

Princeton University
Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs
Policy Workshop WWS591g
Dr. Shlomo Angel, Instructor
Fall 2005

Secure Tenure: Towards Urban Property Rights Reform in Latin America

Course Syllabus

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Workshop Objective and Description:

In his recent book, *The Mystery of Capital*, Hernando de Soto blames the absence of clear property rights in developing countries as a key factor in inhibiting economic development, by keeping both residential and commercial properties as “dead capital”. For the first time, property rights reform has been put on the global development agenda. The objective of the workshop is to provide students with the theoretical foundations and the practical tools necessary for effective property rights reform in Latin America and the Caribbean, by focusing on the millions of families now living in urban informal settlements without proper rights to the lands they occupy.

The key output of the workshop will be a policy paper, provisionally titled “Towards Secure Tenure: Property Rights Reform in Latin America”, for the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The Bank has now formed a committee—headed by Mr. José Brakarz, Senior Social Development specialist at the Bank’s Sustainable Development department—to be the official client for this workshop. The workshop

will prepare a policy paper for the committee that will contain an analysis of the status of property rights and tenure reform in three countries in Latin America and the Caribbean—Brazil, Ecuador, and Mexico; a state-of-the-art survey of the best and worst practices employed in matters of property rights in informal settlements; and a series of key recommendations for the Bank to pursue property rights initiatives in the Latin American region. The paper—after consideration, review, and modification by the Bank’s Committee—will be published as a Bank Technical Note.

The workshop will be conducted by Dr. Shlomo Angel who has researched secure tenure issues in developing countries since the early 1980s, and who, over the past few years, has advised the IDB on housing policy issues—including property rights reform—in ten countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The first weeks of the workshop will be devoted to familiarizing participants with the tenure reform literature—through intensive reading, class discussions, and guest lectures—as well as to organizing the data collection effort in the field. During the fall break, student teams will travel to Brazil, Ecuador, and Mexico to collect data and to interview stakeholders—in the public, civic and private sectors—concerned with urban property rights reform. The remaining weeks of the class will be devoted to analyzing the data, to consolidating a policy framework, and to drafting the final report. In early 2006, the report will be presented to the IDB in its headquarters in Washington D.C. There is also a possibility that the report will be presented at the UN’s Third Urban Forum, scheduled to take place in Vancouver in June 2006.

Course Requirements:

The participants in the workshop will meet regularly as a group once a week in [Room to be announced], Robertson Hall, from 7pm to 10pm on Thursday evenings for two consecutive class periods with a short break in between. These meetings will be devoted to lectures, short presentations, discussions, and hands-on work. Other meetings in smaller groups, outside the official class periods, may be required as well.

The workshop will start on September 15, at 7pm. Altogether, there will be 11 weekly workshop sessions, ending on the 15th of December 2005. Three teams of workshop participants will travel to three different countries in Latin America—Mexico, Brazil, and Ecuador—during the Fall break. Fieldwork (not including travel) will take place between Monday, 31st of October 2005, and Saturday, 5th of November 2005, for data collection; meeting with public officials, private-sector, and civic-sector leaders; and field visits to communities. The final report is to be delivered to the instructor for grading not later than 5pm on “Dean’s Date”, 17 January 2006. The final presentation at the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington D.C. is tentatively scheduled for February 2005.

- (a) *Readings:* In preparation for class discussions each of the first six sessions before the field trips, students will be expected to read chapters or articles pertaining to the discussion topic, or short papers circulated by members of the workshop

- team, before coming to class, and to prepare short presentations based on the readings.
- (b) *Writing a Chapter of the Report:* Each student will be required to draft one of the chapters of the draft report to the client. Once completed, it will be circulated to other team members and, on occasion, presented in class. In special cases, it may be possible for students to collaborate on their papers.
 - (c) *Common Responsibilities:* All members of the workshop will be expected to assist in labor-intensive efforts, as necessary. Similarly, all will be expected to help in administrative arrangements before and during the field trip, in preparing the presentation and in editing the report, and in making the presentation.

Students will be graded on the basis of their written assignment (50%), on their class presentations (20%), on their contribution to common assignments (15%), and on their participation in class discussions (15%).

Office Hours:

The instructor will meet students, by e-mail appointment, at Room [to be announced], Robertson Hall on Thursdays between 4:00pm and 7:00pm.

Tentative Course Schedule

15 September:

Session 1: **Introduction to the Workshop and a plan of action** – personal introductions; workshop plan and schedule; deciding on the division of tasks and responsibilities.

