

GEOG 675 (Fall 2017)
Cities, Universities and the Development Process

Contact Details

Instructor: Professor Kris Olds
Office: Rm. 346 Science Hall
Schedule: Mondays 3:30-6:00 pm, 350 Science Hall
Office Hours: Fridays 1:30-3:15 pm, or by appointment (346 Science Hall)
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Overview

This new 'special topics' course focuses on current debates and thinking about cities, universities & the development process. Particular attention will be paid to the role and impact of hard & soft forms of *infrastructure* (e.g., interdisciplinary research spaces, intellectual property licenses, traffic command centers, the digital cloud), *platforms* (e.g., Airbnb, Amazon), *expertise* (e.g., biomedical, bibliometric, engineering), *authorities* (e.g., Elsevier, Google), and *practices* (e.g., benchmarking & ranking) on our changing cities and universities.

Course readings, discussions, a role-playing exercise, and select on- and off-campus site visits will be used to help us better understand these important phenomena.

Assessment will be based upon completion of assigned readings, participation in course activities (including four book reviews, to be shared with your colleagues), and the development of a research-based paper or blog or website on a relevant topic of your choice.

Please note that this is a truly interdisciplinary course, and I am happily open to students registering in it from virtually any discipline. I would also like to reinforce that that this course is designed for students with wide ranging geographical and historical foci. For example, lessons from the texts we read and sites we visit can be applied to the development and implementation of your own research project in other world regions or historic periods.

Readings and Schedule

This course is involves two very different, yet complementary modes of activity to enhance learning gain: (a) reading and discussions, and (b) field site visits. The purpose of utilizing this approach is to help bring the nature of complex phenomena to life by seeing and feeling/sensing, for example, new spaces of knowledge production, the world's largest

medical record company's campus, and the institutional-organizational unit (and people) that protects you from relentless cyber-attacks targeting our campus infrastructure on a daily basis. And in last week of the term we'll learn about world university rankers and 'organizational disambiguation' being driven by market and branding logics but then shift over, half-way through class, to a small campus office where the 'open' agenda (with respect to teaching and learning) is being furthered via the utilization of a platform to publish Creative Commons-licensed open texts. These two modes of activity are designed to be interdependent, and also ensure the course provides you with an opportunity to get to know your own campus and the Madison city-region better.

The course schedule is outlined below. Making the decision about what readings to assign, and which sites to visit, was a very challenging one given all the fascinating options.

The assigned articles and books are either freely available on the websites I linked to below, or in Helen C White Library on two hour loan. Some are freely available as e-texts too – see:

<https://lcp.library.wisc.edu/viewer/show/57165>

I have also provided Project Muse links to two of the books that provide, when you are on campus, free access to two of the books (*The Prehistory of the Cloud; The Fabric of Space*). On Project Muse:

<https://muse.jhu.edu/about/>

The four books are also available for purchase via the usual sources (direct from the publisher, Amazon, etc.). Please note that I have attempted to ensure that the selected books are relatively cheap, and/or in paperback form. Two (see above) are freely available as well.

SCHEDULE

Week 1

Note: term does not start until Wednesday 6 September.

Week 2: September 11

Infrastructure

Scan: Issue 7 (July 2016) of *Limn*, especially the 'Preface' and 'Rebuilding by Design in Post-Sandy New York.' Links:

<https://limn.it/issue/07/>

<https://limn.it/preface-public-infrastructures-infrastructural-publics/>

<https://limn.it/rebuilding-by-design-in-post-sandy-new-york/>

Platforms

Scan these two short online articles:

Kenney, Martin, and John Zysman (2016) The rise of the platform economy, *Issues in Science and Technology*, 32(3).

<http://issues.org/32-3/the-rise-of-the-platform-economy/>

Gillespie, Tarleton (2017) Is "platform" the right metaphor for the technology companies that dominate digital media?, *Nieman Lab*, 25 August.

<http://www.niemanlab.org/2017/08/is-platform-the-right-metaphor-for-the-technology-companies-that-dominate-digital-media/>

Week 3: September 18

Note: We will visit UW-Madison's Cybersecurity Surveillance and Operations Center as well as meet with Bruce Maas, Emeritus Chief Information Officer, UW-Madison. The meeting begins in Computer Science (CS) 2147, 1210 W. Dayton St., at 3:30 pm. Please leave yourself enough time to get to the building which is located next to Union South. My mobile number is (608) 514-2265 so text me if you get lost on the way and need navigation help.

Reading/scanning recommendations from Bruce:

<http://news.wisc.edu/internet-atlas-maps-the-physical-internet-to-enhance-security/>

Paul Barford's mapping of the Internet

<https://www.internet2.edu/products-services/advanced-networking/>

Internet2 Research and Education network. For example, all the data from the Large Hadron Collider projects in Geneva are processed through HTCondor at Wisconsin. At one point, we had a sustained burst for 30 minutes of 92 gbps (gigabits per second). Imagine all the parts that need to work right for that to happen.

