

## Special Topics: Cuba

UPA 680-01, MUP 680, MPA 680

Spring 2016 / Summer 2015

Taught by Professor John I. Gilderbloom Ph.D.

Class Meeting Times: Every other Saturday Afternoon: 01/9; 01/23/ 02/06; 02/20; 03/5;  
March 12 to 20; 04/09; 04/23

Room 117

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<http://sun.louisville.edu>

Who wants to go to Cuba Spring Break, March 12 to 20 for course credit of up to three/six hours? Please send us an email of interest ([jigild01@louisville.edu](mailto:jigild01@louisville.edu)) and mark subject line as UofL Cuba trip so we can decide if it's a go! University of Louisville graduate students have a unique and exciting opportunity to travel to Cuba to participate in people-to-people exchanges and learn about planning, historic preservation, health care, sustainable development, planning and architecture in one of the few truly Socialist countries left in the world. What does a socialist city look like? What about health care, education, food, transportation, housing, economic development in a socialist versus capitalist city? What about issues such as equality among races and gender? What about gay rights? Even the most jaded traveler will find Cuba to be one of the most beautiful and fascinating places in the world. With 500 years of history and heritage, it is the site of one of the largest intact collections of Spanish Colonial architecture as well as the Largest collection of Soviet era prefabricated buildings. In this beautiful and intriguing setting, you will experience the radically different economic, social, and cultural life of Cuba's citizens.

Preservationists, planners, environmentalists, and architects have a once in a lifetime opportunity to travel to Cuba for a 7day educational/research seminar to one of the world's most interesting countries. We will visit Havana and several places outside of Havana. Students, architects, planners, policy makers, preservationists and community leaders will find this program of particular interest. Our Cuban and American guides are considered academic experts in architecture, planning, environment and urbanism. The tour leader, Professor John Gilderbloom, is considered an expert on Cuba and has consulted with ***National Geographic Magazine***, ***appeared on CNN***, and written about Cuba in ***Planning, Journal of Urban Affairs, Urban Land*** and in my most recent book: ***Invisible City*** and forthcoming ***Ten Commandments of Urban Regeneration***. The Cubans have honored me with a special Diploma /Certificate in Architecture

and a co-authored book on Modern Architecture (I wrote the chapter on Cuban architecture.) I have given presentations to US State Department, testified to the U.S. Senate Hearings on Cuban Embargo, I have been awarded an honorary citation and diploma from Cuban Architectural professional group. This educational and research seminar provides a rare and unique opportunity for Americans with an interest in seeing some of the most beautiful historic architecture in the world. UNESCO has declared Trinidad and Havana, two of the cities we visit, world heritage sites. This research and educational seminar allows Americans to listen and exchange ideas with Cuban architects, planners and preservationists. An important underlying theme of the program is exploring sustainable development and new urbanism in a Communist country. Our educational program is presented in English. Classroom time, including walking tours and bus trips, will total approximately 50 hours.

This program is an exceptional value, with non-stop air from Miami to Havana, accommodations, transfers, daily breakfast, several dinners; visa, English-speaking Cubans and American instructors and guides, and U.S. Treasury license. We will also do a two and half month prep course before we leave for Cuba of readings and guest lectures. So if you are interested in taking this course which counts as in Public Administration, Planning and Urban and Public Affairs please join us. We also plan to invite graduate students from other programs at the University of Louisville. Please send us an email of interest (jigild01@louisville.edu) and mark subject line as UofL Cuba trip so we can decide if it's a go!

Unlike your conventional graduate classes of meeting once a week at night, this course has a much different structure. We will meet only 7 class meetings—five before we leave on March 12 and 20 and two after we come home. Much of this learning is considered “experiential where you will see cityscape first hand. . . If you also think you are going to do a much bigger paper, we can arrange for you to take an Independent Study for another 3 units to complete over summer..

The class will have a number of guest lectures and movies; the course will be run as a seminar, so class discussion will be encouraged. Many of the class lectures will focus on a small booklet called Cuba's Socialism: 1 Miracles and Disasters. I will also draw on my extensive experience in Cuba. As instructor, I reserve the right to make changes in the organization of the course; this allows the class to be flexible and responsive to the needs of the students and the professor.

The course strives to give a good working overview of Cuba from a political, economic, sociological, environmental, design and planning perspectives. Advisors might designate this as an elective for a variety of majors including business, architecture, political science, social work, history, Latin American Studies and art history. You will get a grade in four areas:

**(1) CLASS PARTICIPATION (25%)**

Since the course is designed as a seminar, it is expected that students come prepared to discuss the assigned readings and if possible introduce relevant current events into class discussion. The first part of class will generally be in a lecture format, followed by a class discussion during the second half of class—we have five class meetings before March 12 and two class meetings after March 20.. During Spring Break (March 12 to 20) the class is going to Miami/Cuba so we expect you to show up on time and participate in the numerous lectures, exchanges, and walking tours. We expect you to show up for all class presentations. Second, we expect you to rank the assigned books and give a section of the book via PowerPoint by adding in additional information. The point is to lead a discussion and stimulate participation. You don't have to be stuck with just the reading presentation but add in YouTube Videos or additional readings.

