Instructor:

Professor Carey Doberstein  
Office: Buch C417 (but not really; working from home)  
Office Hours: By appt via Zoom  
E-mail: carey.doberstein@ubc.ca

Course info:

We will meet via video link on Zoom, which is accessible through the Canvas site for the course. Seminars will be recorded for those who are unable on any occasion to participate in the discussion.

Course Description:

Major political, economic, environmental, and social challenges in Canada intersect in cities; economic development, housing and homelessness, policing, and environmental sustainability are all subject to the policies and investment priorities of city governments. Though municipalities in Canadian federalism lack independent constitutional status and confront limits to their legal, fiscal, and political autonomy, increasingly they are critical actors in major policy debates and are generators of policy innovations and governance reforms.

This course will provide students with the theoretical and analytical tools to understand and explain the politics and policy activities of Canada’s metropolitan governments within their unique historical, institutional, and constitutional frameworks and within the political economy of cities. We will examine different theories of urban power and governance, and the ability of different theoretical approaches to explain the emergence of urban policy problems and their various solutions. The focus of the course is on cities in Canada, with a particular focus on Vancouver in the second half of the course when we examine various urban policy issues. Our fundamental aim will be to develop a more comprehensive understanding of how, why, and with what consequences, urban governments and their partners develop and implement policy.
Course Learning Objectives:

This course has 5 core learning objectives. Students will be able to:

1. Describe how local government institutions and intergovernmental relations are structured in Canada
2. Differentiate and critically evaluate the relative strengths and limitations of leading approaches to understanding urban politics
3. Investigate critical urban issues in Vancouver through the lens of competing theories
4. Develop a research question and paper on a contemporary urban issue
5. Present an executive summary of the research paper and take questions from a critical audience

Prerequisites:

POLI 101 and one upper-level Canadian politics course.

Course Format:

The format of the course will be one class session a week, seminar style discussions via Zoom, accessed from within the Canvas course website.

Required Course Texts:

None. All course readings will be available for download from the UBC Canvas system. There are on average about 45-60 pages of scholarly readings per week, plus usually a couple of short popular sources (e.g. op-eds) to read.

Course Assignments, Due Dates and Grading:

Students are responsible for material covered in class discussions as well as in the assigned readings. Regular attendance in class is required.

Grades will be determined on the basis of the following:

a. Paper proposal (due October 27) 10%
b. Final paper (due December 1) 30%
c. Three minute presentation of Final paper 10%
d. Reading and photo journal (weekly, before class) 20%
e. Discussion lead 10%
f. Participation 20%
Assignment details:

Final paper (30%)

In order to develop a feasible and interesting research paper, you must first devise an explicit research question that you plan to address.

Here are some examples of possible areas of focus:
• An important and/or controversial policy issue faced by municipal government in one or more cities that interest you. Issues include housing and homelessness, city centre redevelopment, economic development, historic preservation, suburban sprawl, urban transport, and many others.
• An important urban political event or development in one or more cities. Such events include the rise of a new community movement, the reform of municipal structures, and others.
• An analytical theme raised by the theoretical literature we have read in the course – such as the power of business in urban politics, the relationship between political institutions and policy outcomes in cities, and many others.

Whatever area of focus you choose, the task of your research question is to ask how or why something in that area of focus happens. The task of your research project is to develop an answer to this question that draws on the theory that we have looked at in the course, and provides empirical evidence from one or more cities.

You can draw on both scholarly and non-scholarly sources as necessary. You should use 12 point font, double space your text, and use a consistent and established citation style. The final project should be around 15 pages in length (about 7,000 words), not including references, and will be submitted on the Canvas system, as well as Turnitin.com. The penalty for late submission of this project is 10% per day, including weekend days.

