



**Geography 420W: Race, Class and the Digital Economy:
Inequality, Poverty and Urban Development in Pittsburgh and Durban**
(<http://www.geog.psu.edu/courses/geog420/>)

Time: T/Th 9:45-11:00 am
Location: 7A Sparks Building

Instructor: Chris Benner
318 Walker Building
865-6693
cbenner@psu.edu
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 2:30-4:30pm or by appointment

Course Description:

This course examines race and class dynamics in urban development, and how patterns of urban inequality are being influenced by the digital economy. Cities are fundamentally shaped by inequality and conflict, as different social groups mobilize political and economic resources in an effort to improve their socio-economic circumstances. Rapid globalization and the rise of an information economy, however, are resulting in rapidly changing patterns of employment, economic opportunity and political power. Understanding these changes, how they differ in different places, and how they are affecting patterns of inequality and economic opportunity, is both critical for understanding patterns of urbanization, and essential for promoting more equitable, livable, and sustainable cities.

This course explores these issues in an international, comparative and applied policy perspective, through a detailed comparison of the industrial history and contemporary socio-economic dynamics of Pittsburgh and Durban. Through this process, the course aims to help us understand the ways that race and class are socially constructed, and that seemingly universal processes of globalization and economic restructuring are fundamentally shaped by local political dynamics.

South African Video-Conferences

The course is run in collaboration with the Industrial, Organisational and Labour Studies Program (IOLS) at the University of Natal, in Durban, South Africa. These students are conducting research on economic restructuring in the Durban Metropolitan region. We will be holding periodic video-conferences with collaborators in South Africa, sharing insights on the readings, our research and our interpretations of contemporary urban processes in the U.S. and South Africa. All video-conferences will be held during regular class time.

Course Requirements:

This is a reading and writing intensive course. Students will be expected to perform at a high-level. Class-room time will be primarily reserved for discussions of assigned readings, with

lectures kept to a minimum. Students will take responsibility for preparing material to guide many of our classroom discussions.

Specific requirements include the following:

1. Everyone needs to make sure the course is listed for them on Penn State's Angel Course Management System. Make sure the group entitled "Race, Class and the Digital Economy: Pittsburgh and Durban" is listed under "My Groups". We will be using this for collaboration with colleagues at UKZN and for group work.
2. There are three broad writing assignments that are part of the course, which are explained below. Prior to starting any of these assignments, we will have a class discussion about writing, the process of writing, and what constitutes good writing. Through this, we will develop collective criteria that can be used to help guide us all to better writing.
3. *Writing project 1: Analysis and presentation of course reading:* Each student will be responsible for analyzing the selected reading for 2 class sessions. One of the sessions will be on your own, and one will be in partnership with assigned students at UKZN. This will involve the following tasks:
 - a. Prior to class, preparing a 2-3 page statement to guide class discussion, either alone or together with your UZKN partner(s). Formats may vary, and you should feel free to be creative. It may be useful to include the following:
 - i. Ideas, concepts, arguments that you found particularly stimulating, worth remembering, and building on;
 - ii. Questions, concerns, disagreements, with ideas encountered;
 - iii. Connection, linkages, contradictions, between one idea or approach or another.
 - b. Your 2-3 page statement should be distributed to the class listserv at least 24-hours prior to the class you will be presenting the material.
 - c. During the class time, for the first 20 minutes, the author of the statement will not be allowed to speak. The rest of the class will read the statement, discuss the material and highlight aspects of the written statement that are particular good, or perhaps unclear. After this is an opportunity for the author of the statement to clarify key points and lead the rest of the discussion.
 - d. You then have one-week in order to revise the written statement and submit a final version, which will be graded and contribute to your final grade in the class.
4. *Writing project 2: Statement on contribution of international and comparative perspective on inequality and urban development in the U.S.:* At least 24-hours prior to the third organized video-conference with our South African colleagues, each student will write a 1-2 page statement addressing the following question:
 - a. How does studying inequality and urban development in Durban help in understanding and addressing inequality and poverty in Pittsburgh? More generally, what can we learn from urban development processes in South Africa that can help us address poverty and inequality in the United States? In developing an answer to this question, you might consider issues of race and

ethnicity, labor relations and employment patterns, urban structure, politics and urban services, and the nature of global economic relations, among other issues.

