

## **URB650 Urban Governance**

Spring 2006, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:30-9:05 p.m., May 18 to June 29  
Room 2280, Simon Fraser University Harbour Centre Campus  
515 West Hastings Street, Vancouver  
Instructor's Web site: [www.richardgilbert.ca](http://www.richardgilbert.ca)

### **COURSE DETAILS: VERSION 4, JUNE 1, 2006**

The 13 regular sessions will usually have four elements, each roughly 50 minutes in length, with the first and the last two separated by a 15-minute break. The four elements are instructor presentation; guest presentation; student presentation; and class discussion, not all in every session and not always in that order.

Through this course participants will gain understanding of how urban governance functions in Canada and elsewhere. They will do this through examining the nature and history of urban governance, trends and differences in urban governance along with detailed consideration of actors, issues, and processes, and prospects for urban governance. Participation in this course could result in improved ability to contribute effectively to urban governance.

More specifically, these topics will be the main themes of the 13 sessions (with adjustments to match the schedules of guest presenters):

1. The natures of 'urban', 'governance', and 'urban governance'.
2. History of urban governance in Canada and elsewhere.
3. Overview of trends in urban governance in Canada and elsewhere.
- 4-7. Actors in urban governance: citizens and electors; municipal employees; elected officials; senior governments and special interests.
- 8-12. Issues in urban governance: finances; land-use planning; transport and other infrastructure; economic and social development; energy and environment.
13. Prospects for the future of urban governance.

Intersecting these topics will be several critical matters including size of the municipality, governmental framework (e.g., single-tier, two-tier), involvement of municipal agencies, and societal/economic context (e.g., command vs. market economy; rich vs. poor). Theoretical content will be introduced as appropriate but will not be emphasized.

As a 'warm-up' for the course, potential participants were invited to listen to the series on cities on the CBC radio program *The Current*, broadcast on March 27-30, 2006, and available at <http://www.cbc.ca/thecurrent/logs2006.html> (total about four hours). This series is being touched on during the course, as is the just-published book by John Lorinc, *The New City: How the Crisis of Canada's Cities is Reshaping Our Nation*, Penguin Canada, 2006.

**Course assignments and evaluation:** One course assignment will involve writing a critical analysis (up to 3,000 words)—due June 22—of part or all of one or more meetings of elected municipal officials in the Vancouver region. The focus should be on how it appears that the officials arrive at the decisions they make. The two other assignments will be writing a paper (up to 6,000 words)—due June 15—and making a class presentation (20-40 minutes) on separate relevant topics agreed with the instructor. Evaluations will be based on the three assignments (25% each) and on class participation (25%).

The paper should be of an academic nature. The document at [Symonds](#) is a good model of the quality to strive for, although the paper required here should be only about half the length of that paper. Papers longer than 6,000 words will be penalized, as will critical analyses longer than 3,000 words.

The class presentation should be 10-20 minutes in length and should provoke a discussion of 10-20 minutes to be managed by the presenter. The presentation should make a clear point strongly and persuade the class of this point, through the presentation itself and through the discussion it provokes. The schedule of presentations is set out below.

The deadlines indicated for the two written assignments are not final. Meeting these deadlines will allow an opportunity for face-to-face discussion about the assignment and its grade, and a chance to revise the assignment following the discussion. The final deadline in each case is July 17, 2006, beyond which submissions will not be graded. All submissions should be made by e-mail to

## **DETAILS OF SESSIONS**

*Note: all sessions except the special session on June 3 will start promptly at 5:30 p.m. (often to accommodate guest speakers), and participants could be penalized for lateness without notice. The timings of the other elements of each class will be much more flexible.*

The documents noted with many sessions are not obligatory reading. They and the two sources noted above support involvement in class discussions. Appropriate reference to them in assignments will be regarded favourably.

### **SESSION 1, MAY 18:**

The first part of this session was a 'get to know each other' opportunity. Students explained why they are taking the course and what they want to get out of it. The instructor (biographical notes at [Richard Gilbert](#)) explained why he is teaching the course and what he wants from it.

The second part of the session began a group exercise towards adding an entry on 'urban governance' to Wikipedia (see <http://en.wikipedia.org>). There are several entries in Wikipedia on 'urban' and one on 'governance', but none on 'urban governance', the subject of this course.

A possible outcome of this course will be submission of a Wikipedia entry on 'urban governance'. This matter will be revisited at the end of the course.

For a discussion of the quality of Wikipedia entries see Giles J, Internet encyclopaedias go head to head, *Nature*, December 14, 2005, and related links (at <http://www.nature.com/news/2005/051212/full/438900a.html>).

