**Syllabus: Public Policy 456-756 Winter 2023**

January 4: Introductions: Class procedures and expectations, preview of upcoming topics and speakers, etc. Why we need to know how cities work if we are going to make them better. Who is an activist? The power of activists in local government. State and national politics and what they mean for American cities. (Briefly) Introduction of the midterm group research project on how five major US cities are holding up in the lingering grip of the pandemic. (In place of a midterm exam.) How we will use Ann Arbor as a template.

**January 9:** **Affordable housing.**  Neighborhoods, gentrification, and the nationwide affordable housing crisis. Washtenaw County is one of the most economically segregated in the nation (2020). What can cities do about increasing inequality and gentrification? What can cities do to promote construction of more affordable housing?  COVID-19 effects on housing. The economic stress of the pandemic: Many of our fellow citizens are confronting housing challenges. What is happening as evictions resume and rent subsidy money has run out? Housing musical chairs. Homelessness as one of the major challenges facing American cities.

**January 11: Downtowns:**What is the “hole in the donut”?  Are covid stresses bringing it back? Are more residents living downtown, good for downtown? Who can afford to live there?  **Clean and safe.**  DDA’s, what do they do? Are they necessary? What is a TIFF? Do downtowns need more parking or more bike lanes? Pay a fee to drive into busy city centers? Why should surrounding townships care about Downtowns?

The state of Downtowns in the time of covid. What might be the lasting impact of the pandemic on downtowns? Will workers come back?  How many restaurants, food carts, etc., will permanently disappear?  Will these effects be nationwide?

January 16: **MLK Day.**

**January 18:** **Downtowns:** Guest speaker housing activist **Kirk Westphal**, UM Masters Degree in Planning, former member A2 City Council and former chair of the Planning Commission. Consultant on downtowns.  What makes for a healthy downtown.

**January 23: Morgan Williams Boydston, Human Services Manager, Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development:**  Presentation on Affordable Housing for those in the lower income brackets in Washtenaw County including at risk populations.

**January 25: Marti Praschan, Chief Financial Officer, City of Ann Arbor.**CFO Praschan will give a presentation on the A2 City budget and the major factors impacting it to use as an example when looking at other city budgets. Most American cities subscribe to a common set of budget practices.  What will be the impact of recent federal allocations to local governments. The importance of maintaining a robust bond rating. Legacy costs. Pandemic effects on city budgets. Knowledge about budgets is key to understanding how cities work.

**January 30:  Follow up to the budget presentation**.  The Great Recession and the constant push for greater efficiency; from 1002 to690 employees. Public sector labor unions: Should we have them?  Does government have a greater responsibly to workers than the private sector? Are taxpayers’ shareholders? (Follow up on policing if needed.)

**Police and Fire** Why we need these essential services. Why police and fire unions are more powerful than others. Crime stats. Students’ experiences with police in A2 and other cities. The 2014 shooting of Aura Rosser in Ann Arbor. Was it justified? Defund police?

**February 1: Sheriff Jerry Clayton**was first elected in 2008 then reelected in 2012, 2016 and 2020. Improved public relations and accountability have been constants in his tenure.  In 2017 he led the drive for a millage to increase funding for mental health and public safety. Governor Gretchen Whitmer has appointed him to serve on the state’s Joint Task Force on Jail and Pretrial Incarceration and the Black Leadership Advisory Council. He was also selected to serve on the National Police Foundations Council on Policing Reforms and Race. He recently announced that he is retiring at the end of his term in 2024.

**February 6: Activist Lisa Jackson is the chair of Ann Arbor’s Independent Community Police Oversight**Commission after helping to lead the effort to establish the commission.In that capacity “she focuses on fostering a transparent, accountable, and mutually beneficial relationship between the Ann Arbor Police and the community at large. This includes reviewing complaints against police policies such as the use of force and making recommendations regarding training and community interactions.”

Dr. Jackson, PHD**,** is a Ford Foundation Fellow, a Society for Neuroscience Fellow, a Harry S. Truman Scholar, and a recipient of an American Psychological Association Fellowship in Neuroscience.

**February 8: Matt Carpenter CEO of the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority.**(The Ride.) AAATA and the state of transit in A2. The CEO’s thoughts on transit’s recovery locally and nationwide. What will it take? The impact of recently awarded transit fundsand the new millage dollars**.**

**February 13:**  Follow up to Lisa Jackson then **transportation and the role of activists:**Transit history: Where did the street cars go? What happened to America’s trains? How activists made AAATA a reality. Reversing history by taking back the streets, moving away from auto-centric to improved amenities for pedestrians and cyclists. Will pandemic induced reductions in transit use cripple progress and how will the new funds for infrastructure impact the industry?

**February 15: Economic Development:**The Michigan Municipal League’s economic development activities and “place making”, examples from Michigan cities. What is Ann Arbor **Spark** and what does it do?  Should cities fund economic development or leave it to the Realtors, Chambers of Commerce, etc.? Should cities remake the urban landscape? How far should they go to become more appealing? Do “place making” parks and economic development fuel gentrification?

