

USP 312U Full Syllabus in-person Spring 2026

"Housing is a human right. There can be no fairness or justice in a society in which some live in homelessness, or in the shadow of that risk, while others cannot even imagine it" — Jordan Flaherty, Floodlines: Community and Resistance from Katrina to the Jena Six

Course Objectives

To be truly livable in a city requires a rich repertoire of urban housing. As an introduction to the field of housing and urban development, this course will help learners to:

- Gain a comprehensive understanding of housing supply, demand, and consumption patterns. Explore the interplay between public policies, private market developers, and community organizations in shaping housing and urban development initiatives.
- Examine housing within its broader community and societal contexts. Using U.S. housing as a primary reference point, we will compare international housing development to gain a comprehensive understanding of how housing-related issues manifest in diverse political economies.
- This course develops your research and self-learning skills by using secondary data to analyze housing issues and improve critical thinking skills. Learn housing research methods, including data access and mapping, and engage in both local and international housing discussions. Improve your analytical ability to address housing challenges, and refine your research and essay writing.
- This is a UNST Cluster course - this means the course will integrate the 4 program learning goals from University Studies: [Communication; Inquiry & Critical Thinking; Diversity, Equity & Social Justice](#), and [Ethics Agency & Community](#).

Course Contents

Active participation is essential to the success of this course. Your engagement in weekly discussions, sharing exercises, and in-class activities will not only deepen your understanding of urban housing and development but also contribute to a dynamic and collaborative learning environment. We encourage you to bring your unique perspectives, ask thoughtful questions, and actively contribute to the exploration of complex housing issues. Your participation is valued and will directly enhance your

learning experience and that of your peers. Here are some detailed items in the course content:

- **Course content** on Canvas courseware is organized into weekly modules, which will be available every Sunday at midnight. These modules are your go-to guide, acting as a detailed syllabus. They'll show you what to do 'before,' 'during,' and 'after' class on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- **Course Assignments:**
 - Weekly Exercises: Beyond the Tuesday and Thursday class materials, expect two weekly assignments, both submitted through Canvas. First, a sharing exercise (quiz) is due before Tuesday's class. Second, the discussion forum participation is required. Your first initial post is due on Thursday. the replies to your peers are due Monday the following week at 11:59 PM.
 - Major Essay Assignments: Four major essays are scheduled throughout the 10-week course. Please consult the course schedule on Canvas for precise due dates and assignment details. Allow 2-3 weeks for each essay's completion. There are four individual assignments.
 - [Assignment One - Essay on a dream home.](#)
 - Assignment Two Exploring a housing issue through mapping
 - Assignment Three - A Housing policy critic
 - Assignment Four - Final essay
- **Textbook:** Some theoretical readings are from the [Encyclopedia of Housing \(EOH\)](#). The required textbook is: *Carswell, A. T. (Ed.) (2012). The encyclopedia of housing. (Edition 2). SAGE Publications, Inc., <https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781452218380>*
- The PSU library provides ebook access. Weekly readings are linked directly within each module. You're encouraged to explore additional housing topics in the ebook. Additional readings and videos are available in the weekly modules.
- **Grading:** Your final grade is determined by two main components and your participation in the course.
 - Weekly Exercises (35%): Each week, you'll complete a sharing exercise (2 points) and a discussion exercise (3 points). To fully participate in the discussion, respond to two other students' posts. The lowest two weekly exercise scores (one sharing and one discussion) will be dropped.

- Major Assignments (40%): Four major essays will comprise this portion of your grade. Please refer to the syllabus for individual essay weights.
- Participation (25%)

Instructor Communication Parameters:

For any questions, please try to reach out before or after class, or email me at yfang@pdx.edu with the subject line "USP 312U" for other questions. We should be able to stay in close communication during this course.

Student responsibilities:

1. **Active and Prepared Participation:** Students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, and actively participate in class discussions, and group work. This includes completing assigned readings and preparatory work before each class session.
2. **Timely Completion of Assignments:** Students are responsible for submitting all assignments, including two weekly assignments: a share exercise and a discussion exercise. Four major essays should also be submitted by the specified deadlines. This ensures that they stay on track with the course material and contribute to a timely grading process.
3. **Respectful and Collaborative Engagement:** Students are expected to engage respectfully and collaboratively with their peers and the instructor. This includes listening attentively to others' perspectives, offering constructive feedback, and contributing to a positive learning environment.
4. **Utilization of Course Resources and Seeking Assistance:** Students are responsible for utilizing available course resources, such as the textbook, online materials (Canvas), and instructor office hours, to enhance their understanding of the material. They should proactively seek assistance from the instructor when encountering difficulties or needing clarification.

[Syllabus Statement for the Use of Generative AI](#)

Access and Inclusion for Students with Disabilities

PSU values diversity and inclusion. My goal is to create a learning environment that is accessible, equitable, inclusive, and welcoming. I am committed to fostering mutual

respect and full participation for all students. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. Additionally, the Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment. The DRC works with students who have physical, learning, cognitive, mental health, sensory, chronic illness, and other disabilities.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations.

If you already have accommodations, please contact me to make sure that I have received your DRC Faculty Notification Email so we can discuss your accommodations. The DRC is located in Smith Memorial Student Union, Suite 116. You can also contact the DRC at 503-725-4150, drc@pdx.edu, or [visit the DRC website \(https://www.pdx.edu/disability-resource-center\)](https://www.pdx.edu/disability-resource-center).

It is Portland State University's goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, please register with the [Disability Resource Center](https://www.pdx.edu/disability-resource-center) (DRC) (503-725-4150 or drc@pdx.edu) in order to establish reasonable accommodations. Once you have registered with the DRC, please schedule a time to meet with me so that we can discuss your needs for the term.

Title IX Statement

Portland State is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment (sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, gender or sex-based harassment and stalking). If you have experienced any form of sexual harassment, know that help and support are available. PSU has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, providing academic support and more. Information about PSU's support services on campus, including [confidential services](#) and [reporting options](#), can be found on PSU's [Sexual Misconduct Response](#) website or you may call a Confidential Advocate at 503.894.7982 or by scheduling [online](#). You may also report any incident of discrimination or discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment, to the Title IX Coordinator, [Office of Equity and Compliance](#), or the [Office of the Dean of Student Life](#).

Please be aware that all PSU faculty members and instructors are required to report information of an incident that may constitute prohibited discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual and relationship violence. This means that if you tell me about a

situation of sexual harassment or discrimination, I have to share the information with the University's Title IX Coordinator or the Office of the Dean of Student Life. However, the information will be kept private and only those with a need to know will be provided with what you disclose. Please complete the required student module [Understanding Sexual Misconduct and Resources](#) in Canvas, which provides information about PSU policy and resources.

You may also report sexual and relationship violence to law enforcement on campus with [Campus Public Safety Office \(CPSO\)](#). Or you may file an [anonymous report with Campus Public Safety Office](#) or a [Bias Incident report](#) with the [Bias Review Team \(BRT\)](#). PSU does not typically investigate the reports that are made through these two avenues. These reports help PSU understand what students and employees are experiencing on and around campus and provide support where needed.