

Planning the Future of New York City

Common Course Description:

“Having examined a variety of important aspects of the past and present New York City in the previous seminars, in this fourth and final seminar students analyze the interplay of social, economic and political forces that shape the physical form and social dynamics of New York City...By studying institutional agents of change-federal, state, and city governments; public authorities; private sector interests; community boards; and grassroots organizations-students come to appreciate the roles people take or are given in the decision-making processes of government and the ways in which these roles are affected by patterns of success, inequality, and the operations of power. The culminating project of this seminar are small-group presentations, in an academic setting, of students’ investigations of crucial issues affecting the future of New York City.”

Common Course Learning Objectives:

In this seminar, students will:

1. Use primary sources, both qualitative and quantitative, especially in their research projects, to understand community institutions, the local economy, and the role of government.
2. Develop an understanding of how power differentially affects New York City’s people. Its built environment, and its institutions through site visits, case studies, and research projects.
3. Develop the ability to engage in key contemporary debates that shape the future of the city through in-class discussions, presentations, and colloquia.
4. Develop an understanding of the formal and informal institutions underlying decision making in the city by analyzing historical and contemporary planning and policy issues.

Our Seminar Description:

Our seminar will focus on understanding the political, economic and cultural causes and effects of contemporary gentrification processes in New York City. The first part of the course will ask students to imagine both what kind of city they want to inhabit and whom they imagine should shape that city. To inform this process, we will compare and contrast the “Corporate City” associated with Robert Moses’s post-WWII vision, the “Urban Village” associated with Jane Jacobs’s 1960s vision, and the “Neoliberal City.” The second part of the course will focus on understanding both processes of gentrification and the field of gentrification research. Among issues we will focus on are: debates regarding the relative power of the city’s “growth machine” and of community groups in shaping the city; the regarding the possible “positive outcomes” of gentrification as a policy to

encourage “social mixing” and poverty deconcentration; and debates regarding the negative effects of gentrification in terms of residential and industrial displacement. The last part of the course will ask: “what is to be done?” We will look at debates among policy-makers, planners, activists, and scholars over how to both address and study current gentrification trends.

Instructional Technology Fellow:

Alexis Carrozza will be working with our course as an Instructional Technology Fellow. Below is her information:

Email: acarrozza@gradcenter.cuny.edu

Eportfolio: <http://macaulay.cuny.edu/eportfolios/alexiscarrozza/>

Office: Honors Lounge, Boylan Hall 2231

Office Hours: Thursday, 12-3 pm and by appointment. Please email to make an appointment to meet in-person or virtually (Skype, etc.)

Brooklyn ITFs website (with office hours info):

<https://macaulay.cuny.edu/eportfolios/brooklynitfs/>

Course website:

<http://macaulay.cuny.edu/eportfolios/alonso2017/>

Course requirements:

1. Class participation and collaboration between students is the cornerstone of any successful course; therefore students will be required to attend all class meetings and to keep up with the assigned readings.
2. Students are required to bring to class copies of assigned course readings.
3. Students will be required to write four 3-page critical reviews of selected course readings. Each student will be placed in a group (Group A, B, C...) and each group will be assigned to turn in the reviews at specific dates. Each paper is 10 percent of the final grade. No late review papers will be accepted.
4. Students will also be placed in research teams composed of 4 members. Each team will be responsible for preparing a 4-page team research proposal and a 20-page research paper. In addition, each team will make a 10-minute presentation of their findings. This presentation will be done both during our class sessions and at the May 6-7 Conference.
5. Each research team will be responsible presenting their findings at the May 6-7 Conference.
6. “Incomplete” grades will only be awarded with written verification of a medical or personal emergency.

Required Books:

Hillary Balloon and Kenneth T. Jackson, Robert Moses and the Transformation of New York (optional)

Jane Jacobs, The Death and Life of Great American Cities

Sharon Zukin, The Naked City: The Life and Death of Authentic Public Places

Tom Angotti, New York for Sale: Community Planning Confronts Global Real Estate

Grading

Final course grades will be based on the following formula:

1. Class attendance and participation: 20%
2. 3-page critical reviews: 40% (10% each)
3. Research project and conference presentation: 40% (70% of a student's grade will be based on her or his individual contribution to her or his group research project; 30% of a student's grade will be based on the group's collective oral presentation of their research).