*Students are encouraged to submit work to the Journal of Political Studies (JPS) and the Journal of International Affairs (JIA). The JPS and JIA are entirely student-led, blind peer-reviewed journals that publish undergraduate work. Both journals publish all types of papers from multiple disciplines. Submissions are due on December 23, 2020. Visit ubcjps.com and ubcjia.ca for submission requirements. When in doubt, submit your work.*

Proposal for your research paper (10%)

By Week 7 of the course (Oct 27th), you will put together a 2-3 page (about 1000-word) research proposal. The aim of the proposal is to focus your research question and develop a strategy for the rest of your research. Your proposal should include the following elements:

a. Statement of your research question.
b. Brief discussion of ideas or theories from academic literature that might help you to organize an answer to your research question.
c. Brief discussion of the empirical evidence that you have uncovered so far, if any.
d. Plan for completing the research – what information you need to answer your question well, and how / where you plan to look for that information.
e. Short formal bibliography (about 4-6 sources, not including assigned reading for the course) of the work that you have consulted in designing your project.

I want you to post this on the Canvas discussion board in a space I will create so that you can look at your colleagues’ proposals for comparison and inspiration.

3 Minute Presentation of Final Paper (10%):

Students will deliver a 3 minute presentation (in the vein of the 3MinuteThesis competition) summarizing their final project on the last class and take critical questions from the audience.

Students will be evaluated on their ability to distill their core insights into the short time frame in an engaging and thoughtful manner. Students will also be evaluated for the sophistication and credibility of their responses to critical questions from the audience.

Reading and photo journal (20%):

Students will submit, via CANVAS on separate discussion forums and before each class, a short (400 words) reflection on the week’s scholarly readings, as well as both a photo taken in their lives that week around Vancouver (or wherever you are this Fall) that tells us something about urban politics, broadly defined. The photos and reading reflections do not need to be connected. The reading and photo journaling will be graded on a pass/fail basis, with primary criteria for pass-fail evaluation for the reading journaling being that you demonstrated that you have thought about how concepts or arguments in the readings align or conflict with each other in the case of the reading journal, and you may write in point-form, but please use complete sentences. The primary criteria for pass-fail evaluation is that you are able to describe, briefly and coherently in class, how your photo tells us something interesting about urban politics.

Discussion lead (10%):

Students will co-lead ONE seminar discussion. Precise order TBD collectively by students and professor in Week 1.

An effective discussion leader will typically:

1. Provide opening remarks that set the agenda for the discussion
2. Identify, briefly, the themes that in their view cut across the articles and propose a coherent plan to discuss them
3. Create an inviting space such that all students have an opportunity to share their insights, ask questions, and puzzle through difficult concepts or arguments
4. Manage the discussion such that participation is balanced among students
5. Listen attentively throughout the discussion to be able to synthesize areas of agreement and disagreement among the group at the conclusion of the seminar
Student discussion leads will be evaluated using the above criteria.

**Participation (in class 10%, ‘after class’ 10% = 20%):**
As this is a seminar course, students will be evaluated on their participation in each class. Attendance in each class is a necessary, but not sufficient, step to earn participation points. Students will be most prepared to participate in the class discussions by finishing the assigned readings in advance, and with a critical eye: What is the main point author is making? How does this reading compare to other literature exploring the same topic? Do the arguments comport with your experience and/or intuition? What are the main weaknesses in the author’s argument?

Grading in this realm will reflect the instructor’s assessment of the student’s familiarity with readings and their critical engagement with readings and with other students’ contributions in the discussions. Where there are disagreements or diverse interpretations of the literature of topics under discussion, I expect a respectful approach to dialogue.

Normally participation would be graded exclusively based on in-class discussions, but in the context of remote learning we will not be running 3 hour Zoom sessions each week. I anticipate the class meeting on Zoom from 9-10:30am (Vancouver time) weekly, but then moving to asynchronous work on the Canvas discussion boards for the remainder of our weekly time together. Participation in this “after-class” component will include:

1. A written reaction (at least 200 words) to your own reading journal entry after participating in the class session. (e.g. Did something in the discussion prompt you to rethink your initial thoughts on the readings or issues?)
2. A written reaction (at least 200 words) to at least one classmates’ journal entry
3. Posting at least one news article, twitter thread, podcast or even a meme (and brief commentary, 50 words) relevant to the week’s readings and issues. Does not need to be about Vancouver specifically.

