

IDH 4001H (Seminar 4): Shaping the Future of New York City, Spring 2014

Macaulay Honors College at Baruch College
Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:30 – 3:45 pm
Newman Vertical Campus, Room 3-145

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Course Description:

Seminar 4 seeks to analyze the ongoing interplay of social, economic and political forces that shape the physical form and social dynamics of New York City. By studying the institutional agents of change in the city – federal, state, and city government, public authorities, private sector interests, community boards, and community-based organizations, we will understand and analyze what individuals and institutions do in the process of government, and the ways in which their actions are affected by patterns of inequality and power. I expect that you will apply what you have learned in Seminars 1, 2, and 3 to this course.

Learning objectives for the seminar include:

- Students will use primary sources to understand community institutions, the local economy, and the role of government.
- Students will understand how power differentially affects New York City's people, its built environment, and its institutions.
- Students will begin to engage critically and constructively in key policy debates that shape the future of the city.
- Students will learn about formal and informal institutions that underlie decision making in the city by analyzing historical and contemporary policy issues.
- Students will improve all aspects of their presentation skills.

Each Seminar 4 instructor takes a different approach to the study of cities and has different areas of expertise – thus, every section of the seminar will have a somewhat different orientation while sharing the common description that I have outlined above. In this seminar, we will look first at the broad forces that have shaped the physical, social, and political landscape of New York City, and then focus more narrowly on the topic of gentrification in four New York City neighborhoods. The course thus is divided into three sections. In the first section, we consider some of the major forces that have shaped American cities, and particularly New York City, since the 20th century. Note that this is a very selective examination, as we are constrained by time. In the second section, we examine some key issues facing contemporary New York City, again selectively. In the third section, we look particularly at the issue of gentrification in New York City.

Course Assignments:

This course has the following assignments and requirements:

1. **Reading reactions and question.** For each of the following classes, you must submit a one page reaction to the assigned reading (*not* a summary of the reading; I want to know if you agreed, didn't agree, didn't understand, wanted more clarification on the issue), as well as a thoughtful question about the reading or the topic. These brief papers are due in class at the beginning of the class. You can submit them for the following 15 classes: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, and 23. You are allowed to miss *five* classes, so in total you will be submitting 10 papers. I will write brief comments on these papers and will not grade them, but you will receive no credit for your submissions if they are not thoughtful and/or if they do not reflect that you have done the reading.
2. **Research project and presentations.** The class research project, which involves independent and team research on gentrification in New York City neighborhoods (Long Island City, Queens; West Harlem, Manhattan; Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn; and Bushwick, Brooklyn), will be described in more detail in a separate handout. We will discuss this project in Class 3. It includes the following components:
 - a. Observation of a commercial and a residential area in your assigned neighborhood, due February 26 (individual in-class reports and 2 page written description);
 - b. Observation of a community board meeting, due March 17 (individual in-class reports and 2 page written description);
 - c. Neighborhood history and demographic data, due April 7 (group in-class reports and 7 page written description including charts); and
 - d. Final papers and presentations, which will describe and discuss gentrification in your study neighborhoods, due May 5 and 7 (group in-class reports) and May 14 (25 page paper), as well as a presentation at the Seminar 4 Conference, which will be held on Saturday and Sunday, May 10 and 11 at the Macauley Honors College at 35 West 67th Street.

Grading:

I will calculate course grades as follows. Please note that as this course involves a group project, a portion of your grade will be based on a peer assessment completed by the other members of your group. I will provide assessment forms at the end of the semester.

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| ● Reading reactions/questions | 15% |
| ● Neighborhood observation and community board reports | 15% |
| ● Neighborhood history, etc. report | 15% |
| ● Final paper and presentation (5% for reviewing presentation with Owen Toews) | 30% |
| ● Peer assessment | 10% |
| ● Class participation (includes attendance at Seminar 4 Conference) | 15% |

Course Requirements:

- Your attendance and participation in class sessions are critical and mandatory. Participation means that you have completed all required readings, are prepared to engage in a serious conversation about the readings, listen to and respond to your colleagues, offer thoughtful commentary, and ask questions. I will take attendance at each class session. I will permit only three absences for any reason. For each absence above three for any reason (excessive lateness also counts as absence), I will reduce your final course grade by one notch (e.g. from B+ to B).
- Turn off cell phone and other devices, including laptops, during class, unless you have discussed with me why you need to leave your phone or laptop on.
- Please make sure that you know how to access the blog for the course, as course documents are posted on it. The website is: <http://macaulay.cuny.edu/eportfolios/botein2014>. The password for the readings section is “bearcats.” You should also check it and your Baruch email address on a regular basis, as I may send messages to the class via Blackboard.
- Hand in your work in hard copy, at the beginning of class. If you need an extension, you must communicate with me beforehand and negotiate a mutually acceptable deadline. ***I will not accept unexcused late assignments and you will receive an F for the assignment.***
- Please take advantage of my office hours if you have questions or comments about the course, the readings, or lectures. I am interested in your feedback, and will make myself available to meet with you at a time that accommodates your schedule.