Academic Integrity: The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for implementing that policy can be found at this site:

<http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies>. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member **MUST** report the violation.

Note from the Center for Student Disability Services: “In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services, Ms. Valerie Stewart-Lovell at 718-951-5538. If you have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services please provide your professor with the course accommodation form and discuss your specific accommodation with him/her.”

Course Schedule:

February 2: Introduction: Studying New York City

I. What kind of city? Whose City?

February 9: The Corporate City

Readings:

Kenneth T. Jackson, “Robert Moses and the Rise of New York: *The Power Broker* in Perspective;”

Hillary Ballon, “Robert Moses and Urban Renewal: The Title I Program;”

Martha Biondi, “Robert Moses, Race, and the Limits of an Activist State;”

Robert Fishman, "Revolt of the URBS: Robert Moses and His Critics;"
all in Hillary Ballon and Kenneth T. Jackson, Robert Moses and the Transformation of
New York

February 16: The Urban Village

Readings:

Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, pp. 3-15; 55-73, 108-111,
112-238.

Due: Members of groups A, B, C will submit a 3-page critical review of the readings for
February 9th and 16th.

February 23: The Neoliberal City

Readings:

Brian Tochtermann, "Theorizing Neoliberal Urban Development: A Genealogy from
Richard Florida to Jane Jacobs," Radical History Review 112 (Winter 2012),
pp. 65-87.

Tom Angotti, "The Real Estate Capital of the World," in New York for
Sale: Community Planning Confronts Global Real Estate, (2011), pp. 37-80.

Due: Each member of groups D and E will submit a 3-page critical review of the readings
for February 23rd.

II. Gentrification: Causes, Effects, and Policies

March 2: Mega Projects and the Question of Power to Shape the City

Readings:

Julie Sze, "Sports and Environmental Justice: "Games" of Race, Place, Nostalgia, and
Power in Neoliberal New York City," Journal of Sport and Social Issues (2009),
pp. 111-129.

Susan Fainstein, "Mega-projects in New York, London, Amsterdam," International
Journal of Urban and Regional Research (2008), pp. 767-784.

Naved Sheikh, "Community Benefits Agreements: Can Private Contracts Replace
Public Responsibility," Cornell Journal of Law and Public Policy (Fall 2008),
pp. 223-246.

Film: The Battle for Brooklyn (2011)

Due: Each member of Group A will submit a 3-page critical review of the reading for
March 2nd.

March 9: Neighborhood Level Processes

Readings:

Sharon Zukin, "How Brooklyn Became Cool;" "Why Harlem is Not A Ghetto" and
"Union Square and the Paradox of Public Space," in The Naked City: The Life
and Death of Authentic Public Places (2011), pp. 35-94 and 125-158.

Due: Each member of Group B will submit a 3-page critical review of the reading for March 9th.

March 16: Gentrification, Social Mixing, and Positive Outcomes

Readings:

Lance Freeman and Frank Braconi, "Gentrification and Displacement: New York City in The 1990s" Journal of the American Planning Association 70:1 (2004), pp. 39-52.

J. Vigdor, "Does Gentrification Harm the Poor?" Brookings-Wharton Papers on Urban Affairs (2002), pp. 133-173.

Due: Each member of Group C will submit a 3-page critical review of the readings for March 16th.

March 23: Residential Displacement

Readings:

Filip Stabrowski, "New-Build Gentrification and the Everyday Displacement of Polish Immigrant Tenants in Greenpoint, Brooklyn," Antipode 46:3 (2014), pp. 794-815.

Kathe Newman and Elvin K. Wily, "The Right to Stay Put, Revisited: Gentrification and Resistance to Displacement in New York City," Urban Studies 43:1 (2006), pp. 23-57.

