

Bowdoin College Urban Studies

Course Offerings Spring 2022

[URBS Minor Requirements](#)

URBS 2100/ITAL 2100/DCS 2100 Digital Florence

Professor Crystal Hall

Course Description:

Asks what a digital representation of a city could and should be, particularly in a moment when travel is limited, using Florence, Italy as a case study. Examines digital image, text, and spatial data about the city, juxtaposing it against non-digital primary sources, secondary critical readings, reflections on experiences of urban and other spaces, and data that we will create in class. Emphasizes shifting definitions across time, language, and digital artifacts of what and who is Florentine in these representations. Coursework happens in three phases: going “under the hood” of the popular digital artifacts that provide an experience of Florence in order to evaluate strengths and weaknesses of representation; expanding our definition of Digital Florence to find local perspectives on what the essential features of the city could be; and proposing a digital intervention that better reflects the values we have identified throughout the semester. Assumes no programming knowledge. Taught in English.

No prerequisites.

URBS 2427/ENVS 2427/HIST 2005 City and Landscape in Modern Europe: London, Paris, Vienna, Berlin

Professor Jill Pearlman

Course Description:

Examines the changing nature of the urban built environment in four major European cities from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. Course considers a wide range of factors that have contributed to shaping the cities’ spaces and forms, among them: politics, money, war, environmental degradation, spatial inequities, industrialization, immigration, public health, heritage, tourism, and gentrification. Explores the changing role these capital cities have played on the world stage while also exploring everyday life at street level, housing from slum life to mansion, urban infrastructure, and the impact of grand schemes of urban planning and design. This course satisfies the non-US requirement for the Urban Studies minor.

No prerequisites.

URBS 2620/AFRS 2220 “The Wire”: Race, Class, Gender, and the Urban Crisis

Professor Brian Purnell

Course Description:

Postwar US cities were considered social, economic, political, and cultural zones of crisis. African Americans -- their families; gender relations; their relationship to urban political economy, politics, and culture -- were at the center of this discourse. Uses David Simon’s epic series “The Wire” as a critical source on postindustrial urban life, politics, conflict, and economics to cover the origins of the urban crisis, the rise of an underclass theory of urban class relations, the evolution of the urban underground economy, and the ways the urban crisis shaped depictions of African Americans in American popular culture.

Class Comment(s): This course is intended for students who will be sophomores, juniors, or seniors in the spring. Only students whose class standing will be sophomore, junior or senior in the spring will have registrations processed for this course.

Prerequisite: AFRS 1101 or EDUC 1101 or GSWS 1101 or SOC 1101

URBS 3560/ECON 3560 Urban Economics

Professor Jessica Lavoie

Course Description:

Seminar. Studies the relationship between economics and urban geography, specifically focusing on how individuals, firms, and other organizations make economic choices across urban areas. Provides theoretical and empirical analyses of cities from both historical and contemporary vantage points. Topics include the development of urban areas, patterns of land use within cities, and the causes and consequences of urban poverty, segregation, congestion, and crime. Also examines the merits of policy responses to these urban problems.

Prerequisites: Two of: ECON 2555 and ECON 2557 or MATH 2606