GEOG 5500: POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE CITY - DRAFT

Department of Geography and Environmental Studies

Winter 2026

Time:	Tuesdays 8:35-11:25am, Loeb A220
Instructor:	Dr. Jennifer Ridgley
Email:	jennifer.ridgley@carleton.ca
Office Hours:	By appointment on Tuesdays in Loeb B355
Brightspace Page:	https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home/365772

Course Description

This course engages with influential scholarship on the political economy of the city in order to understand contemporary urban issues and urban struggles. It focuses on geographical perspectives to highlight the *spatiality* of political, economic, social and environmental processes in the city. We will revisit key concepts and theoretical traditions that have influenced critical geography and discuss their relevance to contemporary urban issues. A key objective of this course is supporting students to advance their own research, learning and/or political engagements. In addition to the topics and themes listed below, this course will focus on the development of collective approaches to learning, and scholarship as a collective practice.

Key topics: property and land, gentrification, segregation, financialization, geographical imaginaries, social reproduction, racial capitalism, housing, territorial stigma, carceral space.

Course Goals

- To collectively engage with and analyze diverse scholarship on cities and urban change;
- To support the development of independent research on urban issues;
- To strengthen skills in research and scholarship, including: writing, critical thinking, reading comprehension, engagement with theory and the collective pursuit of knowledge.

Course Format

This is an in-person course and not suitable for online learners.

Readings and Texts:

There is no textbook for this class. All readings will be available through the Carleton University library or *Ares* (Carleton's online reserve system).

Assessment

Participation	20%
Reading Responses	25%
Discussant Role	15%
Final Paper Proposal and Seminar	10%
Final Paper and Presentation	30%

Note that standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

A Note on Participation

Students are expected to come to every class prepared to discuss the readings and fully participate in classroom activities. Students should bring a copy of the required readings and their notes to class with them to facilitate engagement with the texts during class time. Participation will be evaluated as a combination of:

- Attendance (a simple tally of the number of classes attended); and
- Participation (a qualitative assessment of your contribution to class: come prepared (with readings done and notes prepared), raise questions, actively engage in discussions, prepare for and participate in learning activities, make meaningful contributions to class discussion, engage respectfully with colleagues, etc.

COURSE SCHEDULE

January 6	Introduction to Course
January 13	Property and Land I
January 27	Property and Land II
February 3	Gentrification, Racial Capitalism and Social Mix
February 10	Water and Infrastructure
February 17	Winter Break
February 24	Social Reproduction I: Theory and Context cont'd
March 3	Social Reproduction II: Sites and Spaces
March 10	Imagined Geographies and Territorial Stigma Final paper proposal due March13th
March 17	Research Seminar
March 24	Financialization I: The Process and Framework
March 31	Financialization II: Spaces and Sites
April 7	Course Conclusion and Presentation of Final Papers Final papers due April 10th

Academic Integrity

Students are responsible for reading and familiarizing themselves with Carleton's Academic Integrity Policy. This policy is available here: https://carleton.ca/secretariat/wp-content/uploads/Academic-Integrity-Policy.pdf

Plagiarism

The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as "*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own.*" This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT);
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty follows a rigorous process for academic integrity allegations, including reviewing documents and interviewing the student, when an instructor suspects a violation has been committed. Penalties for violations may include a final grade of "F" for the course.

Prohibitions on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Copilot, etc.)

The use of generative artificial intelligence tools is very restricted. Students may only use AI tools for grammar and spell checking their (already produced) written work, or for basic formatting and design suggestions (eg. Microsoft Word's formatting tools, PowerPoint Design editor, etc.).

Other uses of generative artificial intelligence tools for the creation or submission of graded work, or while completing learning activities in class are prohibited. Any unauthorized use of generative AI tools will be considered a violation of Carleton's Academic Integrity Policy (https://carleton.ca/secretariat/wp-content/uploads/Academic-Integrity-Policy-2021.pdf)

This policy ensures that student voices and ideas are prioritized and authentically represented, maintaining the integrity of the work produced by students while allowing basic support to enhance clarity, correctness, and layout. The goal of adopting a limited use of AI is to help students develop foundational skills in writing and critical thinking by practicing substantive content creation without relying on AI support.

Documenting AI use: It is not necessary to document the use of AI for the permitted purposes listed above.

As our understanding of the uses of AI and its relationship to student work and academic integrity continue to evolve, students are required to discuss their use of AI in any circumstance not described here with the course instructor to ensure it supports the learning goals for the course.

Statement on Student Mental Health

As a University student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you: https://carleton.ca/wellness/

Academic Accommodations

Carleton is committed to providing academic accessibility for all individuals. You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. The accommodation request processes, including information about the *Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances*, are outlined on the Academic Accommodations website (students.carleton.ca/course-outline).

Intellectual Property

Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, assignments, presentations, etc., by both instructors and students, are copy protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, videos, outlines, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute course materials publicly for commercial or noncommercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).