In this sociological and policy-oriented course, students interface with change-agents in Chicago—community residents, religious leaders, and social activists; not-for-profit and governmental actors; and educators and researchers. The course explores how these change-agents advance innovative and also tried-and-true approaches to social problems, especially those of low-income areas characterized by troubled schools and high rates of crime (and with a particular focus on South Side neighborhoods). Students are asked to think critically about how meaningful social change occurs, and why it so often does not. The central components of the course are Chicago-oriented readings, in-class and online discussions, guest speakers, Friday excursions, and independent field research.

**Grading:**
- 20% attendance/involvement
- 21% weekly Discussions postings (7 @ 3%)
- 9% fieldnotes/interview write-ups (3 @ 3%)
- 15% Vamonde Adventure
- 35% fieldwork write-up (includes presentation)

**Attendance/involvement:** Students are expected to attend and participate in all classes and excursions, and to arrive on time. Active participation is central to this class. Screen policy: don’t use them.

**Weekly Discussions:** At least two short (about 75-200 words) postings a week, with at least one related to readings. Either before or after class, but discussion posts are due by Saturday at 5 p.m. I hope it’s not busy work but a way to engage the texts, pose and explore questions, and offer authentic responses to readings, other students’ posts, and excursion experiences. The goal is to create a space for reflection, exchange, and community. Also, it lets me know where you’re at. Revise comments for clarity and quality, but postings, unlike essays, need not be formal and utterly free of typos. Weekly grading on quality and quantity (3=exceptional; 2.75=excellent; 2.5=good; etc.) with a one-point deduction for late posts. Each week at Sunday at 5 p.m one discussion is closed, and the next is opened. I’ll drop lowest three grades.

**Fieldwork:** The independent fieldwork project is detailed in a separate document, but it is meant to provide an opportunity for students to dig deeply into a topic of interest using ethnographic methods—or a related form of social documentary method. Three fieldwork submissions are ungraded (complete/incomplete) with half-point deduction for each day late.

**Vamonde:** We’ll work with Anijo Mathew, creator of Vamonde, to publish your narrated Chicago “adventure” using photographs, video, and even audio. It’s likely that your Vamonde adventure will relate to (or perhaps be an expansion of) your fieldwork and your fieldwork presentation, and is meant to be a lasting and public contribution of your Study Chicago experience. We’ll learn as we go here.

**Required books:**
Course Schedule

WEEK 1

3/29 (Tu): The South Side and Ethnography: The Art of Listening
Natalie Y. Moore, The South Side, Introduction and Chp. 1 (pp. 1-34)
Canvas: Ocejo, “Sociology’s Urban Explorers,” Ethnography and the City
In-class: Reading: Zorbaugh, Gold Coast and the Slum (Ch. 8, “Little Hell” excerpt)
Fieldwork assignment: discuss entrée, ethics of field research, model reports
Listen: TED Radio Hour, “How Can Listening Transform An Entire Community?”

3/31 (Th): The Great Migrations and the Construction of Black Chicago
Natalie Y. Moore, The South Side, Chp. 2, “Jim Crow in Chicago”
Canvas: Drake and Cayton, Black Metropolis (pp. 214-235, 379-397, 755-767, 778-782)
In-class: Lecture/discussion: Historical South Side, Part I
Guest (3:30): Anijo Punnen Mathew, founder, Vamonde
Why did he create Vamonde? How do we create our own Vamonde adventure?