**February 20:  Washtenaw County Prosecutor Eli Savit** is a former clerk to Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg and former chief counsel for the City Of Detroit.  Progressive prosecutor Savit will comment on the change he is bringing to the office in Washtenaw County and the nationwide movement in cities toward a new era of enlightened prosecution.

**February 22:  Environment: Preview of Sea Level Rise.** (Start Reading!)  **Environmental Justice:** The role of environmental activists and NGOs in the Detroit incinerator battle.

Spring Break!

**March 6:  Research presentations on the state of the city and current and possible long-term effects of the pandemic on five American cities.**Two 30 minute presentations.  Questions and discussion to follow.

**March 8:  Midterm Research Presentations (2)**

**March 13:  Midterm Research Presentation (1)**

**March 15 - Lead up to Melissa Stultz presentation**: A2's carbon reduction efforts earlier this century.**Climate challenges to cities. Adaptation: Who will pay for it?**

**March 20: Melissa Stults PHD**, Sustainability and Innovations Manager for the City of Ann Arbor.  A member of the UM’s Commission on Carbon Neutrality. Presentation on her team’s plan, now the City’s plan, to achieve carbon neutrality in A2.

(Missy is a shining example of how a dedicated activist can make progress on long term issues in a bureaucracy.)

**March 22:  Ann Arbor’s Greenbelt 19 years later.** The open space movement to combat suburban sprawl:  Boulder, Lexington, Portland and A2. The hard fought 2003 Campaign in A2, how activists made it happen and how it is preserving the countryside and farmland for local agriculture. Why is this important? How the Greenbelt impacted planning in A2 and the questions it raised. Is density more of a mandate?  Does the existence of the Greenbelt contribute to rising housing prices?

**March 27: State Representative** **Felicia Brabec** **A former member of the Washtenaw County Commission.**An update on the city/state relationship, the state budget, politics in Lansing, etc.  Representative Brabec will be happy to answer your questions and will share her reflections on politics in Lansing and her time in local and state government. What the future may hold with Michigan's newly drawn state house districts.

**The planning process**:  Zoning, “by-right” developments, PUDs., residential neighborhoods. Creating a “20 minute” city. State laws inhibiting mandated inclusion of affordable housing in new developments. Do historic districts promote gentrification? Affordable housing premiums. Ann Arbor’s changing skyline.  The power of NMIBI’s in American cities. The ever-growing UM. The role of activists. What about more development in existing corridors?  Is there a place for public art? Who pays for it?

**March 29:** **Housing activist** **Jessica Letaw,** founder of the Ann Arbor YIMBY (Yes in my backyard) Chapter and member of the Board of the Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority.

**April 3:**   **Activism:** (A sample of:) Activism in A2 from the Civil War to present.

**And: Ayesha Ghazi-Edwin** was elected to the A2 City Council in 2022. She is also the Executive Director of American Citizens for Justice, and she serves on the City of Ann Arbor’s Human Rights Commission. A Lecturer at the UM School of Social Work, she teaches a Graduate Level class on Community Engagement.

**April 5:** **TBD**

**April 10**: **Student led discussion of Sea Level Rise.**

**April 12: More Sea Level Rise.**

**April 17:** **Last Day of Class**:  All issues discussed.

Contact John Hieftje:  [jhieftje@umich.edu;](mailto:jhieftje@umich.edu;)

Required of students:  Midterm group research presentations with written individual submissions. In place of a final exam there will be an individual research project.  There will be a few short papers (no more than 3 pages) as assigned, attendance and class participation. Follow news for city government coverage online at the Ann Arbor News (MLive) and in the Michigan Daily.

Students are required to attend at least one City Council voting session (remotely or in person) during the semester and write a short paper, at least one page but no more than two, describing the meeting.

Grades:  Midterm = 40%, final research paper = 30%, other assignments, attendance, and class participation = 30%

**Required reading:**

**Sea Level Rise, A Slow Tsunami on America’s Shores**, Orrin H. Pilkey and Keith C. Pilkey. 2019 Duke University Press.

**Weekly articles** as assigned and posted. PowerPoint’s will be available following presentations.

Dates to be aware of**:**City Council Meetings: Voting sessions: 1st and 3rd Mondays at 7 PM, (Except for holidays when Council meets on the following Tuesday.)  Live and repeated Coverage on CTN TV.  Council working sessions on the second Monday, City Planning Commission meets on many Tuesday evenings. Downtown Development Authority meets on 1st Wednesday at noon. Check A2 city web site.

For Further information you might be interested in:

The New Urban Crisis by Richard Florida:  How our Cities are Increasing Inequality, Deepening Segregation, Failing the Middle Class and What We Can Do About It.  2017 Basic Books

The Geography of Risk, Epic Storms, Rising Seas and the Cost of America’s Coasts, Gilbert M. Gaul.