- b. Following each subsequent video-conferences, you will revise the statement to improve it, and incorporate new insights you gain as the semester progresses.
 - c. The final version of this statement (which will be the only version actually graded) is due one-week after the final video-conference.
5. **Writing project 3: Semester research project:** Students will work in teams to produce a detailed research paper for a client in Pittsburgh, on a project related to addressing poverty and social inequality in the Pittsburgh area. The client this year is the Pittsburgh Interfaith Impact Network (PIIN), an interracial, urban-suburban coalition of congregations and other faith-based organizations in southwestern Pennsylvania. PIIN draws together people of many faiths and income levels to act powerfully on local and regional issues of justice and equity through community-building, negotiation with decision-makers and direct action. PIIN is an affiliate of the Gamaliel Foundation (www.gamaliel.org), a network of over 60 grass-roots organizations in 18 states. Begun in 1986, Gamaliel assists in developing powerful faith-based organizations that rebuild their communities. These affiliates collaborate as a national network to bring about systems social transformation. Over the last two years, PIIN has engaged in a number of issues that impact Pittsburgh and the region, including the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIFs), funding for mass transit, enforcement of fair housing policies, and regional cooperation. Their work has been most focused on the city of Pittsburgh itself, where the largest community of African-Americans is concentrated. They are currently in the process, however, of expanding their constituency to declining and at-risk suburban communities throughout the Pittsburgh Metropolitan Region. As part of this work, they are working to infuse a “regional equity perspective” throughout the organization and on building African-American leadership in the region. We will pursue an applied research and GIS mapping project designed to support these regional equity organizing initiatives.

The primary goals of this research project are to:

- a) Identify towns and electoral districts in the Pittsburgh MSA that are either distressed or at-risk, where these is likely to be a strong constituency for regional equity development strategies; and
- b) Document patterns and dynamics of regional inequality in fiscal health, housing patterns, and economic opportunity that can support PIIN’s organizing efforts.

The specific research tasks that we will undertake include:

1. *Promising electoral dynamics:* Identify cities and electoral districts that reflect changing “social fault lines” in the region through particularly tight margins in recent elections and/or recent changes in long-standing voting patterns. Data to be gathered and analyzed includes:
 - a. Recent voting patterns in U.S. Congressional races
 - b. Recent voting patterns in PA House of Representatives Races
 - c. Recent voting patterns in PA Senate Races

2. *Fiscally distressed or at-risk towns*: Identify municipalities that are fiscally distressed or at risk, and document inequality in fiscal basis of local government throughout the region. Data to be gathered and analyzed includes:
 - a. Total tax base, per capita tax base, per capita tax rates
 - b. Property tax base per household, property tax base per poor family
3. *Socio-demographic and housing shifts*: Document regional inequality (by census tract) in key socio-economic variables. Data to be gathered and analyzed includes:
 - a. Housing variables: homeownership rates, housing value.
 - b. Job change: job loss and job gain
 - c. Demographic shifts: Racial change

The primary goal of this semester research projects is to collectively produce a final product that will be useful to PIIN in their organizational development processes, and to present the results of our research to the client organization and related organizations. As such, it is not an academic paper, but an applied research project. Part of your task in developing this research paper is to understand the perspective of the client organization, and to produce a report that meets their needs. You will be working in teams on this project, and will be working closely with the professor on these projects throughout the semester.

Pittsburgh Field Trips:

During the course of the semester we will have the opportunity for at least two, and perhaps more, organized field trips to Pittsburgh. These trips are an invaluable opportunity to meet with organizations in Pittsburgh and get a first-hand understanding of urban dynamics in the region. On field trip days we will be leaving State College at 6:30 am, and returning after 9:00 pm. Details of the trips will be discussed in class.