The ‘after class’ component does not need to be completed immediately after class (although that may be the best/easiest time to do it), but you must complete it before the beginning of the next class. I do not want this all to be completed at the last minute in December. The point of it is for us to reflect on the topics each week as we do them and collectively mine additional resources to reflect broader debates and controversies in each realm.
Acknowledgement

UBC’s Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people. The land it is situated on has always been a place of learning for the Musqueam people, who for millennia have passed on in their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

General Academic Policies

Regular attendance in class meetings is expected. All assignments must be completed and handed in.

Read the university calendar so that you are aware of no-penalty drop dates, requirements for medical authorization (to defer an exam, for example) and other procedures that may affect you.

Students who wish to appeal grades assigned to their academic work may do so. The initial appeal should be made to the course instructor. If the student remains unsatisfied with this process, he/she may proceed to the head of the department or further to a formal committee established in accordance with University policies.

Religious holidays – UBC permits students who are scheduled to attend classes or write examinations on holy days of their religions to notify their instructor in advance of these days and their wish to observe them by absenting themselves from class or examination. Instructors provide opportunity for students to make up work or examinations missed without penalty. (Policy # 65.)

UBC is committed to the academic success of students with disabilities. UBC's policy on Academic Accommodations for students with disabilities aims to remove barriers and provide equal access to University services, ensure fair and consistent treatment of all students, and to create a welcoming environment. Students with a disability should first meet with an Access and Diversity advisor to determine what accommodations/services you are eligible for.

Academic Integrity and Responsibility

As a member of this class, you are responsible for contributing to the course objectives through your participation in class activities and your work on essays and other projects. In the process of coming into your own as an independent, responsible participant in the academic community, you are encouraged to seek advice, clarification, and guidance in your learning from your instructor. If you decide to seek help beyond the resources of this course, you are responsible for ensuring that this help does not lead you to submit others’ work as your own. If an outside tutor or other person helps you, show this policy to your tutor or helper: make sure you both understand the limits of this person’s permissible contribution. If you are uncertain, consult your instructor.
Academic communities depend on their members’ honesty and integrity in representing the sources of reasoning, claims, and wordings that appear in their work. Like any other member of the academic community, you will be held responsible for the accurate representation of your sources: the means by which you produced the work you are submitting. If you are found to have misrepresented your sources and to have submitted others’ work as your own, penalties may follow. Your case may be forwarded to the Head of the department, who may decide that you should receive zero for the assignment. The Head will report your case to the Dean’s Office, where the report will remain on file. The Head may decide, in consultation with your instructor, that a greater penalty is called for, and will forward your case to the Dean’s Office. After an interview in the Dean’s Office, your case may be forwarded to the President’s Advisory Committee on Academic Misconduct. Following a hearing in which you will be asked to account for your actions, the President may apply penalties including zero for the assignment; zero for the course; suspension from the university for a period ranging from 4 to 24 months; a notation on your permanent record. The penalty may be a combination of these.

Academic communities also depend on their members’ living up to the commitments they make. By enrolling in this course, you make commitments to an academic community: you are responsible for meeting deadlines, and attending class and engaging in class activities. If you find that you cannot meet a deadline or cannot participate in a course activity, discuss your situation with your instructor before the deadline or before your absence.

Like any academic author submitting work for review and evaluation, you are guaranteeing that the work you submit for this course has not already been submitted for credit in another course. Your submitting work from another course, without your instructor’s prior agreement, may result in penalties such as those applied to the misrepresentation of sources.