Session 2: **The Housing Sector and Housing Policy in Developing Countries – An Introduction** (Lecture by Instructor and class discussion)

22 September:

Session 3: **The Housing Sector and Housing Policy in Latin America – A Comparative Perspective** (Lecture by Instructor and class discussion)

Session 4: **Brazil, Mexico and Ecuador – Country Profiles** (short student presentations and class discussion)

29 September:

Session 5: **The Role of the Property Rights Regime in Housing Policy** (Lecture by Instructor and class discussion)

Session 6: **“Secure Tenure for the Urban Poor”** (video of an expert group meeting at the World Bank in May 2002)

6 October:

Session 7: **Class Debate on the motion “Hernando de Soto’s *Mystery of Capital* is a misrepresentation of the secure tenure issue”**

Session 8: **Strategy Session I** (class discussion of conceptual issues and administrative arrangements for field work)

13 October:

Yom Kippur – No Class

20 October:

Session 9: **The History of the Struggle for Secure Tenure in Mexico** (Guest Lecture by Dr. Peter Ward, University of Austin, Texas – to be confirmed)

Session 10: **Strategy Session II** (discussion of conceptual issues and administrative arrangements for field work)

27 October:

Session 11: **The History of the Struggle for Secure Tenure in Brazil** (Guest Lecture by Mr. Martim Smolka, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Cambridge MA – to be confirmed)

Session 12: **Strategy Session III** (discussion of conceptual issues and administrative arrangements for field work)

31 October-5 Nov:

One-week field trip to three countries in Latin America: Mexico, Brazil, and Ecuador. One team of workshop participants will travel to each one of three cities: Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, and Guayaquil. The teams will seek to meet various stakeholders involved – both directly and indirectly – in property rights issues in housing. They will meet with officials, representatives of the private and civil sector, community leaders, and other interested parties; they will visit and survey communities with different tenure status; and they will collect documents and data from multiple sources.

10 November:

Session 13: **What should be the structure and content of the proposed policy paper to the Inter-American Development Bank?** (Open class discussion)

Session 14: **Strategy Session IV** (Allocation of responsibilities for different sections of proposed policy paper)

17 November:

Session 15: Case Study 1: The Practice of Tenure Regularization in Mexico (Student presentation and class discussion)

Session 16: Case Study 2: The Practice of Tenure Regularization in Brazil (Student presentation and class discussion)

24 November:

Thanksgiving – No Class

1 December:

Session 17: Case Study 3: The Practice of Tenure Regularization in Ecuador (Student presentation and class discussion)

Session 18: Secure Tenure for the Urban Poor in Latin America and the Caribbean – A Conceptual Framework (Student presentation and class discussion)

8 December:

Session 19: Secure Tenure for the Urban Poor in Latin America and the Caribbean – Assessment of Available Strategies (Student presentation and class discussion)

Session 20: Secure Tenure for the Urban Poor in Latin America and the Caribbean – Practical Considerations (Student presentation and class discussion)

15 December:

Session 21: Feedback on draft chapters of the Policy Paper (Student presentations and class discussion)

Session 22: Strategy Session V (Submission of draft chapters; discussion of strategy for preparing and presenting the final report; course evaluation)

17 January:

“Dean’s Date” – 5pm deadline for submission of final report by email to Instructor for grading.

Preliminary List of Selected Readings:

American Planning Association, 2001, “A Roundtable Discussion on *The Mystery of Capital*”, *Interplan*, No. 67, June, 2–9.

- Angel, Shlomo, 1983, "Land Tenure for the Urban Poor," in Angel, Archer, Tanphiphat and Wegelin, editors, *Land for housing the Poor*, Singapore: Select Books, 110-142.
- Angel, Shlomo, 1983, "Upgrading Slum Infrastructure: Divergent Objectives in Search of a Consensus," *Third World Planning Review* 5 (No. 1, February): 5-22.
- Angel, Shlomo, 2005, "Urban Tenure and Property Rights Regimes in Latin America: Excerpts From Nine Recent Housing Policy Assessments", unpublished note, New York, July.
- Baross, Paul, 1983, "The Articulation of Land Supply for Popular Settlements in Third World Cities", in Angel, Archer, Tanphiphat and Wegelin, editors, *Land for housing the Poor*, Singapore: Select Books, 180-210.
- De Soto, Hernando, 2000, *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else*, New York: Basic Books.
- Groupement de Recherche Interurba, 1995, "Integration of Irregular Settlements: Current Questions in Asia and Latin America", *Pratique Urbaines* 12 (English), January Paris: AITEC.
- Hardoy, Jorge E., and David Satterthwaite, 1989, "Chapter 1: The Legal and the Illegal City," in *Squatter Citizen: Life in the Urban Third World*, London: Earthscan Publications, 12-36.
- Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, 2002, "Access to Land by the Urban Poor: Annual Roundtable", Cambridge MA: Lincoln Institute,
- Rose, Carol M. 1994, "Chapter 1: Possession as the Origin of Property," in *Property and Persuasion: Essays on the History, Theory, and Rhetoric of Private Ownership*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 11-23.
- Turner, John C. 1967. "Barriers and Channels for Housing Development in Modernizing Countries," in *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 33:3, 167-181.
- Ward, Peter M., 1983, "Land for Housing the Poor: How Can Planners Contribute?" in Angel, Archer, Tanphiphat and Wegelin, editors, *Land for housing the Poor*, Singapore: Select Books, 34-53.
- World Bank, 1993, *Housing: Enabling Markets to Work*, A World Bank Policy Paper, Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1-144.