

UPPP 275: Political Economy of Housing

Winter 2022

M 9:00 – 11:50 am (SBSG 3240)

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Course Description

Particularly in urban areas, which house over half of the global population, housing access has increasingly become a matter of concern. Housing pressures are contingent on historical, institutional, and sociopolitical contexts – political actors and regimes have responded differently to housing and socioeconomic needs and demands. Yet housing financialization processes (e.g., mortgage securitization, subprime lending, transnational landlords and real estate investment) have intensified across world regions. Particularly since the 1980s, financial deregulation promoted the rise of financial institutions and the indebtedness of governments, developers, and households. While the 2008 financial crisis made it clear that the financial sector had grown at the expense of entire national economies – and households – housing financialization continued to evolve and expand, notably in the global South.

This course will introduce students to the different, and often fraught and uneven, political, market, and societal forces that have influenced recent housing finance and development trends throughout the globe. We will also examine the paradoxical convergence of housing production booms and displacement pressures, as well as the prevalence of periodical economic busts. Since civic and institutional responses have emerged to address some of the localized socioeconomic implications of these housing and economic cycles (e.g., housing insecurity, economic crises, and urban decline), we will revisit how housing access is both promoted and restricted throughout them while engaging with critical theoretical and empirical debates around related urban questions and studies.

Preliminary Summary of Seminar Requirements & Assignments

In-class & Canvas Participation (25 points)

Annotated bibliography / final project prep (35 points)

Take home essay or podcast (40 points)

*All course content (e.g., readings) will be posted on Canvas