Grading:

Your grade in the course will be based on the following:

General class-room and listserv participation	20%
Writing project 1: Analysis of reading material	15%
Writing project 2: Statement on value of international comparison	15%
Writing project 3: Semester research project	50%

Learning Environment and Academic Integrity:

The University's policy statement on academic integrity reads in part:

“Academic integrity mandates the pursuit of teaching, learning, research, and creative activity in an open, honest, and responsible manner. An academic community that values integrity promotes the highest levels of personal honesty,

respect for the rights, property, and dignity of others, and fosters an environment in which students and scholars can enjoy the fruits of their efforts. Academic integrity includes a commitment neither to engage in acts of falsification, misrepresentation, or deception, nor to tolerate such acts by other members of the community.” <http://www.psu.edu/oldmain/prov/academicintegrity.htm>

Plagiarism, cheating, knowledge of these without reporting them, or any other form of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for the course and referral for further disciplinary action. In all written work, you must reference and attribute sources. If you have any questions as to what may or may not constitute plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty, please see the instructor or the assistant. Any violations of academic integrity will be dealt with following the University’s procedures, which are described in detail at <http://www.psu.edu/dept/oue/aappm/G-9.html>

Course Texts:

Many of the readings will be drawn from the following texts, which should be available from the bookstores, and will also be available on reserve at the EMS library in 105 Deike Building:

Hays, Samuel, ed. (1989) *City at the Point: Essays on the Social History of Pittsburgh* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press)

Lubove, Roy. (1996) *Twentieth Century Pittsburgh: Volume 2, The Post Steel Era* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press)

Maylam, Paul and Iain Edwards, eds. (1996) *The People’s City: African Life in Twentieth Century Durban* (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press)

Freund, Bill and Vishnu Padayachee, eds. (2002) *(D)urban Vortex: South African City in Transition* (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press)

Additional assigned reading material will be available via electronic reserve on the Angel system.

COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change as needed):

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION AND SETTING THE CONTEXT

- Tue 30 Aug ***PSU: Course introduction, personal introductions, discussion of writing assignments and evaluations***
UKZN: Discussion of Class Projects
- Thurs 1 Sep ***Video Conference: Introductions, discussing themes of the course and context of comparing both cities***
PSU Read: Setting the Context: Pittsburgh and Durban: Industrial Restructuring and Renewal
Jezierski, Louise (1996) "Pittsburgh: Partnerships in a Regional City" in Savitch, H.V. and Vogel, Ronald K. *Regional Politics: America in a Post-City Age Urban Affairs Annual Review #45*. (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications) (electronic reserve)
Morris, Mike et al. (2002) "From Import Substitution Industrialisation to Globalised International Competitiveness" pp. 107-133 in *(D)urban Vortex*.
- Tue 6 Sep ***Race and Racism in the U.S.***
Roediger, David R. (1994) "From the Social Construction of Race to the Abolition of Whiteness" in *Towards the Abolition of Whiteness* (New York: Verso Press) pp. 1-17 (electronic reserve)
Omi, Michael and Howard Winant (1994) *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s* (New York: Routledge) Chapter 4 (Racial Formation)
- Thurs 8 Sep ***Video-conference: Race in South Africa and the U.S.***
Race and Racial Narratives in South Africa
Greenstein, Ran (1993) "Racial Formation: Towards a Comparative Study of Collective Identities in South Africa and the United States" *Social Dynamics* 19.2, pp. 1-29 (electronic reserves)
Posel, D (2001) 'What's in a Name? Racial categorizations under apartheid and their afterlife' *Transformation* 47, pp 50-74.
Webster, E (1977) "The 1949 Durban Riots: A Case Study in Race and Class", P. Bonner (ed) *Working Papers in Southern African Studies*, vol 1 (Johannesburg: African Studies Institute)

