

**Department of Politics**  
College of Arts and Science  
New York University  
Fall 2018

## **Planet of Cities: Evidence-Based Policy Responses to Global Urbanization**

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Instructor: Dr. Shlomo Angel, Professor of City Planning  
Associate Instructor: Alejandro M. Blei, Research Scholar  
Office Address: The Marron Institute of Urban Management  
60 Fifth Avenue, 2nd Floor  
New York, NY 10011  
Telephone: 212-992-6839  
E-mail: [sangel@stern.nyu.edu](mailto:sangel@stern.nyu.edu)  
[ablei@stern.nyu.edu](mailto:ablei@stern.nyu.edu)

### **Objective:**

The aim of this course is to provide students with an international perspective on urbanization and to introduce them to the theory, the evidence, and the practical tools necessary to formulate and put into practice effective policies that can respond to rapid urbanization in countries the world over, policies that can ensure that cities grow in a productive, inclusive, sustainable, and resilient manner in the decades to come.

### **Course Description:**

This course is offered as a course in *International Politics* at the Department of Politics at New York University. The course is a 4-credit course and it will be given in 14 sessions, one session a week, during the Fall Semester of 2018. The sessions will be composed of lectures and question-and-answer periods. They will be divided into three class periods of 50 minutes each, with 10 minute breaks between them. No prior experience or special expertise is required for the successful completion of the course. The required readings for the course will be chapters from the instructor's book, *Planet of Cities* [Cambridge MA: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, 2012], supplemented by additional optional readings of short articles and working papers.

**The Instructor:**

Shlomo (Solly) Angel is a Professor of City Planning and Director of the NYU Urban Expansion Program at the Marron Institute of Urban Management and the Stern School of Business of New York University. The twin missions of the NYU Urban Expansion Program are to assist rapidly growing cities in less-developed countries in making minimal preparations for their inevitable expansion and to monitor global urban expansion. Prior to joining NYU, Dr. Angel was a fellow at the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy of Cambridge, Massachusetts. This resulted in the publication in 2012 of his most recent book, *Planet of Cities* and its companion *Atlas of Urban Expansion* (with colleagues). Dr. Angel holds an architecture degree and a doctorate in City and Regional Planning from the University of California at Berkeley. He is a co-author of *A Pattern Language*; the author of *Housing Policy Matters* (Oxford University Press, 2000), the co-author of the World Bank's housing policy paper titled *Housing: Enabling Markets to Work*, and the author of more than a dozen monographs on housing policy in different countries in Latin America. As an international expert on housing and urban development policy he has consulted the United Nations, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and numerous national governments. He has also taught urban policy and planning at the Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok for ten years, at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School for seven years and at the NYU Wagner School for twelve years. Dr. Angel's key contribution to the field of housing policy, urban planning, and urban policy has been his work on the comparative mapping and measurement of cities and their spatial attributes on a global scale, and on the production of maps and metrics that can effectively inform urban planning and policy decisions. His most recent contribution, prepared with colleagues for Habitat III, the U.N. Conference on Cities held in Quito, Ecuador is *Atlas of Urban Expansion—2016*, on line at [www.atlasofurbanexpansion.org](http://www.atlasofurbanexpansion.org).

**Course Requirements:**

There are three requirements for completing the course: (1) Reading one or two chapters every week in *Planet of Cities* and other readings and completing a short 10-minute quiz on every chapter; (2) Writing a 3-3,500 word mid-term paper; and (3) writing a 5-6,000 words final paper. The grade for the course will be a weighted average of the responses to the quizzes (20%), the mid-term paper (35%) and the final paper (45%).

**Readings:**

Shlomo Angel's *Planet of Cities* [Cambridge MA: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, 2012] will be the textbook for the class and the only required reading. Books will be available at the NYU Bookstore on Broadway or at Amazon. They are now also available as e-books at Amazon.

**Quizzes on NYU Classes:**

Course information and quizzes will be available on *NYU Classes*. The quizzes for a chapter in a given class session will be available for 10 minutes until the class session starts and will not be available afterwards. Students who miss a quiz can make it up during the last week of classes, when all quizzes will again become available. Students who wish to take a particular quiz again to improve their score can do so during that week as well. In those cases, the final score for a particular quiz will be the average of the original quiz score and the make-up quiz score.

