

The Evolution of Human Settlements, UST606

Fall Semester, 2007

Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs

Cleveland State University

Instructor: Dr. William M. Bowen

Office: UB219 phone: 687-9226 email: bowen@urban.csuohio.edu

Hours: Wednesday 10:00 - 12:00 or by appointment

Course Description and Overview:

This course is primarily about coping with complexity in human settlements. It is motivated by a concern for today's densely-populated urban socio-technical systems, where complexity is frequently a source of difficulty. The primary goal is to provide the student with sufficient conceptual and theoretical background, and sufficient substantive knowledge about various human settlements, to begin to understand and apply the theories, concepts, and ideas in consideration of plans, policies and decisions that exert influence on the future of these systems.

Several distinct kinds of problem are part of a consideration of complex human settlements. Any particular such settlement can be understood as a socio-technical system located in a particular ecosystem, at a particular time and place, with a particular endowment of resources, knowledge, and technology. One kind of problem is thus of recognizing and properly understanding the substantive aspects of the situation in which the individuals within the settlement find themselves. This involves (a) identifying the elements of the situation and the relations applicable among those elements, and (b) assimilating that knowledge into a broad perspective with which to understand the conditions that govern and constrain human action within that situation. The second kind of problem is one of developing a shared understanding among people who have different perspectives and values and who are in one way or another a part of the situation—whether they are engaged in studying it, involved in changing it, or simply being influenced by it. A third kind of problem is how to put such understanding as can be developed into the stream of human achievement in an informed, organized, effective way, preserving whatever relevant knowledge and insight enhances adaptivity in light of changing situations. A fourth kind of problem, which is embedded in the third, but which deserves special recognition because of its impact, is to make those plans, policies, and decisions that exert influence on the future of society. Personal values play a major role in this area, but relevant knowledge can influence greatly the precise way in which values are exercised. This course aims primarily at the first two of these problems, in the belief that contributions to them will indirectly benefit the other two.

Conventional ways of coping with complexity in human settlements are not satisfactory. Much of the difficulty comes about because hubris, population growth and technological advancement interact in a vicious cycle. Much also comes about because the rate of

change in many human societies is now faster than the rate at which people can effectively assimilate such changes not only into the cognitive frameworks with which they deliberate action at an individual level, but also the institutional frameworks around which societies are organized. It is probably not possible to attach meaningful measures to these two rates, but it is at least possible to consider ways in which they may be made more compatible. The rate of change in society does not seem to be highly susceptible to adjustment. But it may be possible to influence the rate at which people can effectively assimilate the changes into their own individual knowledge and understanding. In turn, actions and argumentation based upon enhanced knowledge and understanding can, in principle, make possible an extended form of democracy and bring about improvements in the decision-making processes which influence the experiences of individuals living within these settlements.

The course has two primary components. The first is comprised of presentations and discussions during class-meetings. The format of the class-meetings will be largely of a seminar type. That is, in each meeting, a brief presentation about that week's reading will be made, and this will be followed by a discussion. Students are expected to: prepare for and attend all classes, participate actively in discussions, ask clarifying questions, and generally contribute to the discussion. The second is comprised of homework done individually by members of the course. This will consist of reading the assigned course material and, as necessary, writing papers.

Learning objectives:

1. Obtain overview of the natural history of diverse human societies throughout the world, with special emphasis upon the environmental and geographical factors that have come to characterize them through time
2. Begin to know and understand the component principles and characteristics of the dynamics of evolutionary systems and how they apply within the context of human settlements
3. Come to know salient characterizing elements of human settlements at various times and places recorded in natural and written history, including those in the Neolithic, ancient, medieval, industrial, and information ages.
4. Assess the empirical evidence used to establish the validity of evolutionary explanations of human settlements
5. Become familiar with the state of human settlements around the world today
6. Obtain insight into how evolutionary processes have determined the state of human settlements around the world today.
7. To stimulate questions, discussion, and critical thinking, on an informed basis, and with an open mind, about current urban policies and practices
8. Extend the substantive knowledge of past human settlements together with principles of evolutionary and systems theory to anticipate possible future outcomes.

9. Obtain insights into human thought and behavior which are essential in order for participants and reformers to successfully solve problems within complex urban social systems

References:

Paul Cartledge (2002). *Sparta and Lakonia: A Regional History, 1300 – 362*. London: Routledge

N. Christie and S.T. Loseby (1996). *Towns in Transition: Urban Evolution in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*. Brookfield VT: Scolar Press.

Howard Chudacoff and Judith E. Smith (1994). *The Evolution of American Urban Society*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Tim Cornell (1995). *The Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars*. London: Routledge.

Jared Diamond (1999). *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company.

Gustave Glotz (1969). *The Greek City and Its Institutions*. Translated by N. Mallinson. London: Routledge

Maurizio Gualtieri (1987). Fortifications and Settlement Organization: An example from Pre-Roman Italy. *World Archaeology* 19(1): 30-46.

Mason Hammon (1974). The Emergence of Mediaeval Towns: Independence or Continuity? *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 78: 1 – 33.