Due: Each member of Group D will submit a 3-page critical review of the readings for March 23rd.

March 30: Industrial Displacement

Readings:

Winifred Curran, "'From the Frying Pan to the Oven': Gentrification and the Experience of Industrial Displacement in Williamsburg, Brooklyn," Urban Studies 44:8 (July 2007), pp. 1427-1440.

Winifred Curran, "In Defense of Old Industrial Spaces: Manufacturing, Creativity and Innovation in Williamsburg, Brooklyn," International Journal Of Urban and Regional Research (34:4 (December 2010), pp. 871-885.

Due: Each member of Group E will submit a 3-page critical review of the readings for March 30th.

April 14: Research Team Preliminary Presentations

Due: Each research team will make a preliminary 10-minute presentation of their research project. Each group will receive feedback from peers.

April 13 & 20: Spring Break

April 27: Research Team Presentations

III. What is to be done?

May 4: Community Strategies and Planning Processes

Readings:

Hamil Pearsall, "Superfund Me: A Study of Resistance to Gentrification in New York City," *Urban Studies* 50:11 (August 2013), p. 2293-2310.

Tom Angotti, "From Protest to Planning Stories" and "Community Planning for the Few," in *New York for Sale: Community Planning Confronts Global Real Estate*, (2011), pp. 113-130 and 179-224.

May 6 and 7: CUNY-wide "Planning the Future of New York City" Conference

Students are required to attend. Each research team will make a 10-minute presentation on their proposal to solve a problem related to the effects of gentrification that are currently faced by city residents. Experts in the field will provide the teams with feedback on their proposal.

May 11: Living and Learning in the Shadow of Gentrification

Film: Marc Levin's *Class Divide* (2016)

May 18: On-going Debates in Gentrification Research

Readings:

Sharon Zukin, "Conclusion: Destination Culture and the Crisis of Authenticity" in *The Naked City: The Life and Death of Authentic Public Places* (2011), pp. 219-246.

Chris Allen, "Gentrification 'Research' and the Academic Nobility: A Different Class?;"

Lance Freeman, "Comment on 'The Eviction of Critical Perspectives from Gentrification Research;'"

Kate Shaw, "A Response to 'The Eviction of Critical Perspectives from Gentrification Research;'"

Neil Smith, "On 'The Eviction of Critical Perspectives;'"

Loic Wacquant, "Relocating Gentrification: The Working Class, Science, and the State in Recent Urban Research;"

All in AbdouMalik Simone, ed. "Debates and Developments" in *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 32:1 (March 2008) pp. 180-205.

Due: Each member of groups A, B, C, D and E will submit a 3-page critical review of the readings for May 4th and 18th and the film *Class Divide*.

May 28: 20-page research projects are due by 3:30 PM

Instructions for Research Project Assignment:

The research assignment asks you to work collectively with a group of your peers to imagine a “solution” to a current “problem” facing our city. Each research team will examine the effects of gentrification on a specific New York City neighborhood and make a specific proposal on how to improve the impact these effects are having on the dynamics of the neighborhood.

First, your team will need to create a profile of the neighborhood. This profile will help you identify the effects the forces of gentrification have had on the neighborhood over the last decades. Secondly, your team will need to identify a specific “problem” resulting from these forces. Once your team has done so, the team will need to conduct further research to identify the best “solution” to this “problem.” Your final paper will also need to identify potential intended and unintended consequences of your proposed “solution.”

You will be assigned to a team with five members. Your team will need to make two in-class oral presentations as well as a presentation at the CUNY-wide conference on May 6th and 7^h.

Seventy percent of your final grade for this assignment will be based on your individual contribution to your group and thirty percent of your grade will be based on your group’s collective performance.

Below are due dates associated with the research project. These dates are important. They are designed to keep your team on-track to producing a successful project.

Feb. 9:	Research Teams will be chosen
April 6:	Preliminary Research Team presentations in class
April 27:	Research Team Presentations in class
May 6 and 7:	CUNY-wide Conference
May 28:	20-page research paper due by 3:30 PM