**TurnItin**

In accordance with departmental policy, in this course you will be required to submit your research paper in electronic form to a service called TurnItIn. UBC subscribes to this service that checks written material for originality by searching for matching text. This service is in increasing use in universities as protection for students against the impact of academic fraud on scholarship competitions, graduate and law school admissions, and degree reputation. Students will submit their research papers to the TurnItIn website, where software scans the paper against a database which includes public websites, paper writing services, essays submitted to TurnItIn, and journal articles. The service then produces a report on the paper’s originality. The instructor will review the reports, and where necessary, the papers themselves. Please note that TurnItIn stores information on servers that reside in the United States. If you do not wish to use your name when creating your TurnItIn account, please use the first 5 digits of your student number as an alias.
instead. For more information on TurnItIn, reasons for its use, and general policies, see the UBC Vice President Academic and Provost web site, at:

http://www.vpacademic.ubc.ca/integrity/turnitin/index.htm

Students are required to e-mail one copy of their paper to the Instructor and submit the same paper electronically to TurnItIn.

Still a little uncertain or paranoid about what constitutes plagiarism? For a quick refresher visit: http://www.indiana.edu/%7Ewts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml and/or: http://sja.ucdavis.edu/files/plagiarism.pdf

The following directions are taken directly from the UBC VP Academic website:

To submit your paper to TurnItIn, log on to the TurnItIn site, at:

www.turnitin.com

You will be asked to create a unique “user profile,” consisting of an ID (e-mail address) and password (see upper right hand corner of the TurnItIn homepage). Once this ID is created, you will be able to add courses to your profile. To add a course, you will need the “course ID” which is:

**Course ID: 25866337**

and the “course password” which is:

**Course Password: URBANGOV**

Once added to a course, you will be able to submit your “research paper” to the service. You will be asked to provide your name and student number, as well as some details about your assignment. This information will be used only to identify your submission to your instructor. Please ensure that there is NO IDENTIFYING INFORMATION included in the text of your assignment, including headers. This is for your own privacy (if you do submit identifying information by mistake and you are not concerned, you can leave it as is). You will be asked to cut and paste (text only) the body of your assignment, and the bibliography into separate fields within the website. Simply confirm the submission, and TurnItIn will issue a receipt (via e-mail). If you encounter difficulties submitting your bibliography, do not be concerned. The important element is the body (text) of the paper.

Please note that TurnItIn stores information on servers that reside in the United States. If you do not wish to use your name when creating your TurnItIn account, please use the first 5 digits of your student number as an alias instead.

Assignments are not accessible to the public once submitted to TurnItIn, and you, as the author, retain ownership of your original material. Your work will be added
to TurnItIn’s archive for comparison against subsequently submitted material, thus ensuring that your work is not plagiarized.

**Illness and Absence**

If you experience medical, emotional, or personal problems that affect your attendance or academic performance, please notify Arts Academic Advising. If you are registered with Access and Diversity, you should notify your instructor at least two weeks before examination dates. If you are planning to be absent for varsity athletics, family obligations, or other commitments, you should discuss your commitments with the instructor before the drop date.

**Reach out and ask for help if you need it**

University students often encounter setbacks from time to time that can impact academic performance. If you run into difficulties and need assistance, I encourage you to contact me by email or by dropping by my office. I will do my best to support your success during the term. This includes identifying concerns I may have about your academic progress or wellbeing through Early Alert. With Early Alert, faculty members can connect you with advisors who offer student’s support and assistance getting back on track to success. Only specialized UBC advisors are able to access any concerns I may identify, and Early Alert does not affect your academic record.

For more information: https:// facultystaff.students.ubc.ca/systems-tools/early-alert

For information about addressing mental or physical health concerns, including seeing a UBC counselor or doctor, visit: https://students.ubc.ca/health-wellness

**Respectful University Environment**

UBC recognizes that “the best possible environment for working, learning and living is one in which respect, civility, diversity, opportunity and inclusion are valued.” The full UBC Statement on Respectful Environment for Students, Faculty and Staff can be found at http://www.hr.ubc.ca/respectful-environment/files/UBC-Statement-on-Respectful-Environment-2014.pdf. Students should read this statement carefully and take note of both the protections and the responsibilities that it outlines for all members of the UBC community. Students should also review the Student Code of Conduct, at: http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,750,0

This course values frank discussion, healthy debate, and the free and respectful exchange of ideas. Students are welcome to voice and defend their views, which may differ from those of other students or of the instructor. However, disrespectful behavior, including bullying and harassment, will not be tolerated. The instructor will be professional and respectful in all their exchanges with students, and students
will exercise similar professionalism and respect in their interactions with each other and with the instructor.