4/3 (Sun): Excursion: The Conzen Magical Mystery Tour and Inaugural Ball (Michael)

WEEK 2

4/5 (Tu): Growing Up on the South Side: The Social Epidemiology of Crime
Jones and Newman, Our America (entire book)
Listen at home: This American Life, “Harper High School, Part 1” (57 min.)
In-class: Lecture/discussion: Historical South Side, Part II
Viewing: “Crips and Bloods: Made in America” (15 min. excerpt)
Discuss: readings, student fieldwork ideas, review model proposals

4/7 (Th): Growing Up in the American Gang
Laurence Ralph, Renegade Dreams, Preface, Introduction, Chp. 1
In-class: Guest panel: Growing up on the South Side (3:30-4:20)
Rudy Nimocks, former police detective, Chicago Youth Leadership Academy
Dematreas Whatley, former gang member, current youth mentor

4/8 (Fri): Excursion: West Englewood, drug economy, foreclosure crisis, food-oriented development (Chad)
Host: John Walker, former Gangster Discipline governor, current youth mentor
Read: “Peace House in Englewood” & “Whole Foods and Englewood” & “Dream Café”

WEEK 3

4/12 (Tu): The Importance of Place, Neighborhoods, Networks
Laurence Ralph, Renegade Dreams, Chps. 2, 3, and Conclusion
Canvas resource (rec’d): Emerson, Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes
In-class: Discuss readings, film, proposals, review model fieldnotes
Viewing: TED, Christakis, “The Hidden Influence of Social Network” (18 min.)
Due by Noon at Canvas: Fieldwork Proposal
4/14 (Th): Neighborhoods and Strategic Interventions
Read: NYTimes, “Closing the Math Gap for Boys” and “Intensive Tutoring Helps”
Listen at home: This American Life, “Harper High School, Part 2” (62 min.)
Watch at home: Frontline, “The Interrupters” and “Youth Guidance and Becoming a Man”
Canvas (skim): Sharkey, “Navigating Dangerous Streets: Sources, Conseqs. of Street Efficacy,” ASR
In-class: Discuss “The Interrupters”
   Guest panel: Science and Hard Work of Crime Reduction
   Jens Ludwig (c), Director, UChicago Crime Lab
   BAM and SAGA tutors

4/15 (Fri): Excursion: Chicago History Museum (Kathy) (Chad out of town)

WEEK 4

4/19 (Tu): Crime, Youth, and the Police I
Canvas: Michelle Alexander, The New Jim Crow, Introduction, Chp. 1
Read: Friedersdorf, “The Corrupt System That Killed Laquan McDonald,” The Atlantic
Canvas: Police Accountability Task Force report (due mid-April)
In-class: Guest: Craig Futterman, UChicago Law School, Invisible Institute (3:30 p.m.)

4/21 (Th): Crime, Youth, and the Police II
Canvas: Alice Goffman, On the Run: Fugitive Life..., Preface, Chp. 3 (55-85), App (211-243)
Read: “1.5 Million Missing Black Men”
Watch at home: “Hip Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes” (first 20 minutes required, rest is optional)
In-class: Guests: Sheldon Smith and Todd Brown, Dovetail Project (3:30 p.m.)
Due by Noon at Canvas: Fieldnotes #1

4/22 (Fri): Excursion: Pullman National Monument (Kathy)

WEEK 5

4/26 (Tu): Graduating from Chicago’s High Schools I
Canvas: Tough, How Children Succeed, Introduction, Chp. 1
Canvas: Payne and Kaba, “So Much Reform, So Little Change,” Social Policy
Chicago Reader, “In Chicago’s war zones, the tragedy extends beyond the kids who die”
In-class: Discuss readings and slides on Chicago school history

4/28 (Th): Graduating from Chicago’s High Schools II
Natalie Y. Moore, The South Side, Chapter 5
Listen at home: This American Life, “Back to School” (57 min.)
Canvas: Kapadia Matsko & Hammerness, “Unpacking the “Urban” in Urban Teacher Education”
In-class: Guest speaker, Revolutionizing Urban Teaching
   Tanika Island, Urban Teacher Education Program

4/29 (Fri): Excursion: Deep Tunnel or O’Hare (Michael)
WEEK 6

5/3 (Tu): The Middle School Years
   Canvas: Voisin et al., “AA Adolescents Living with Community Violence, Chicago’s Southside”
   Canvas: Lisa Dodson, Don’t Call Us Out of Name, Chapter 3, “Choice and Motherhood”
   Watch in class: Frontline, “Middle School Moment” (13 min.)

