

# People's Park and the Right to The Commons

DeCal Class Syllabus - Spring 2019



peoplespark.org

Class Facilitators: Adam Zeigler: adamziegler@pm.me

Class meetings:

Tuesdays 5–6 pm, Barrows Hall, Room 166

## Class Overview

People's Park is internationally known for its rich history of struggle and resistance. From the Ohlone Indians to the current drive to build housing on it, the Park has raised important questions about who has a right to the land and who it should serve. This class will examine the history of the Park including the Native American period, the Mexican Cession and Gold Rush period as well as the exercise of eminent domain that turned the developed city block into first a parking lot and then a park. We will examine crucial concepts such as "user development", open space, "Everyone Gets a Blister" and land "ownership" itself. Students will meet activists, park users and city officials who can discuss the significance of this controversial piece of land.

## Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this semester, students will:

- Know and be able to identify the main periods in the parks development
- Identify key concepts that have united park activists across decades
- Articulate reasons both for and against development of the park
- Explain how the transformation of the park will impact marginalized communities
- Analyze the overall patterns of gentrification taking place in Berkeley and compare how these dynamics are influencing the discussion

## Student requirements

Attendance: Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. Students may not have more than two unexcused absences in order to pass. Please notify us via email if you think you will need to miss class.

Readings: Students should come to class having read the assigned reading and prepared to ask questions and discuss related topics.

Park Shifts: Students will be expected to attend three organized activities in the park. One will be the People's Park Anniversary, plus two other events (concerts, rallies, speaking events)

## Assignments

- Each student will be required to write a 1-2 page reflection about their observations of activity/people in the park. Due 03/07 and 04/11
- Each student will be required to briefly interview a park user about their attitudes towards the park and the potential for its development into student housing.
- Students are required to spend one 2 hour shift assisting with park activities (gardening, serving food, attending a meeting, etc.)

## Grading

- Attend at least three Park Shifts (40%)
- Have no more than two unexcused absences (40%)
- Complete the short two reflections (20%)

## Spring 2019 Semester Schedule

**January 22: Intro to People's Park: The Current Plan to Build Student Dorms** (All presenters and facilitators should attend)

**January 29: Movie: "Berkeley In the 60's": The Context for the People's Park Struggle**  
(Guest: M. Delacour)

**February 5: Park History through 1969 and the Occupation of Berkeley** (Guests: L. Teague, J. Chanin, A. Weills, D. Siegel)  
Recommended: <http://www.peoplespark.org/wp/history/>

**February 12: The Principles of the Park: Who Owns the Land?** (Adam & Laleh will facilitate crucial questions discussion)

**February 19: The Park Gets Paved: Struggles and Resistance 1969-1989** (Guest: R. Bates)

**February 26: The Volleyball Courts and the Resistance of 1990s: Building the Town/Gown Relationship and Shared Governance: Berkeley and the UC make a deal** (Guests: Carol Denny, A. Prichett)

**March 5: UC Regents and the Long Range Development Plan/ The Role of The Regents**  
(Guests Lisa Teague/ Greg/ Alfred Wu)

**March 12: Park Design and Elements (Tour of the Park)**  
(Guests: Darin/Greg/Alfred Wu)

**March 19: The Botanical Development in People's Park: Part Tour/Part gardening** (wear appropriate clothing)

**March 26: Spring Break NO CLASS**

**April 2: The Park as Community Center/ Homelessness and People's Park** (TBA)

**April 9: Plan for Mobilizing students. Rally planning: People's Park Anniversary and Historic Site status**

**April 16: Problems with UC regent centered control on Berkeley Development** (Guest: Joe Liesner)

**April 23: Linking Struggles: West Berkeley Shell mound speak out** (Laleh or she will find someone or do it.)

**April 30: Legacies of Resistance: How do we resist?**  
(Adam/Laleh facilitate: All come!)  
(Bring one page reflection/proposal)  
Last Class Evaluation, potluck and presentations

### Readings and Resources:

- People's Park 1969 by Alan Copeland
- People's Park: Still Blooming Oct 15, 2009 by Terri Compost
- Berkeley in The 60's: Video, 2007
- The Ohlone Way, Malcolm Margolis
- Remaking the University
- Various newspaper articles

More details, readings, web links: [peoplespark.org](http://peoplespark.org)