URBAN HOUSING

Fall 2015
Dr. Jennifer Steffel Johnson
Jennifer.SteffelJohnson@ucdenver.edu

Tuesdays 2:00pm-4:45pm
Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:30-1:30pm and by appointment
Office: CAP 320P
303-315-0061

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course will focus on housing as a vital element of the urban fabric. We will examine the sociological, physical, economic, and political aspects of urban housing, along with the actors and institutions that impact both the demand and supply of housing in the U.S. The course will explore urban housing policies and their relationship to the fields of planning and design, including factors that impact the creation, location, and design of housing in urban regions.

Classes will consist of in-depth discussion and some lectures, and students will contribute individual presentations at various points during the class. In the first half of the semester, the class, working in teams, will be conducting background research for and participating in the real-client affordable housing design charrettes that will take place in partnership with Housing Colorado in early October. In the second half of the semester, students will choose between two research projects that will make important contributions to the field of housing.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
At the end of the semester, you should be able to:
1. Identify the various types, uses and meanings (social, psychological, physical, economic, and political) of urban housing.
2. Use a variety of data sets from HUD and other sources to analyze trends in urban housing supply and demand.
3. Understand and analyze housing problems and trends in the United States.
4. Identify the key housing U.S. policies and their impacts.
5. Define “affordable” housing and identify the factors affecting housing affordability.
6. Recognize the ways housing connects individuals to or separates them from essential systems such as employment, health, education and transportation.
7. Analyze the opportunities and challenges presented by mixed-income housing.
8. Understand the official and unofficial causes and impacts of exclusionary housing practices and segregation in the U.S. housing market; understand the power and the limits of Fair Housing rules.
9. Understand the role of gentrification on housing quality, supply and demand; identify the role that housing development plays in gentrification processes.
10. Understand that financing housing development is a complex but essential endeavor.
11. Identify several innovative housing strategies.
12. Explain factors associated with homelessness and interventions that attempt to address the issue in metropolitan areas.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
The Department of Planning and Design has incorporated the Planning Accreditation Board’s (PAB) standards for teaching planning knowledge, skills and values into the curricula of our courses. The following PAB Learning Outcomes will be assessed for planning students in this course:

Primary:
- Growth and Development: appreciation of economic, social and cultural factors in urban and regional growth and change
- Social Justice: appreciation of equity concerns in planning
- Research: tools for assembling and analyzing ideas and information from prior practice and scholarship, and from primary and secondary sources

Secondary:
- Written, Oral and Graphic Communication: ability to prepare clear, accurate and compelling text, graphics and maps for use in documents and presentations
- Planning Law: appreciation of the legal and institutional contexts within which planning occurs
- Planning Process Methods: tools for stakeholder involvement, community engagement, and working with diverse communities
- Purpose and Meaning of Planning: appreciation of why planning is undertaken by communities, cities, regions, and nations, and the impact planning is expected to have

COURSE VIRTUES:
- Intellectual curiosity. Be open to new ideas; ask questions; reflect on what you’re learning; think about things in new ways.
- Analytic thinking. Look for hidden assumptions in readings; compare and contrast theoretical perspectives; check theoretical ideas against your own experience; notice inconsistencies in arguments; entertain counter-arguments.
- True participation. Complete readings before class; give careful thought to writing assignments; proofread writing before turning it in; give yourself the time necessary to do each task well; meet assignment deadlines; actively participate in discussions; attend class.
- Collaborative learning. Be respectful towards other students’ ideas, especially when you disagree; actively participate in discussions and small group tasks; ask for clarification; address your comments and questions to each other as much as to the instructor; learn from each other.

CANVAS AND COURSE COMMUNICATIONS:
It is your responsibility to become familiar with the functions of Canvas to access readings, assignments, support materials, and important announcements. Additionally, you must maintain a working email address to facilitate communication from the professor and between your project teammates.
COURSE EVALUATION/REQUIREMENTS:
I will provide you with a rubric outlining what is expected of you (i.e., how you will be graded) for each assignment. These rubrics are designed to give you ongoing feedback about your progress in the course and provide a basis for improving your overall performance and learning experience. You are responsible for reading rubrics in advance of each assignment and asking questions if you do not understand something. Late assignments will not be accepted. Please work with me in a timely manner to resolve any problems you may encounter.

If you are absent, it is your responsibility to clarify missed assignments with classmates or with me prior to the next class. Participation in class field trips and the housing charrette (which takes place on a Friday-Saturday-Sunday) are required. Requests for exceptions to these policies must be discussed with me in advance.