Part of the discussion this evening will touch on the relevance of information technology to urban governance. Two ways into the literature on this topic are:

1. Nohrstedt S-A, Montin S, *Digital Planning? Integrating New Information and Communication Technologies in Urban Planning*. Proposed Research Program (8 pages, 2002), Örebro University, Sweden. Available at [Nohrstedt et al.](#)
2. Francke M, Ham E, *Space of Flows, Manuel Castells*. (12 pages, 2006) Student Paper, Department of Human Geography, Radboudj University, Nijmegen, The Netherlands. Available at [Francke & Ham](#).

### **SESSION 2, MAY 23:**

The guest presenter for this session was **Nola-Kate Seymoar**, President and CEO of the Vancouver-based International Institute for of Sustainable Cities (biographical notes at [Nola-Kate Seymoar](#)). Dr. Seymoar, introduced by **Brenda Jones**, spoke on multi-stakeholder processes for sustainability planning in local government, and on public engagement models, using *Imagine Calgary* as an example. Information about *Imagine Calgary* is at <http://www.imaginecalgary.ca>.

The evening also included a presentation by the instructor on the recent history of urban governance in Canada and elsewhere. It drew on two articles available online from the SFU library, and a third available from the link below:

1. Collin J-P, Roberson M, The borough system of consolidated Montréal: Revisiting urban governance in a composite metropolis. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 27(3), 307-330 (2005).
2. Jouve B, From government to urban governance in Western Europe: A critical analysis. *Public Administration and Development*, 25, 285-294 (2005).
3. Kamal-Chaoui L, *OECD Metropolitan Regions: What role for the central governments?* Paper presented at the XVIIth session of the entretiens Jacques Cartier 'Metropolitan Governance: Seeking consistency in complexity', Montreal, October 2004. 23 pages. Available at [Kamal-Chaoui](#).

### **SESSION 3, MAY 25:**

This session continued the discussion provoked by Dr. Seymoar, elaborated to consider 'actors in urban governance', touching on the following papers:

1. Mason M, *Collaborative Partnerships for Urban Development: a Study of the Vancouver Agreement*. Research Papers in Environmental & Spatial Analysis No. 108. Department of Geography and Environment, London School of Economics (38 pages, 2006). Available at [Mason](#).

2. Symonds J, Engaging citizens—How do B.C. municipalities engage citizens in their communities? Paper presented at the June 2005 meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, London, Ontario. 27 pages. Available at [Symonds](#).
3. Bäck H, Party politics and the common good in Swedish local government. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 26(2), 93-123 (2003). Available online from the SFU library.
4. Musso JA, Weare C, Oztas N, Loges WE, Neighborhood governance reform and networks of community power in Los Angeles. *American Review of Public Administration*, 36(1), 79-97 (2006). Available online from the SFU library.
5. Lowndes V, Pratchett L, Stoker G, Trends in public participation: Part 1 – Local government perspectives. *Public Administration*, 79(1), 205-222 (2001). Available online from the SFU library.
6. Lowndes V, Pratchett L, Stoker G, Trends in public participation: Part 1 – Citizens' perspectives. *Public Administration*, 79(2), 445-455 (2001). Available online from the SFU library.

Proposals for course assignments were to be submitted by this evening. During the session, students had individual time with the instructor to discuss the proposals. Meanwhile, the class attended a nearby event sponsored by the Institute for the Humanities at Simon Fraser University entitled *Urban Citizenship: Literary Incursions*, held at Spartacus Books, 319 West Hastings Street. This public reading of recent literary works by Oana Avasilichioaei, Wayde Compton, Anne Stone, and Meredith Quartermain explored the question of citizenship in urban spaces.

#### **SESSION 4, MAY 30**

This session focussed initially on the legal competences of Canadian municipalities and their implications for governance. The guest presenter was **Donald Lidstone**, a lawyer with the Vancouver firm Lidstone, Young, Anderson (biographical notes at [Donald Lidstone](#)). In 2004, Mr. Lidstone wrote a seminal document for the Federation of Canadian Municipalities entitled *Assessment of the Municipal Acts of the Provinces and Territories* (available at [Lidstone](#)). His presentation, introduced by **Nickola Selby**, reviewed and updated this 65-page document. Students were strongly advised to read the document before the May 30 class. His speaking notes are available at [Lidstone 2](#).

Mr. Lidstone's presentation was followed by an instructor presentation on the roles of municipal associations in Canada, on the so-called 'New Deal for Cities', and on other matters addressed in Stevenson D, Gilbert R, Coping with Canadian federalism: the case of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. *Canadian Public Administration Journal*, 48(4), 528-551, 2005 (available at [Stevenson & Gilbert](#)).