5/5 (Th): Rethinking Early Childhood Education and CPS
   Canvas: Heckman, “The Value of Early Childhood Education”
   Canvas (skim): Dana McCoy et al., “Children’s Cognitive Performance and... Community Violence”
   Guest: Early Childhood Education and CPS
      Joyce Nimocks, Woodlawn Children’s Promise Community (3:40-4:20 p.m.)
   Due by Noon at Canvas: Fieldnotes #2

5/6 (Fri): Excursion: Rebuild Foundation (starting at Archives) and Sunshine Gospel Ministries (Chad)
   Read: Chicago Tribune, “How to be a Good Neighbor with Theaster Gates”
   Canvas: Ann Markusen and Anne Gadwa, Creative Placemaking, NEA
   Browse: Rebuild Foundation and Sunshine Gospel

WEEK 7

5/10 (Tu): Black Politics and Social Capital
   Natalie Y. Moore, The South Side, Chps. 8 & 9
   Canvas: Broughton, “Notes on Method”
   Canvas: model fieldwork projects
   In-class: Discuss Moore’s book, fieldwork, model fieldwork project

5/12 (Th): The Black Church, Building Community, and Social Activism
   Canvas: McRoberts, Streets of Glory, Chp. 6, “Church-based ‘Activism’” and “Author’s Note”
   Canvas: Drake and Cayton, Black Metropolis (pp. 611-627, 658-663, 669-685)
   Read (recommended): PBS, Marliyn Mellones, “The Black Church”

5/13 (Fri): Excursion: St. Sabina (Kathy)

WEEK 8

5/17 (Tu): Food, Environment, and Grassroots Activism
   Natalie Y. Moore, The South Side, Chapter 6
   Canvas: Pellow and Brulle, “Poisoning the Planet: The Struggle for Environmental Justice”
   Read: Grist, “Chicago’s Urban Farm District”
5/19 (Th): Racial Inequalities and Health Disparities  
**Canvas**: Klinenberg, *Heat Wave: Social Autopsy of a Disaster*, Prologue (1-13), Chp. 2 (79-128)  
**Guest**: Luis Gutierrez, *Latinos Progresando*

5/20 (Fri): *Excursion*: Little Village and the Toxic Tour (Chad)  
*Little Village Environmental Justice Organization*  
Grist, “Meet the Woman Who Shut Down Chicago’s Dirty Coal Plants”

**WEEK 9**

5/24 (Tu): At the Intersection of Poverty and Housing  
**Canvas**: Venkatesh, *American Project*, Preface, Chp. 2, “Doing the Hustle,” Author’s Note  
**Canvas**: Desmond, “Unaffordable America: Poverty, Housing, and Eviction,” IRP 2015  
**Due by Noon at Canvas**: Fieldnotes #3

5/26 (Th): The Plan for Transformation and the Ongoing Affordable Housing Crisis  
**Canvas**: Austen, “The Last Tower: The Decline and Fall of Public Housing,” *Harper’s*  
Natalie Y. Moore, *The South Side*, Chapter 3  
**Watch at home**: CHA’s PFT video  
**In-class**: Housing slides, discussion of readings  
**Guest** (or site visit): Mattie Butler, *WECAN* (affordable housing)  
Charlie Barlow, housing expert, geographer, PBPL Studies

5/27 (Fri): *Excursion*: Public Housing in Chicago (Michael)

5/28 (Sat): **Due by 5 p.m.**: Vamonde Adventure posted

**WEEK 10**

5/31 (Tu): Fieldwork Presentations  
Student Vamonde and fieldwork presentations  
**Canvas**: Hart, *Story Craft*, Chps. 1 & 4

6/2 (Th): Closing Banquet  
Swift Hall, 1st floor Commons, 4-8 p.m.

**EXAM WEEK**

6/7 (Tu): **Due @ Canvas by Midnight as PDF file**: Final Fieldwork Projects