R.F.J. Jones (1987). A False Start? The Roman Urbanization of Western Europe. *World Archaeology* 19 (1): 47 – 57.

Henri Pirenne (1925). *Medieval Cities: Their Origins and the Revival of Trade*. Princeton: Princeton University Press

Anthony E.J. Morris (1994). *History of Urban Form: Before the Industrial Revolution*. New York: Wiley.

Norman J.G. Pounds (1969). The Urbanization of the Classical World. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 59(1); 135 – 157.

Gregory L. Possehl (1990). Revolution in the Urban Revolution: The Emergence of Indus Urbanization. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 19: 261 – 282.

O.F. Robinson (1992). *Ancient Rome: City Planning and Administration*. New York: Routledge.

T. Leslie Shear, Jr. (1981) Athens: From City-State to Provincial Town. *Hesperia*, 50 (4): 356 – 377.

Timothy Taylor (1987). Aspects of Settlement Diversity and its Classification in southeast Europe before the Roman Period. *World Archaeology* 19 (1): 1-22.

Robert Tittler (1984). Late Medieval Urban Prosperity. *The Economic History Review*. 37 (4): 551-554.

Valetine F. Turchin (1977). *The Phenomenon of Science: A Cybernetic Approach to Human Evolution*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Marc Van De Mierop (1997). *The Ancient Mesopotamian City*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Adriaan Verhulst (1994). The Origins and Early Development of Medieval Towns in Northern Europe. *The Economic History Review* 47 (2): 362-373.

Willem van Vliet (2001). *Cities in a Globalizing World: Global Report on Human Settlements 2001*. United Nations Center for Human Settlements. London: Sterling, VA: Earthscan Publications, 2001

Robert J. Wenke (1989). Egypt: Origins of Complex Societies. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 18: 129 – 155.

Other readings as assigned.

CLASS POLICIES

Grades:

A final exam will be given and will account for 30% of the course grade. It will consist of true-false, multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and/or short answer questions. The primary purpose of the exam will be to test your knowledge of the information, concepts and ideas contained in the readings, though any clarification or elaboration of such that occurs in class will also be legitimate.

Each student will write three short papers, each approximately 5 pages in length. Each paper will comprise 15% of your course grade. The first will be a “foundations” paper, demonstrating your knowledge and understanding of one or more of the principle(s), concept(s) or aspect(s) of evolutionary systems as applied to human settlements. The second will be a “case study” paper, examining how the principles of evolution have

operated through relatively long periods of time in terms of a given city or set of cities. The third will be a “current urban problems” paper which describes the conditions that appertain within one or more of the major human settlements in the world today, and explains these conditions in terms of evolutionary and systems theory.

In each case, which is to say for each paper, an “A” paper will be one which clearly and accurately presents a coherent thesis, argument or point-of-view, which is free of grammatical and syntactical errors, and which in the instructor’s judgment provides convincing evidence of a deep, long, logical chain of reasoning from explicit assumptions and evidence about the relevant topic. A “B” paper will be one that does not meet this standard but that nevertheless demonstrates that the student has a clear grasp of the relevant evidence and principles regarding the topic, contains no more than a few minor grammatical and syntactical errors, and/or suggests the possibility that a sound and well-reasoned thesis, argument, or point-of-view along the lines contained in the paper could be constructed with additional work. A “C” paper will be one that does not meet the standard for a “B” paper, but that nevertheless contains the rough outline of a thesis, argument or point-of-view. Evident and/or logic may be lacking, or the paper may be written in substandard English. Papers that do not meet the standard for a “C” paper will be graded accordingly.

The remaining 25% of the course grade will be determined by the student’s demonstrated willingness and ability to participate in an informed way in class discussion. The course is set up in a seminar format, so each student’s thorough preparation for each class-meeting is a key to a successful outcome.

Extra Credit:

There is no “extra credit” in this class. No extra homework, reports, exam re-writes, or any such “bail me out at the end of the semester so I can get the grade I want” opportunities. Please do not bother asking.

Missed exams:

Only in cases of extreme and documented circumstances or documented illness will a make-up exam be given. You must make these arrangements in advance of the exam. This is your responsibility: I will not seek you out to take a make-up exam. The make up will vary in form, content, and length from that given in class. Except in rare circumstances, students will earn a score of zero on a missed exam.

Late assignments and incompletes:

Unless extenuating circumstances require otherwise and the instructor agrees beforehand to accept a late assignment, late work will not be accepted. You earn a grade of zero for

all homework not handed in at the beginning of class. Unless arranged in advance, you must be present in class to hand in your homework.

A grade of “Incomplete” will not, as a rule, be assigned at the end of class.

Expectations:

Use the computer for text editing. Spell-check and proofread everything you hand in (these are not the same things). Critically evaluate all work handed in for correctness, completeness, and clarity. Only work that is error free in all three of these categories will earn a grade of ‘A’ in this course.

All work must be handed in as a “hard copy.” No e-mail, e-mail attachments, faxes, etc. will be accepted.