#### **SESSION 5, JUNE 1**

The focus this evening will be on how things get done in Vancouver—and in other municipalities—and in particular how City staff balance what may be competing imperatives of business, residents, NGOs, council and councillors, and their own professional integrity. The guest presenter will be **Ann McAfee**, Co-director of Planning for the City of Vancouver (see [Ann McAfee](#) for a brief biographical note). Dr. McAfee, to be introduced by

**Cameron Scott**, will bring to the topic her 32 years of work with the City of Vancouver and her considerable international experience in China, The Philippines, Mexico, Brazil, Poland, and Australia.

This session will be the first at which student presentations will be made, to be a feature of most subsequent sessions. **Nickola Selby** will make a presentation on the Vancouver Charter. This document is at [http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/V/vanch\\_00.htm](http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/V/vanch_00.htm).

### **SPECIAL SESSION, JUNE 3:**

The class will convene at 1 p.m. SFU's Burnaby Campus, tentatively in Room AQ3181, joined by some students in URB695, as a 45-minute seminar on housing and urban governance conducted by **Jack Layton**, leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada (biographical notes at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jack\\_Layton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jack_Layton)). The announcement of this private event and a subsequent public event includes the following:

Dr. Jack Layton, federal NDP leader and one-time political science and geography professor at Ryerson University and the University of Toronto, will be returning to the academic world to conduct a seminar for graduate students in SFU's Urban Studies Program. This is to be followed by a public presentation on Canada's urban and environmental challenges at 1:45 p.m. on June 3, during SFU's Open House, in Room AQ3181 at the Burnaby campus. The presentation promises to be a major statement about the kind of actions required to move Canada, and particularly Canada's cities, towards a truly sustainable future. Media opportunities will be available at 2:30 p.m., immediately after the presentation.

**Anthony Perl**, director of SFU's Urban Studies Program, will preside over both events and introduce Jack Layton at each event. (I will regrettably be away that day.)

Jack Layton's book *Homelessness: The Making and Unmaking of a Crisis*, Penguin, Toronto, 2000, provides good preparation for these encounters, as does his paper 'A time to build Canadian cities', *Policy Options*, February 2004, pp. 33-38, available at <http://www.irpp.org/po/archive/feb04/Layton.pdf>.

### **SESSION 6, JUNE 6:**

The guest presenter will be **Johnny Carline**, Chief Administrative Officer for the Greater Vancouver Regional District (biographical notes at [Johnny Carline](#)). Mr. Carline, to be introduced by **Cynthia Lussier**, will make a presentation entitled 'Sustainability as a Transformation Strategy'.

Also presenting this evening will be **Frances Stemberidge**, on 'Key Contemporary Factors in Urban Intergovernmental Relations—A Vancouver View'.

A third presentation will be by the instructor: on urban governance aspects of energy-related activities, based on his recent report for the City of Hamilton, Ontario, entitled

*Hamilton, The Electric City* (available at [Hamilton 1](#)) and his April 28 presentation to Hamilton City Council on the report (available at [Hamilton 2](#)).

### **SESSION 7, JUNE 8:**

The guest presenter will be **Stuart Ramsey**, a transportation planner with the City of Burnaby (biographical notes at [Stuart Ramsey](#)). Mr. Ramsey, who will be introduced by **Andrea Streilein**, will provide another perspective on how things get done, or not done, at City Hall, focussing on the interplays among city staff, councillors, and residents/business operators, and even within civic administrations, e.g., between departments and between upper and lower echelons of a department.

The student presentation this evening will be made by **Allison Clarke**: on the usefulness, value, and importance of urban governance indicators.

The balance of the evening will comprise a general discussion of the previous three guest presentations (Ann McAfee, Jack Layton, and Johnny Carline).

### **SESSION 8, JUNE 13:**

The guest presenter will be **Julian Darley** (biographical notes at [Julian Darley](#)), founder of Global Public Media and the founder and director of the Post Carbon Institute. He is the author of *Relocalize Now* (see <http://www.newsociety.com/bookid/3895>), with David Room and Celine Rich, to be published in July 2006. Mr. Darley will present their “plan for the global relocalization of our way of life through the recreation of local communities—or ‘outposts’—at the level of neighbourhood and nation that can begin to build ‘parallel public infrastructures’ for survival”. The class will examine the implications of such relocalization for urban governance. **Allison Clarke** will introduce Mr. Darley.

This evening’s student presentation will be made by **Andrea Streilein** on high-rise condominium buildings as gated communities.

The general discussion of previous presentations will continue during the balance of the session.