**Office Hours:**

The instructor and, on occasion, the associate instructor will meet students, by appointment only, at the Marron Institute for Urban Management. Please e-mail to arrange for an appointment. Appointments will generally be held on Thursday afternoons, 4:00-6:00 p.m.

**Course Schedule:**

**Session 1:** Introduction to the class and administrative matters

**Session 2:** Four Propositions Underlying Urban Policy-Making

**Readings:** *Planet of Cities*, Chapters 2-5.

**Session 3:** Urbanization in Historical Perspective

**Readings:** *Planet of Cities*, Chapter 6 (pp.77-96); Douglas Rae, excerpt from *City: Urbanism and its End* (pp.1-31); Marc Antrop, "Landscape change and the urbanization process in Europe";

**Session 4:** The Geography of World Urbanization

**Readings:** *Planet of Cities*, Chapter 7 (pp.97-110); Neil Brenner, "Theses on Urbanization;"

**Session 5:** The Global Hierarchy of Cities

**Readings:** *Planet of Cities*, Chapter 8 (pp.111-134); Saskia Sassen, "The Global City: Introducing a Concept;"

**Session 6:** Global Urban Land Cover and its Expansion

**Readings:** *Planet of Cities*, Chapter 10 (pp.157-170); Tingwei Zhang, "Land market forces and government's role in sprawl: The case of China"; Marcy Burchfield et al., "Causes of Sprawl: A Portrait from Space."

**Session 7:** Cities as Labor Markets

**Readings:** Alain Bertaud, “Cities as Labor Markets;” Melo et al. “Agglomeration, accessibility and productivity: Evidence for large metropolitan areas in the US;” Enrico Moretti, excerpt from *The New Geography of Jobs* (pp.1-19); Angel, S. and Blei, A.M., “The Productivity of American Cities”.

**Session 8:** The Urban Density Dilemma

**Readings:** Michael Sorkin, “Density Noodle;” Mills and Tan, “A Comparison of Urban Population Density Functions in Developed and Developing Countries;” Nicola Dempsey et al. “The key to sustainable urban development in UK cities? The influence of density on social sustainability.”

**Session 9:** Urban Spatial Structure from Centrality to Dispersal

**Readings:** *Planet of Cities*, Chapter 12 (pp.187-204); Homer Hoyt, “Forces of Urban Centralization and Decentralization;” Blumenberg and Manville, “Beyond Spatial Mismatch”; Angel, S. and Blei, A. M. “The Spatial Structure of American Cities”.

**Session 10:** The Fragmentation of Urban Landscapes

**Readings:** *Planet of Cities*, Chapter 13 (pp.205-222); Janice Lord and David Norton, “Scale and the Spatial Concept of Fragmentation;” Robert Lang and Paul Knox, “The New Metropolis: Rethinking Megalopolis.”

**Session 11:** The Pulsating Compactness of Urban Footprints

**Readings:** *Planet of Cities*, Chapter 14 (pp.223-248); Emily Talen, excerpt from *City Rules* (pp.1-36); Haiyan Chen et al., “Sustainable urban form for Chinese compact cities: Challenges of a rapid urbanized economy”; Harari, M., “Cities in Bad Shape: Urban Geometry in India”.

**Session 12:** Cities and Climate Change

**Readings:** Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), *Fifth Assessment Report*, Chapter 12: Human Settlements, Infrastructure and Spatial Planning; UNEP, IEA Training Manual, Vol. 2: Climate Change Vulnerability and Impact Assessment in Cities”; World Bank, Guide to Climate Change Adaptation in Cities”.

**Session 13:** Urban Expansion and the Loss of Cultivated Lands

**Readings:** *Planet of Cities*, Chapter 16 (pp.265-284); Cadenasso et al., “Spatial heterogeneity in urban ecosystems: reconceptualizing land cover and a framework for classification;” Karen Seto et al., “A Meta-Analysis of Global Urban Land Expansion.”

**Session 14:** Making Room for a Planet of Cities

**Readings:** *Planet of Cities*, Chapter 17 (pp.285-310); Karima Kourtit et al., “The new urban world: Challenges and policy;”

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