Attendance: It is strongly recommended that you attend every class in its entirety, for the following reasons:

- Arriving on time allows you to either make a presentation or listen to the presentation and to participate in the discussion
- Arriving on time allows you to hand in your homework, as necessary;
- Though exam material will be drawn primarily from the text, aspects of it may also come from the presentations and discussion;
- Common problems and issues relating to course material and homework will be discussed;
- You are responsible for changes to this syllabus announced in class.

Cell phones and other classroom interruptions:

Please be sure to turn your cell phone off before entering the classroom. Also, please be sure to notify the instructor if you must leave class in the middle of the period.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Misconduct

Any form of academic misconduct will potentially earn an immediate grade of **F** for the course. In addition, your name will be forwarded to the Academic Misconduct Review Committee, for a hearing concerning your suspension from the University. You should familiarize yourself with the various forms of academic misconduct in section 3.1.2 of the CSU Student Handbook, available at http://www.csuohio.edu:80/student-life/student_handbook/

When dealing with homework or assignments completed in a lab setting, students often find it difficult to distinguish between “helping out” a fellow student, or “working together” on a project and academic misconduct. These guidelines may be helpful:

- Never share any of your written or electronic materials with another student. This includes your homeworks, data, tables, files, etc. This is academic misconduct.
- Work only at your own computer. Do not sit in front of a classmate’s computer and “take control” by using the mouse, typing on the keyboard, etc. By doing so, you are actually doing the work that your classmate will hand in and take credit for. This is academic misconduct.
- Write independently. When assignments are graded, sentences that are duplicated, or even highly similar, in more than one assignment are blatantly obvious. Writing up your answers without consultation avoids this situation. Handing in an assignment containing verbatim passages from another student’s work is academic misconduct.
- Reference your information sources. When you use a piece of information in your write up that you learned from another source (for example, your text book), that source must be referenced. Information taken verbatim must be quoted (to give the original author credit) and information that is paraphrased must be referenced. Failing to reference your sources is academic misconduct.

All the work that you hand in must represent your own independent and unique work. It should be distinct from that of every other student in the class. If you have questions about this, please ask – it is best to resolve these issues in advance.

The Grade of “Incomplete”

In accordance with university policy:

“The grade of Incomplete (I) is given when the work in a course has been generally passing, but when some specifically required task has not been completed through no fault of the student (Cleveland State Student Handbook, http://www.csuohio.edu:80/student-life/student_handbook/ Section 3.1.5).”

To be clear, an Incomplete is not a way of avoiding a bad grade on your record, or lightening your academic workload after having missed the last drop date. An Incomplete will be granted only in those cases that fit the above guidelines.

Important Registration Information

- Check the CSU Registrar's website for the last date for dropping this course: <http://www.csuohio.edu/registrar/calendar.html> .
- Check with the Urban College's Student Services office (687-3884) to see how dropping a course might impact your financial aid, assistantship, or scholarship.

Cancellation of Class Due to Weather

Class will not be cancelled due to weather unless the university is closed. CSU determines if evening classes will be held by 2pm daily. If CSU is open, class will proceed as scheduled, including any exams or deadlines that are scheduled for that class.

Students with Special Needs

Anyone anticipating the need for special accommodations to take exams, complete assignments, or otherwise fully participate in this class must identify himself or herself to the instructor as soon as possible.

Affirmative Action

Cleveland State University is committed to social justice: the university does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin.

The instructor fully concurs with that commitment and expects to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Personal attacks of any form will not be tolerated.

Tentative Schedule of Topics and Readings:

I. Foundations: The Origins and Fates of Human Societies

A. The genealogy of *homo sapiens*: Paleolithic humans

B. Geographically differing courses of human evolution

week 1

C. The rise and diffusion of food production

Reading: Diamond

- D. The evolution of germs, writing, technology,
government, and religion week 2
- E. Case studies
- Reading: Diamond
- F. Systems theory, cybernetics and the evolution of human
societies weeks 3 and 4
- Reading: Turchin
- II. *Selected Neolithic Settlements* weeks 5 and 6
- Paper 1 due --
- A. Mesopotamia
- Reading: Van De Mieroop (Chapters 2 – 5 and Conclusion)
- B. The Indus Valley
- Reading: Possehl
- C. Egypt
- Reading: Wenke
- III. *Ancient Settlements* weeks 6 and 7
- Reading: Pounds
- A. The Greek Polis: Sparta
- Reading: Cartledge
- B. The Greek Polis: Athens
- Reading: Glotz and/or Morris and/or Shear
- C. Rome
- Reading: Cornell, Christie and Loseby, Gualtieri, Robinson, Taylor

- IV. *Middle Age and Early Modern Settlements* week 8
Reading: Pirene, Jones, Tittler, Verhulst, Hammond
- V. *Settlements and the Industrial Revolution* week 9
- VI. *The Evolution of American Urban Society* weeks 10 – 12
-- paper 2 due on week 10--
Reading: Chudacoff and Smith
- VII. *State of the World's Settlements Today* week 13 – 15
Reading: van Vliet
-- paper 3 due on week 15