<http://er.educause.edu/articles/2014/1/speeding-up-on-curves>

Brad Wheeler, co-founder of Unizin (that chose Canvas) writes about digital scale and change.

<http://er.educause.edu/articles/2014/8/questions-of-data-ownership-on-campus>
2 authors were UW employees and one was a UW PhD candidate.

<http://www.iotcenter.wisc.edu/>

Reading/scanning recommendations from Kris:

Brown, Malcolm, Joanne Dehoney, and Nancy Millichap (2015) *The Next Generation Digital Learning Environment*. ELI Paper, EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative, April.
<https://library.educause.edu/resources/2015/4/the-next-generation-digital-learning-environment-a-report-on-research>

Kitchin, Rob, and Martin Dodge (2017) The (in)security of smart cities: vulnerabilities, risks, mitigation and prevention, The Programmable City Working Paper, February.
<https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/f6z63>

Watters, Audrey (2016) The best way to predict the future is to issue a press release,
<http://hackededucation.com/2016/11/02/futures>

Watters, Audrey (2016) 'Un-Annotated'
<http://hackededucation.com/2017/04/26/no-annotations-thanks-bye>

<https://it.wisc.edu/about/office-of-the-cio/cybersecurity/>

Week 4: September 25

Read & Review:

Hu, Tung-Hui (2015) *A Prehistory of the Cloud*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
<https://mitpress.mit.edu/prehistory-cloud>
<https://muse.jhu.edu/book/41681>

Week 5: October 2Read & Review:

Srnicek, Nick (2017) *Platform Capitalism*, Malden, MA: Polity.
<http://politybooks.com/bookdetail/?isbn=9781509504862>

Week 6: October 9

Note: Site visit to the Google office, 10, N Livingston St, Madison, WI 53703 (at East Washington) where we will be hosted by computer scientist Florentina Popovici.

Read:

Langley, Paul, and Andrew Leyshon (forthcoming) Platform capitalism: The intermediation and capitalization of digital economic circulation, *Finance and Society*.
http://financeandsociety.ed.ac.uk/ojs-images/financeandsociety/FS_EarlyView_LangleyLeyshon.pdf

Russell, Andrew, and Lee Vinsel (2016) Hail the maintainers, *Aeon*, July.
<https://aeon.co/essays/innovation-is-overvalued-maintenance-often-matters-more>

Wiig, Alan (2015) The urban, infrastructural geography of 'The Cloud'.
<https://medium.com/vantage/the-urban-infrastructural-geography-of-the-cloud-1b076cf9b06e>

Week 7: October 16

Note: Meetings with the Director of Planning (Adam Sayre) and the Director of Public Works (Theran Jacobson), City of Verona, WI. We will be discussing their perspective on the Epic Systems campus, and the role of Epic in transforming Verona, as well as Verona's role in servicing and supporting Epic.

Read:

Addie, Jean-Paul (2016) Theorising suburban infrastructure: a framework for critical and comparative analysis, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 41(3), 273-285.

Filion, Pierre, and Roger Keil (2017) Contested infrastructures: tension, inequity and innovation in the global suburb, *Urban Policy and Research*, 35(1), 7-19.

Shelton, Taylor, Matthew Zook, and Alan Wiig (2015) The 'actually existing' smart city, *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 8, 13-25.

Week 8: October 23

Note: Guided tour of Epic Systems in Verona, followed by independent small group exploration of Epic campus. The guided tour begins at 3:00 pm and lasts one hour. The independent exploration will last from 4-5 pm. Details to follow.

Read:

Boulton, Guy (2016) Epic Systems soars with transitions to electronic health records, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 24 January.

<http://archive.jsonline.com/business/epic-systems-soars-with-transition-to-electronic-health-records-b99642837z1-366328781.html/>

Caldwell, Patrick (2015) We've spent billions to fix our medical records, and they're still a mess. Here's why, *Mother Jones*, 21 October.

<http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2015/10/epic-systems-judith-faulkner-hitech-ehr-interoperability/>

Monegain, Bernie (2016) Epic reveals R&D spending outstrips Apple, Google and its competitors, *Healthcare IT News*, 13 September.

<http://www.healthcareitnews.com/news/epic-reveals-rd-spending-outstrips-apple-google-and-its-competitors>

Ori R (2013) Chicago: City of big servers. *Urban Land: The Magazine of the Urban Land Institute*, 4 October.

<http://urbanland.uli.org/economy-markets-trends/the-city-of-big-servers/>

Week 9: October 30

Read & Review:

Gandy, Matthew (2014) *The Fabric of Space: Water, Modernity and the Urban Imagination*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

<https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/fabric-space>

<https://muse.jhu.edu/book/35772>

Week 10: November 6

Note: This week will involve site visits to the Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery and the Wisconsin School of Business to learn more about the development and/or reorganization of physical space to facilitate new forms of knowledge production, enhanced learning gain, and new subjectivities. Readings TBC.