SECTION II: 20th CENTURY DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING

- Tue 13 Sep ***Pittsburgh economic decline and renewal, post WWII.***
From Hays, Samuel (1989) *City at the Point*:
Chapter 1: Faires, Nora “Immigrant and Industry: Peopling the ‘Iron City’”
Chapter 3: Glasco, Laurence “Double Burden: The Black Experience in Pittsburgh”
Chapter 4: Oestreicher, Richard “Working-Class Formation, Development, and Consciousness in Pittsburgh, 1790-1960”
Chapter 8: Ingham, John “Steel City Aristocrats”
- Thurs 15 Sep ***Video-conference: De-industrialization in Pittsburgh***
End of the Steel Era in Pittsburgh
Lubove, Roy (1995) “The Pittsburgh Renaissance: An Experiment in Public Paternalism” Chapter six of *Twentieth Century Pittsburgh: Volume 1, Government, Business and Environmental Change* (electronic reserve)

Lubove, Roy (1996) *Twentieth Century Pittsburgh, Vol. II*
Chapter 1: “Elegy for a Bygone World”
Chapter 2: “Economic Development Strategy in the Post-Steel Era”
- Tue 20 Sep ***UKZN: Mid-term Break***
PSU: Durban: Early Industrialization and Urbanization
Kuper, L Watts, H. & Davies, R 1958. *Durban: A Study in Racial Ecology*
Ch 2: The People of Durban: Economic Aspects, pp 43-66. Ch 7: Group Areas pp 175 – 209.

Swanson, MW 1976. ‘The Durban System’: Roots of Urban Apartheid in Colonial Natal’ *African Studies*, 35:3-4

Maylam, P 1996. The Changing Political Economy of the Region, 1920-1950. in R. Morrell et al (ed) *Political Economy and Identities in KwaZulu-Natal: Historical and Social Perspectives* (Durban: Indicator Press) pp
- Thurs 22 Sep ***No Video-conference***
UKZN: Mid-term Break
PSU: Durban: Development of an Apartheid City
Maharaj, B. 1996. The historical development of the apartheid local state in South Africa: the case of Durban. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 20: 587-600 (electronic version)

Maylam, Paul and Iain Edwards *The People’s City*:
“Introduction: The Struggle for Space in Twentieth Century Durban”.

- Tue 27 Sep ***Durban: Class formation and class conflict, 1930s-1980s***
 Maylam, Paul and Iain Edwards *The People's City*:
 Hemson, David "In the Eye of the Storm: Dock-workers in Durban"
 Nuttal, Tim "The Leaves in the Trees are Proclaiming our Slavery:
 African Trade-Union Organisation, 1937-1949
 Sitas, Ari "The Sweat was Black: Working for Dunlop"
- Thurs 29 Sep ***Video-Conference: Durban's 20th Century Development***
Durban: Economic Development and Change
 Freund and Padayachee (2002) *(D)urban Vortex*
 Chapter 1: Freund, Bill "City Hall and the Direction of Development"
 Chapter 5: Padayachee, Vishnu "Financing Durban's Development,
 1970-1999"

SECTION III: POST 1970s & CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENTS

- Tue 4 Oct ***The New Economy: Splintering Metropolis***
 Graham, Stephen and Simon Marvin (2001) *Splintering Urbanism: Networked Infrastructures, Technological Mobilities and the Urban Condition* (London: Routledge) Chapter 6 "Social Landscapes of Splintering Urbanism", pp. 217-301 (electronic reserve)
- Thurs 6 Oct ***Video-Conference: The Network City***
Reconnecting the Splintered Metropolis: Community-Based Regionalism
 Pastor Manuel. 2000. *Regions that work : how cities and suburbs can grow together*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Chapter 1 (The New Regionalism and the New Community Building) and Chapter 7 (Growing Together: Policies for Regional Prosperity and Equity) (electronic copy)
- Tue 11 Oct ***Pittsburgh: Regional Development and Governance***
 Lubove, Roy (1996) *Twentieth Century Pittsburgh, Vol. II*
 Chapter 4: "A Second Renaissance"
 Chapter 5: "Pittsburgh Neighborhoods: A System of Subsidized Empowerment"
 Chapter 9: "Amenities and Economic Development"

