Learn about:
- Affordable housing
- Housing markets and finance
- Zoning and land use
- Gentrification and displacement

Through:
- Weekly guest lectures
- Case studies
- Interactive exercises

Class Description:
Long before Covid-19, the United States suffered from a housing crisis, the depths of which have only been exposed by the pandemic. Across the country, working class and low-income Americans struggle to pay rent, while the prospect of home ownership is elusive for all but the very rich. At the local level, battles over where to build and how to prevent displacement highlight the tradeoffs between housing affordability, place-based investing, and access to opportunity. How did we get here? And what should U.S. housing policy look like going forward? The goal of this class is to build a foundation that will help students to think critically about these questions.

Through readings, guest lectures, case studies, and hands-on exercises, the class will explore a range of topics, including housing affordability, the interaction between demand and supply, housing finance, zoning and land use, gentrification and displacement, and the role that housing plays in promoting household well-being. The course will be oriented to contemporary issues in US housing policy, and will focus mostly, but not exclusively, on the US context.

This course will pay particular attention to how housing is intertwined with issues of inequality and access to opportunity for low-income and minority households. It will also provide context for the issues that city, regional, and state level governments face in determining housing policies and programs. By the end of the class, students will understand the origins of contemporary debates in U.S. housing policy, gain familiarity with the programs, players, and best practices in the field, and develop their ability to evaluate the tradeoffs and challenges inherent in different policy approaches.

For more information contact Madeleine Parker, madeleine.parker@berkeley.edu