### **(2) BOOK ESSAYS (25%)**

For this class to be a success, we need to get you to read these fantastic books on Cuba. We are not interested in a summary but more a reaction or critique of the books. We will ask for five essays of which the four best essays will be your grade. Average length should be around 1,000 words—about 2 to 3 pages double space.

### **(3) REFLECTIONS JOURNAL (25%)**

You will be asked to keep a daily journal concerning your thoughts and observations while in Cuba of what you are seeing and how it related to course readings.

**(4) Project (25%)** Honestly, it's a creative endeavor that is rooted on some aspect of Cuban life: art, farming, sustainable policies, housing, community development, tourist industry, small business development; issues of race, gender, aging and disability; transportation, food, and health. What does a socialist city look like? What works? What doesn't? You are only in Cuba for one week so most likely it will be observational qualitative research. Your best friend might be a camera to carry out your research. We encourage you to visit with Cubans in their houses ride the bus, visit a medical or dentist office, outdoor art market or businesses; walk the streets, eat at Cuban restaurants. I am looking for publishable tight magazine style a paper 2,000 to 5,000 word that integrates photos, observations, readings. I want something original and not your typical library literature review.

## **Books**

### **The following books are required:**

- (1) Havana: Two faces of the Antillean Metropolis** by Robert Segre, Mario Coyula (maybe one of our tour guide leaders) and Joseph Scarpaci. New York, New York: John Wiley and Sons. 1-800-879-4539 or try <http://amazon.com>. The title might be a little stiff and academic but it is a neat collaboration between American, Brazilian and Cuban academics on planning a Socialist city, and it is illustrated with maps, pictures and other data. This is a very good resource book

for planners, architects, urban historians and geographers.

(2) **History of Cuba by Cliff Staten St. Martin's Press.** Cliff wrote this book based on his visit to Cuba with my group! The book is now in its seven edition.

(3) **Primary Health Care in Cuba by Linda Whiteford Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.**

(4) **Revolution of Forms: Cuba's Forgotten Art Schools by John Loomis, 1999, New York: Princeton University Press** This book published by Princeton is one of the best books I have ever read. A case study of what happened to architecture in Cuba after the revolution by focusing on one building, which changed architecture in socialist Cuba forever. Powerful, insightful and scary.

(5) **Eduardo Luis Rodríguez.** The Havana Guide: Modern Architecture 1925-1965. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2000. The Havana Guide is the first publication of its kind in English to recognize the wealth of modern architecture that exists throughout Havana. Written with an academic perspective, Rodríguez fails to review post-revolutionary architecture. Undoubtedly, such a review by a Cuban living in Cuba would probably be highly critical and create many problems for him/her. So we understand this predicament. Surprisingly, Princeton University Press has rejected proposals to publish books critical of Cuban architecture during the revolutionary period.

(6) Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security in an Era of Oil Scarcity: Lessons from Cuba by Julia Wright

**(7) Looking for a good book on art in Cuba. Any suggestions?**

Outline of classes at the University of Louisville: meet in room 117 at 426 Bloom Street!

**01/9;**

**Introduction to the Class and slide presentation overview!**

Read papers by John I. Gilderbloom including articles on Cuba economics and politics; testimony to the U.S. Senate on ending the Cuban blockade.

**01/23 History and Politics in Cuba**

**History of Cuba by Cliff Staten St. Martin's Press.**

Please also read Gilderbloom's United States Senate

With guest speaker Professor Cliff Staten Indiana University and former attendee of this Program; Larry Muhammad, Cisco Montgomery, also invited is Carla Wallace whose sister has done a documentary on Cuba

02/06 The Case for and Against Cuban Socialism! Do women and blacks do better

under Socialism?

**Havana: Two faces of the Antillean Metropolis** by Robert Segre, Mario Coyula (maybe one of our tour guide leaders) and Joseph Scarpaci invited Professor Julie M. Bunck who has done ground breaking “politically incorrect” comparative research on the status of women and blacks in Cuba and United States. You might be surprised. Contact: Julie@louisville@edu; 502 852-7293 / 1659  
Articles on Cuba by our guest speaker Professor Julie Bunck

02/20 Health and Food

**Primary Health Care in Cuba by Linda Whiteford Rowman and Littlefield**

**Student presenters: Kasandra Lambert and Ashley O’Neil**

03/05 Architecture, Art and Politics

**Eduardo Luis Rodríguez.** The Havana Guide: Modern Architecture 1925-1965.

**Revolution of Forms: Cuba's Forgotten Art Schools by John Loomis, 1999, New York: Princeton University Press**

Read Gilderbloom’s Essay on Modern Architecture in Cuba

**Includes a documentary film: Unfinished Spaces: Cuba’s Architectural Revolution**

Read Gilderbloom’s Essay on Modern Architecture in Cuba

04/09 Discussion of the trip highlights and lowlights; What worked and what did not?  
Invited Guest: Dean of A&S

04/16 Class presentations of projects in project. Note if you are taking an overload or need more time we can give you an incomplete grade through the last Saturday of May of 2016. If you also think you are going to do a much bigger paper, we can arrange for you to take an Independent Study for another 3 units to complete over summer.

04/23 Final Papers/ Projects are to be turned in and put either in my mail box or under my door.