Active Class Participation and Regular Attendance (20%) – Class attendance and participation are essential for success in this course. Each unexcused absence will reduce your course grade by 5%. Because this is a graduate seminar, you are expected to complete all the readings on time and come prepared to make substantive contributions to the weekly class discussions. Though I will provide brief lectures relating to course topics throughout the semester, the remaining class time will involve active participation and discussion by seminar participants. As part of your participation grade, you will occasionally be required to collect a small amount of data or prepare a brief synopsis to share with the class.

Housing Policy or Design Innovation Presentation (10%) – Students will each make a brief presentation to the class describing a) an innovative housing-related program or policy, or b) an innovative approach to the design of urban housing, as assigned.

Housing Colorado Design Charrette (45% total) – The class will be conducting background research for and participating in the real-client design charrettes that will take place on-site in Denver, to be presented at the Housing Colorado conference in Vail. Your grade for this project will include several components, including completion of your assigned data collection tasks, peer and team leader evaluation of your contributions to your team, the successful completion of your team’s design charrette, and a brief reflection paper.
- pre-charrette and post-charrette peer reviews: 30%
- charrette reflection paper: 15%

Research Projects (25%)
- Project A: Do CHFA’s Investments Result in an Undue Concentration of Poverty?
- OR
- Project B: House/Home Article for Encyclopedia
COURSE SCHEDULE:

This is a **tentative schedule** of course topics, readings and assignments. Please monitor updates on Canvas and as announced in class. **All readings will be made available on Canvas.**

1) August 18: Course Overview; Housing as Home


2) August 25: A Case for the Right to Housing; Factors in Housing Choice

   *Guest Speakers: Housing Colorado Charrette team leaders (3:30)*


   **Student data collection- DUE August 30, 11 pm**

3) September 1: Trends in U.S. Housing Quality, Demand and Supply


4) September 8: “Affordable” Housing


   National Low-Income Housing Coalition (2014). *Out of Reach 2014*.

   Center for Neighborhood Technology (2010). *Penny Wise, Pound Fuelish*.

5) September 15: Housing Connections to Everyday Life


   Read (at least!) one of the following:
Education

Health


Transportation

Employment and Economic Opportunity

6) September 22: Tiny Houses and Other Housing Design Innovations

Readings TBA

Student housing design innovation presentations (MArch, MLA, MUD, and MSHP students)

7) September 29: Affordable Housing Development and Finance

Guest speaker: Ken Hoagland, Community Capital Corporation

Low-Income Housing Tax Credits: A Layperson’s Guide

8) October 6: No class; charrette team meetings

Pre-Charrette Team Peer Reviews DUE October 7, 11:59 pm

** Friday, October 9 – Sunday October 11: Affordable Housing Charrettes On Site

9) October 13: The Role of Housing in Gentrification and Community Development


Charrette Team Peer Reviews Due
10) October 20: Development Regulations: Tools for Exclusion and Inclusion

*Guest Speaker: Laura Brudzynski, aide to Denver City Councilmember Robin Kneich*


*“Don’t Put It Here!” Does Affordable Housing Cause Nearby Property Values to Decline? Center for Housing Policy.*

11) October 27: U.S. Housing Policy and Programs- History and Innovations


*Policy innovations student presentations (MURP and MPA students)*

12) November 3: Segregation, Discrimination and Fair Housing

*Guest Speaker: Kate Quillen, Fair Housing Specialist, Denver Metro Fair Housing Center*


*Charrette Reflection Paper Due*

13) November 10: Homelessness

Video: *Transformation through Partnerships: Systems Change to End Chronic Homelessness*


14) November 17: PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT
http://volunteer.unitedwaydenver.org/aem/corp/event/?doc_id=2018&key=fbdef386618714c4fe8221690f4adcf1

November 24: No Class (Thanksgiving/ Fall Break)

15) December 1: Public Housing and Mixed-Income Housing

Film: *The Pruitt-Igoe Myth*


16) December 8: Field Trip- Mariposa

Research Projects A and B Due

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

**Academic Honesty:** Plagiarism is the use of another person’s words or ideas without crediting that person. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and may lead to failure on an assignment, in the class, and dismissal from the University. You are responsible for being attentive to and observant of campus policies about academic honesty as stated in the University’s Student Conduct Code.

**Access, Disability, Communication:** I invite students with special needs to contact me to discuss any concerns or needs they may have. Please notify me if you require accommodation for any type of physical or learning disability. Formal accommodations for students with disabilities should be coordinated through the Disability Services office, (303) 556-3450. The Disability Services office will determine the special needs and student’s eligibility for special accommodation.

**Course Communication:** In addition to announcements made and written handouts distributed in class, I may need to contact you between classes, which I'll do through individual and group email messages. **One of the requirements for this course is that you maintain a university email address, check it regularly for messages and be sure it is working.** You are responsible for any messages, including assignments and schedule changes, I send you via email. You also may contact me via email, in addition to seeing me during office hours or calling me.