The Economics of Place by Elizabeth Phillips Foley, Colleen Layton, Daniel Gilmartin, 2014 edition. Michigan Municipal League web site, [www.mml.org (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.) Links to an external site.](http://www.mml.org/)   ISBN 978-1-929923-00-7

**Office hours:** Send me an email and I will be happy to set up a time to talk via zoom, phone or in person just about any time. I'm flexible.

**Ford School Inclusivity Statement**:  Members of the Ford School community represent a rich variety of backgrounds and perspectives. We are committed to providing an atmosphere for learning that respects diversity. While working together to build this community we ask all members to:  
  
● share their unique experiences, values and beliefs  
● be open to the views of others  
● honor the uniqueness of their colleagues  
● appreciate the opportunity that we have to learn from each other in this community  
● value one another’s opinions and communicate in a respectful manner  
● keep confidential discussions that the community has of a personal (or professional) nature  
● use this opportunity together to discuss ways in which we can create an inclusive environment in Ford classes and across the UM community  
  
Ford School Public Health Protection Policy:  In order to participate in any in-person aspects of this course--including meeting with other students to study or work on a team project--you must follow all the public health safety measures and policies put in place by the State of Michigan, Washtenaw County, the University of Michigan, and the Ford School.  Up to date information on U-M policies can be found [here](https://campusblueprint.umich.edu/).  It is expected that you will protect and enhance the health of everyone in the Ford School community by staying home and following self-isolation guidelines if you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, or are awaiting a test result because of symptoms.  If you do not have a verified COVID-19 vaccine report in the U-M vaccination report system, you are required to participate in [weekly testing](https://campusblueprint.umich.edu/prevention-testing-care/testing/sampling-tracking-program/) if you intend to come to campus for any reason.    
  
Student Mental Health and Wellbeing:  The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students.  We acknowledge that a variety of issues, both those relating to the pandemic and other issues such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, and depression, can directly impact students’ academic performance and overall wellbeing. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available.   
  
Kristen Carney, LMSW is an embedded counselor within the Ford School.  She is available to meet with Ford School students in-person or via remote access using Zoom.  You may reach her at [krisca@umich.edu](mailto:krisca@umich.edu).  In addition, you may access other counselors and urgent services at [Counseling and Psychological Services](https://caps.umich.edu/) (CAPS) and/or [University Health Service](https://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs) (UHS).  Students may also use the Crisis Text Line (text '4UMICH' to 741741) to be connected to a trained crisis volunteer.  You can find additional resources both on and off campus through the [University Health Service](https://uhs.umich.edu/stressresources) and through [CAPS](https://caps.umich.edu/article/um-mental-health-resources).  
  
Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:  If you believe you need an accommodation for a disability, please reach out to U-M [Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD)](https://ssd.umich.edu/) office to help determine appropriate academic accommodations and how to communicate about your accommodations with your professors. Any information you provide will be treated as private and confidential.  
  
Academic Integrity: The Ford School academic community, like all communities, functions best when its members treat one another with honesty, fairness, respect, and trust. We hold all members of our community to high standards of scholarship and integrity. To accomplish its mission of providing an optimal educational environment and developing leaders of society, the Ford School promotes the assumption of personal responsibility and integrity and prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty, plagiarism and misconduct. Academic dishonesty may be understood as any action or attempted action that may result in creating an unfair academic advantage for oneself or an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any other member or members of the academic community. Plagiarism involves representing the words, ideas, or work of others as one’s own in writing or presentations, and failing to give full and proper credit to the original source. Conduct, without regard to motive, that violates the academic integrity and ethical standards will result in serious consequences and disciplinary action. The Ford School's policy of academic integrity can be found in the [MPP/MPA,](https://umich.box.com/v/2019-masters-handbook) [BA](https://umich.box.com/v/2019-ba-handbook), and [PhD Program](https://umich.box.com/v/phd1819) handbooks. Additional information regarding academic dishonesty, plagiarism and misconduct and their consequences is available at:   [http://www.rackham.umich.edu/current-students/policies/academic-policies/section11#112 (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.](http://www.rackham.umich.edu/current-students/policies/academic-policies/section11#112)  
  
Use of Technology:  Students should follow instructions from their instructor as to acceptable use of technology in the classroom, including laptops, in each course. All course materials (including slides, assignments, handouts, pre-recorded lectures or recordings of class) are to be considered confidential material and are not to be shared in full or part with anyone outside of the course participants. Likewise, your own personal recording (audio or video) of your classes or office hour sessions is allowed only with the express written permission of your instructor.  If you wish to post course materials or photographs/videos of classmates or your instructor to third-party sites (e.g. social media), you must first have informed consent. Without explicit permission from the instructor and in some cases your classmates, the public distribution or posting of any photos, audio/video recordings or pre-recordings from class, discussion section or office hours, even if you have permission to record, is not allowed and could be considered academic misconduct.