I expect us all to respect the preferred personal pronouns of all students. Using the right pronoun, like using someone’s correct name, is a way to show respect. Please advise me of your pronoun preference early in the semester so I can change my records as appropriate.

If you have any concerns about the class environment, please raise them with the instructor. You also have the options of contacting the Head of the Political Science Department, UBC’s Equity and Inclusion Office (http://equity.ubc.ca), or the UBC Ombudsperson for Students: https://ombudsoffice.ubc.ca

**Equity and Harassment**

UBC is committed to equity (including but not limited to gender equity) and fostering a safe learning environment for everyone. All peoples should be able to study, work, and learn in a supportive environment that is free from sexual violence, harassment, and discrimination. UBC’s Policy #3 on Discrimination and Harassment defines harassment as: “unwanted and unwelcome attention from a person who knows, or ought to know, that the behaviour is unwelcome. Harassment can range from written or spoken comments to unwanted jokes, gifts, and physical assault, and may be accompanied by threats or promises regarding work or study opportunities and conditions. Harassment can be either a single incident or a series of related incidents.” Such behavior is not acceptable and will not be tolerated at UBC. If you or someone you know has encountered sexual violence or harassment, you can find confidential support and resources at the AMS Sexual Assault Support Centre, (SASC), and the Equity and Inclusion Office. The SASC is an all-genders service that serves the UBC-Vancouver campus community and is committed to creating a safer campus community, free from sexualized violence. Their work is informed by feminism, anti-oppression and recognition of intersectionality. The Equity and Inclusion Office is committed to fostering a community in which human rights are respected and equity and diversity are integral to university life.

Resources are available at:
Sexual Assault Support Centre, (SASC)
249M, Student Union Building, UBC
604-827-5180
sasc@ams.ubc.ca
http://amssasc.ca

Equity and Inclusion Office
2306 – 1874 East Mall (Brock Hall)
604.822.6353
equity@equity.ubc.ca
http://equity.ubc.ca
Lecture Outline and Readings:

PART I: URBAN GOVERNANCE THEORY AND ANALYTICAL APPROACHES

Week 1 (Sept 15): Why care about urban politics?

Scholarly literature (48 pages):

Grey literature:

Week 2 (Sept 22): Who Governs? Community power, urban political economy, and social movements

Scholarly literature (70 pages)

Grey literature
- none this week

Week 3 (Sept 29): The local (and regional) state in Canada

Scholarly literature (84 pages)

Grey literature:

Week 4 (Oct 6): The municipality in multi-level governance: muni-prov-fed
Scholarly literature (66 pages)

Grey literature

Week 5 (Oct 13): Indigenous governance in an urban context in Canada
Scholarly literature (82 pages)

Grey literature

**PART II: POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE IN VANCOUVER**

**Week 6 (Oct 20): Understanding Vancouver: History, Governance, Big Debates**

*Scholarly literature (53 pages)*


*Grey literature*


**Week 7 (Oct 27): Electoral system and voting in Vancouver**

*Scholarly literature (45 pages)*


*Grey literature*


**Week 8 (Nov 3): Democracy and public engagement**

*Scholarly literature (53 pages)*


**Grey literature:**


**Week 9 (Nov 10): Vancouverism**

**Scholarly literature (64 pages)**


**Grey literature:**


**Week 10 (Nov 17): Poverty and exclusion in the DTES**

**Scholarly literature (42 pages)**


**Grey literature:**


Week 11 (Nov 24): Policing the city

Scholarly literature (44 pages)

Grey literature:

Week 12 (Dec 1): Presentations
-last class devoted to presentations of final papers