### **SESSION 9, JUNE 15:**

There will be no guest presentation this evening. The student presentation will be made by **Brenda Jones**, on public consultation aspects of the planning for TransLink’s proposed Evergreen light-rail transit line.

The remainder of the evening will focus on municipal finances, with consideration of the relevant parts of the following five documents:

1. Collin, J-P, and Léveillé, J, *Municipal organization in Canada: tradition and transformation, varying from province to province*. ICPS, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelone (62 pages, 2003). Available at [http://www.diba.es/innovacio/fitxers/ML\\_Canada.pdf](http://www.diba.es/innovacio/fitxers/ML_Canada.pdf).

2. McMillan, ML, *Municipal Relations with the Federal and Provincial Governments: A Fiscal Perspective*. Presentation to the Municipal-Provincial-Federal Relations Conference, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario (55 pages, 2003). Available at <http://www.vrm.ca/documents/McMillan.pdf>
3. Gilbert R, The decline of the Canadian municipality, *Plan Canada*, 29(1), 11-13 (1989). Available at [Gilbert](#).
4. Mintz, JM, Roberts T, *Running on Empty: A proposal to improve City finances*. CD Howe institute, Toronto (36 pages, 2006). At [http://www.cdhowe.org/pdf/commentary\\_226.pdf](http://www.cdhowe.org/pdf/commentary_226.pdf).
5. Slack E, Bird RM, *Cities in Canadian Federalism*, International Tax Program Paper 0603, Joseph L. Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto (42 pages, 2006). Available at <http://www.rotman.utoronto.ca/iib/ITP0603.pdf>.

### **SESSION 10, JUNE 20:**

The guest presenter will be **Dave Wetzel**, vice-chair of Transport for London, the operating authority for public transport and major roads in London, UK (biographical notes at [Dave Wetzel](#)). Mr. Wetzel, introduced by **Brenda Jones**, will speak about a particular interest of his: funding infrastructure by capturing the value added to nearby land. He may also touch on the implementation of London's Congestion Charge, a case study in the implementation of a unpopular but necessary measure.

There will be two student presentations this evening. **Lainya Rowett** will speak on how the GVRD's sustainability initiatives are overrun by local agendas. **Cameron Scott** will present an analysis of the contribution made by CityPlan Committees to urban governance in the City of Vancouver. The balance of the evening will comprise continuation of the consideration of urban finances begun in the previous session.

### **SESSION 11, JUNE 22:**

The guest presenter will be **Paul Bedford**, former Chief Planner for the City of Toronto (biographical notes at [Paul Bedford](#)). Mr. Bedford, introduced by **Daniel Gerson**, will speak to the governance of Canada's largest city and urban region. His remarks will be based on his response (available at [Bedford](#)) to the report of the Governing Toronto Advisory Panel, established by Toronto City Council in 2005. The Panel's report is at [http://www.toronto.ca/governingtoronto/pdf/govto\\_finalreport.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/governingtoronto/pdf/govto_finalreport.pdf).

This session will end at 7 p.m. so that students can join an ongoing reception, at a location to be indicated, being arranged for participants in a closed workshop to be held on June 24, after this week's World Urban Forum. (Details of the workshop are at [Workshop](#)).

### **SESSION 12, JUNE 27:**

The guest presenter will be **Peter Newman**, Professor of City Policy and Director of the Institute for Sustainability and Technology Policy at Murdoch University, Western Austra-

lia (biographical notes at [Peter Newman](#)). He will be introduced by **Frances Stembridge**. His topic will be sustainability and urban governance.

This evening's student presenter will be **Cynthia Lussier**, who will speak to how existing methods of public participation in urban governance are not effective at engaging people.

The balance of the evening will be spent discussing urban governance and economic development, with reference to the items concerning the City of Hamilton considered during Session 6 and the following book chapter: Gilbert R, Stevenson D, Governance and Economic Development: the Regions of Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal. In *Cities for Citizens: Improving Metropolitan Governance*, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Paris, France (2001), pp. 199-241. Available at [Gilbert & Stevenson](#).

### **SESSION 13, JUNE 29:**

The guest presenter will be **Ken Cameron**, now CEO of the Homeowner Protection office, formerly Manager, Policy and Planning, for the Greater Vancouver Regional District (biographical notes at [Ken Cameron](#)). Mr. Cameron, introduced by **Lainya Rowett**, will speak to the future of urban governance in Canada and elsewhere.

The student presentation will be by **Daniel Gerson**, on Brazil's experience with participatory budgeting. During the balance of the session, the class will revisit the matter of defining urban governance, discussed during the first session.