- Thurs 13 Oct ***Video-Conference: Pittsburgh in the New Economy***
Pittsburgh: “New Economy” Development Strategies
 Carnegie Mellon University (1994) *The Greater Pittsburgh Region: Working Together to Compete Globally* Carnegie Mellon University and Allegheny Conference on Community Development
 Detrick, Sabina (1999) “The post-industrial revitalization of Pittsburgh: myths and evidence” *Community Development Journal* 34:1, pp. 4-12
- Tue 18 Oct ***Pittsburgh: Workforce Development***
 Working Together Consortium *Working Together to Connect Workers to the Jobs of the Future: Critical Steps for Regional Success* (aka The Nordenberg Report)
 Workforce Alliance, Background Report on the Workforce Investment Act. <http://www.workforcealliance.org/policy/wia.shtm>
 The Reinvestment Fund, Summary of Workforce Investment System in Pennsylvania
- Thurs 20 Oct ***Video-conference: Pittsburgh: Specific ‘New Economy’ Development Initiatives***
 Review web-sites:
 Pittsburgh Digital Greenhouse (<http://www.digitalgreenhouse.com/>)
 Innovation Works (<http://www.innovationworks.org/>)
 Pittsburgh Technology Council (<http://www.tc-p.com/>)
 Carnegie Mellon Center for Economic Development, especially recent reports on Bio-technology in Pittsburgh (<http://www.smartpolicy.org/>)
- Tue 25 Oct ***Durban: Economic Development Policy***
 City of Durban (eThekweni) (2002) Integrated Development Plan Summary
 Freund and Padayachee (2002) *(D)urban Vortex*
 Chapter 2: Hall, Peter and Glen Robbins “Economic Development for a New Era”
 Paper by Robinson, Bonnin, et al

Thurs	27 Oct	<i>Video-Conference: Durban: Contemporary Economic Development Issues and Initiatives</i> uShaka and Point Development http://www.durbanpoint.co.za/ http://www.ushakamarineworld.co.za/ Inanda/Ntuzuma/KwaMashu development http://www.durban.gov.za/eThekweni/Municipality/abm/maps
Tue	1 Nov	<i>Durban: Contemporary Economic Development Issues and Initiatives</i> Workforce development, training, and Black Economic Empowerment— Readings TBD
Thurs	3 Nov	Video-Conference: Durban Student Presentations Reading: Students papers.
Tue	8 Nov	<i>Regional Equity</i> Blackwell and Fox (2004) <i>Regional Equity and Smart Growth: Opportunities for Advancing Social and Economic Justice in America</i> Brookings Institution (2004) <i>Pulling Apart: Economic Segregation Among Suburbs and Central Cities in Major Metropolitan Areas</i>
Thurs	10 Nov	<i>PIIN Research Project Class Work-time</i>
Tue	15 Nov	Benner, Pastor, et al (2005) <i>Edging Towards Equity: Building a New Movement Towards Metropolitan Sustainability</i>
Thurs	17 Nov	<i>PIIN Research Project Class Work-time</i>
Tue	22 Nov	<i>No Class—Follows a Friday schedule</i>
Thurs	24 Nov	<i>No Class—Thanksgiving</i>
Tue	29 Nov	<i>PIIN Research Project Class Work-time</i>
Thurs	1 Dec	<i>Student Presentation—Political Dynamics</i>
Tue	6 Dec	<i>Student Presentation—Fiscal Health of Cities</i>
Thurs	8 Dec	<i>Student Presentation—Socio-demographic and Housing Shifts</i>

Note: Final field trip to Pittsburgh to present the research to PIIN will be scheduled during finals week to allow maximum possible participation.