INSTRUCTIONS – Field exploration on RIPTA’s “R Line,” and essay

Feb. 3 – **NO CLASS – Field Excursion: Rhode Island Urban Communities (RIPTA)**

Feb. 5 – **NO CLASS – Field Excursion: Rhode Island Urban Communities (RIPTA)**

Feb. 10 – **The Reform Crusades**

Read: *City Politics*, Chap. 4.

DUE: Field exploration essay – The urban community

Feb. 12 – **Urban Voters and the Rise of a National Democratic Majority**

Read: *City Politics*, Chap. 5.

Feb. 17 – **The City/Suburban Divide**

Read: *City Politics*, Chap. 6.

Feb. 19 – **Federal Programs and the Divisive Politics of Race**

Read: *City Politics*, Chap. 8.

Feb. 24 – **The Rise of the Sunbelt**

Read: *City Politics*, Chap. 9.

DUE: Unit Essay #2: “The meaning of community in city, suburb, and town”

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**UNIT III • CHALLENGES of CONTEMPORARY URBAN GOVERNMENT**

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*Urban Issues: Selections from CQ Researcher*. (CQ Press 2010).

*Cities, Politics, and Policy: A Comparative Analysis*. John P. Pelissero, Ed. (CQ Press 2003).

*The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How It Changed America*. Nicholas Lemann (Vintage 1992).

*The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements*. Manuel Castells (California 1983).

*Rainbow’s End: Irish-Americans and the Dilemmas of Urban Machine Politics, 1840-1985*. Steven Erie. (California 1985).

*Bitter Fruit: Black Politics and the Chicago Machine, 1931-1991*. William J. Grimshaw (Chicago 1992).

Feb. 26 – **Special Guest Speaker**

Read: *TBA*

Mar. 3 – **The Political Environment of the U.S. City**

Read: (1) Chapter 1, “The Political Environment of Cities in the Twenty-First Century,” by John P. Pelissero; (2) “Chapter 7, City Councils,” by Timothy B. Krebs and John P. Pelissero, in *Cities, Politics, and Policy: A Comparative Analysis*, John P. Pelissero, Ed. (CQ Press 2003)

INSTRUCTIONS: City Council meeting and essay

**Mar. 5 – NO CLASS – Providence City Council Meeting**

*Field Assignment:* The City Council of the City of Providence meets in the Council chambers, on the third floor of City Hall, adjacent to Kennedy Plaza. The meeting on March 5 will begin at 7:00 p.m. There are sometimes delays.

**Mar. 10 – NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK**

**Mar. 12 – NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK**

**Mar. 17 – Special Guest Speaker**

**DUE:** Field exploration essay – The City Council

**Mar. 19 – Mid-Semester Exam**

**Mar. 24 – The Rise of the Fragmented Metropolis**

Read: *City Politics*, Chap. 10.

**Mar. 26 – The Metropolitan Battleground**

Read: *City Politics*, Chap. 12.

**Mar. 31 – NO CLASS – Western Political Science Association**

**Apr. 2 – NO CLASS - Easter**

**Apr. 7 – The Renaissance of the Metropolitan Center**

Read: *City Politics*, Chap. 13.

**Apr. 9 – Governing the Divided City**

Read: *City Politics*, Chap. 14.

**Apr. 14 – City and Metropolis in the Global Era**

Read: *City Politics*, Chap. 15.

**DUE:** Unit Essay #3: “Social power and democracy—Who governs?”

**UNIT IV • THEORY AND PRACTICE in CITY GOVERNMENT**

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**Apr. 16 – Community Power Structure: Social Elites in City Government**

Read : (1) Chapter 1 “Introduction,” (2) Chapter 2 “Location of power in regional city,” (3) Chapter 3 “What some leaders are like,” from *Community Power Structure: A Study of Decision Makers*, by Floyd Hunter (1953).

**Apr. 21 – Guest Lecture: The News Media and Urban Power**

Read: *TBA*

**Apr. 23 – Guest Lecture: Community Organization and Politics**

Read: *TBA*

**Apr. 28 – Review of “Theory and Practice”**

**DUE:** Unit Essay #4: “Social change and social power in American cities”

**Apr. 30 – Discussion - Final class meeting**

**DISTRIBUTION:** Final exam questions