Week 11: November 13**Read & Review:**

Ong, Aihwa (2016) *Fungible Life: Experiment in the Asian City of Life*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

<https://www.dukeupress.edu/fungible-life>

Week 12: November 20 -- Project Drop-In Session

Note: Project drop-in session – come to Room 346, Science Hall.

Week 13: November 27

Note: the class will involve detailed case studies of Qatar (by Danya Al Saleh, PhD student, UW-Madison) and Singapore (by Kris Olds). Danya will be visiting the class, presenting, and dialoguing with us for half of the class time.

Read:

Olds, Kris, and Nigel Thrift (2005) Cultures on the brink: reengineering the soul of capitalism – on a global scale, in A. Ong and S. Collier (eds.) *Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics and Ethics as Anthropological Problems*, Oxford: Blackwell, 270-290.

Olds, Kris (2007) Global assemblage: Singapore, Western universities, and the construction of a global education hub, *World Development*, 35(6), 959-975.

Vora, Neha (2014) Expat/expert camps: redefining labor within Gulf Migration, in Abdulhadi Khalaf, Omar AlShehabi, and Adam Hanieh (eds.) *Transit States: Labour, Migration, and Citizenship in the Gulf*, London: Pluto Press, Chapter 8.

Weber, Alan (2014) Education, development and sustainability in Qatar: A case study of economic and knowledge transformation in the Arabian Gulf, *International Perspectives on Education and Society*, 24, 59–82.

Week 14: December 4

Note: This session will consist of a role-playing exercise related to the impact of the Airbnb platform on cities. A de-brief stage will follow the exercise. Detailed guidelines and some preparatory reading will be provided several weeks ahead of Week 14.

Week 15: December 11

Note: Following a lecture & discussion, we will visit the College of Letters & Science Learning Support Services unit to learn about a new open text publishing platform.

Read:

Hazelkorn, Ellen (2017) *Global Rankings and the Geopolitics of Higher Education*, London: Routledge, pp. 1-76.

Weller, Martin (2014) *The Battle for Open*, London: Ubiquity Press, pp. 27-44, 67-88.
<https://www.ubiquitypress.com/site/books/10.5334/bam/>

Recommended:

Larkin, Brian (2013) The politics and poetics of infrastructure, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 42, 327-43.

Assessment

Book Reviews (4):	40%
Research Project/Website:	40%
Class Participation	20%

Book Review Note: To facilitate learning and learning-oriented discussions, all students are *required* to prepare a book review for each of the four assigned course books.

There are many different models to adopt when developing book reviews, and I will outline these when we first meet. I also recommend that you collect and read a sample of book reviews in journals such as the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *Urban Studies*, and *Urban Affairs Review*.

The book reviews need to be completed by 12:00 noon on the Mondays before we meet. I will be creating a UW-Madison Dropbox for you to upload the file. Please ensure that you:

1. Save the file in PDF format only
2. Save the file like this: FAMILYNAMEreviewABULUGHOD.pdf

3. Upload to the Dropbox site I will give you access to.

I will then merge these files and send out the compilation of reviews to everyone in the class.

The book reviews are required because they help spur on discussion, facilitate the “participation” of relatively quieter people, force you to complete reading the book on time, and enable everyone to take something away from class for their files. Let me assure you that students love reading their colleagues’ book reviews – everyone has a different insight on each book, yet some commonalities and points of consensus often emerge as well. The capacity to write regularly (it gets easier over time, believe me!) is also worth developing.

In addition, two people will be assigned responsibility to help *facilitate* discussion with me during the four book weeks. **The facilitators are required to send me (via email) some prospective discussion questions by 6:00 pm on the day before the class (i.e. Sundays).** I will merge these discussion questions with my questions, and bring along a list of discussion questions to each class on a 1-2 page handout. Anyone in the class is permitted to send me questions too – just do so by the above deadline (i.e. 6:00 pm on Sundays).

Research Paper/Website Note: A research paper or website should be developed on a relevant topic of your choice. The papers can be on theoretical, methodological or substantive issues. Research papers should be no more than 4,000-6,000 words. Please see me if you have any questions about the topic, and see the Writing Center’s Writer’s Handbook for additional guidance:

<https://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/PlanResearchPaper.html>

Students wishing to develop a website should talk to me about your plans so we reach consensus about the format and structure of the planned site.

The final paper is due no later than midnight on Friday 15 December.

Code of Conduct: Please review the UW-Madison guidelines regarding Academic Integrity:

<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/>

Plagiarism is a serious offense and can damage your grade, career plans, and self-esteem. Please don’t take the risk – it’s not worth it!

Kris Olds

18 September 2017