Course Reading:

The reading for the course is available on readings section of the course blog/eportfolio, when marked with a “*”, or on the Internet, when linked directly from this syllabus. The password to access the blog is “bearcats.”

I also recommend that you read the *New York Times* and your local community newspapers. If you see articles that you think would interest the class, please feel free to give them to me and I will copy and distribute them.

Services for Students with Disabilities:

Baruch College provides reasonable accommodations and modifications for students with disabilities to ensure that no student with a disability is denied the benefits of, is excluded from participation in, or otherwise is subjected to discrimination under the education program or activity operated by the College because of the absence of educational auxiliary aids for students with disabilities. Arrangements for adapting class procedures without compromising course content and standards may take time. Therefore, students who require accommodations or modifications should speak with me as soon as possible. In order to receive services, you must register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities. Documentation is necessary for every disability. For more information concerning services for students with disabilities, please contact Barbara Sirois, Director of the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities, Vertical Campus Building, One Bernard Baruch Way, 2nd floor, Room 2-270, 646-312-4590.

Academic Honesty:

Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses. The following definitions are based on the College's Academic Honesty website:

Cheating is the attempted or unauthorized use of materials, information, notes, study aids, devices or communication during an academic exercise. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Copying from another student during an examination or allowing another to copy your work
- Unauthorized collaboration on a take home assignment or examination
- Using unauthorized notes during a closed book examination
- Using unauthorized electronic devices during an examination
- Taking an examination for another student
- Asking or allowing another student to take an examination for you
- Changing a corrected exam and returning it for more credit
- Submitting substantial portions of the same paper to two classes without consulting the second instructor
- Preparing answers or writing notes in a blue book (exam booklet) before an examination
- Allowing others to research and write assigned papers including the use of commercial term paper services

Plagiarism is the act of presenting another person's ideas, research or writing as your own:

- Copying another person's actual words without the use of quotation marks and footnotes (a functional limit is *four or more words* taken from the work of another)
- Presenting another person's ideas or theories in your own words without acknowledging them
- Using information that is not considered common knowledge without acknowledging the source
- Failure to acknowledge collaborators on homework and laboratory assignment

I will give a *failing grade* on any assignment that has been plagiarized. I will make no exceptions. In addition, I am required by College policy to submit a report of suspected academic dishonesty to the Office of the Dean of Students. This report becomes part of your permanent file.

Class Schedule:

Please note that the readings listed below each class are to be completed for that class.

Part I: Shaping Contemporary Cities

Class 1 (1/27/14) – Introductions; course mechanics and overview

Reading:

- None (first class)

Class 2 (1/29/14) – Urbanism

Film in class: The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces (excerpt)

Reading:

- Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Chapter 2, “The uses of sidewalks: safety,” 29-54.*
- E.B. White, *Here is New York*, 25-37 and 54-56.*

Class 3 (2/3/14) – Gentrification research project

Submit your neighborhood choice to me at the beginning of class

Reading:

- Research project assignment (on Blackboard)
- Kate L. Turabian, *Student’s Guide to Writing College Papers*, 4th Edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), Chapter 1, “What Researchers Do and How They Think about It,” 11-25.*
- “A Quick Guide to Punctuation” at http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/student/student_punctuation.pdf

Class 4 (2/5/14) – American Cities Today

Reading:

- Michael B. Katz, “What is an American City?” *Dissent*, Summer 2009, 19-26.*
- Thomas J. Sugrue, “The Rise and Fall of Detroit’s Middle Class,” *The New Yorker*, July 22, 2013: <http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/newsdesk/2013/07/the-rise-and-fall-of-detroits-middle-class.html>

Class 5 (2/10/14) – The Great Migrations

The first 20-30 minutes of the class will focus on collecting data as part of a neighborhood observation (for your assignment due 2/26)

Reading:

- Isabel Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America’s Great Migration* (New York: Vintage Books, 2010), “The Great Migration, 1915-1970,” 8-15, and excerpts following Ida Mae Brandon Gladney, pp. 19-35, 95-106, 183-184, 189-192, 242-246, 267-275, 285-292, 315-319, 332-340, 371-378, 385-389, 394-398, 506-511.*

No class 2/12 or 2/17 – College is closed

Class 6 (2/19/14) – Federal Housing Policies and the New Deal

Reading:

- Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), “Federal Subsidy and the Suburban Dream: How Washington Changed the American Housing Market,” 190-218.*

Class 7 (2/24/14) – Robert Moses and Urban Renewal

Reading:

- Robert A. Caro, *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York* (New York: Vintage, 1974), Introduction, “Wait Until the Evening,” 1-21.*
- Hilary Ballon and Kenneth T. Jackson, eds., *Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2007), Hilary Ballon, “Robert Moses and Urban Renewal: The Title I Program,” 94-115.*

Class 8 (2/26/14) – Presentations on neighborhood observations (papers due)

Class 9 (3/3/14) – Research 101

Reading:

- Colin Robson, *Real World Research*, 3rd Edition (West Sussex, UK: Wiley, 2011), Chapter 2, “Approaches to Social Research,” 13-41.*
- Kate L. Turabian, *Student’s Guide to Writing College Papers*, 4th Edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), Chapter 11, “Presenting Evidence in Tables and Figures,” 104-114.*
- “Turabian Quick Guide” on citations:
http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html

Class 10 (3/5/14) – Public Housing

Film in class: The Pruitt-Igoe Myth

Reading:

- Lawrence J. Vale, *Purging the Poorest: Public Housing and the Design Politics of Twice-Cleared Communities* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2013), Chapter 1, “Public Housing, Design Politics, and Twice-Cleared Communities,” 1-38.*
- Michael Kimmelman, “Towers of Dreams: One Ended in Nightmare,” *New York Times*, January 26, 2012, C1:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/26/arts/design/penn-south-and-pruitt-igoe-starkly-different-housing-plans.html>

Class 11 (3/10/14) – Community-based Housing Development in NYC

Reading:

- Frank P. Braconi, “In Re In Rem: Innovation and Expediency in New York’s Housing Policy,” in *Housing and Community Development in New York City: Facing the Future*, Michael H. Schill, ed. (Albany: SUNY Press, 1999), 93-118.*
- Michael Powell, “Government Can’t Help? Tell That to the South Bronx,” *New York Times*, July 25, 2011, A17:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/26/nyregion/government-cant-help-tell-it-to-the-south-bronx.html>

Class 12 (3/12/14) – Homeownership and the fiscal crisis

Reading:

- Dan Immergluck, *Foreclosed: High-Risk Lending, Deregulation, and the Undermining of America's Mortgage Market* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 2009), Chapter 5, “The Economic and Social Costs of High-Risk Mortgage Lending,” 133-166.*
- Watch PBS NewsHour, “Raze the Roof: Cleveland Levels Vacant Homes to Revive Neighborhoods,” July 5, 2011: http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/business/july-dec11/makingsense_07-05.html
- Catherine Dunn, “Foreclosure Crisis Fades to Black and Brown,” *City Limits*, August 2011: <http://www.citylimits.org/news/articles/4363/foreclosure-crisis-fades-to-black-and-brown>

Class 13 (3/17/14) – Presentations on Community Board observations (papers due)

Class 14 (3/19/14) – Presentation Skills and Demographic Research –

Guest Speaker: Frank Donnelly, Geospatial Data Librarian, Newman Library, Baruch College, CUNY

Reading:

- Explore www.census.gov and http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/neighbor_info/nhmap.shtml and http://guides.newman.baruch.cuny.edu/nyc_data

Part II: Topical Issues in Contemporary New York City

Class 15 (3/24/14) – Homelessness

Reading:

- Ian Frazier, “Hidden City,” *The New Yorker*, October 28, 2013: http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2013/10/28/131028fa_fact_frazier?currentPage=all.
- Andrea Elliott, “Invisible Child,” *New York Times*, December 2013 (there are 5 parts to this series; please read them all): <http://www.nytimes.com/projects/2013/invisible-child/#/?chapt=1>

Class 16 (3/26/14) – Megaprojects: Atlantic Yards

Film in Class: Battle for Brooklyn

Reading:

- Atlantic Yards Frequently Asked Questions: <http://www.atlanticyards.com/faq>
- Atlantic Yards Community Benefits Agreement: <http://www.atlanticyards.com/community-benefits-agreement>

Class 17 (3/31/14) – Market-based Approaches to Social Services

Reading:

- David W. Chen, “Goldman to Invest in City Jail Program, Profiting if Recidivism Falls Sharply,” *New York Times*, August 2, 2012: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/02/nyregion/goldman-to-invest-in-new-york-city-jail-program.html>
- MDRC, Performance-Based Scholarships: What Have We Learned? (August 2013).*

Class 18 (4/2/14) – Gentrification and Neighborhood Change

Film in Class: My Brooklyn

Reading:

- Loretta Lees, Tom Slater, and Elvin Wyly, *Gentrification* (New York: Routledge, 2008), Chapter 1: “The Birth of Gentrification,” pp. 3-36.*

Class 19 (4/7/14) – Group presentations on neighborhood histories, key institutions, and demographic data (papers due)

Class 20 (4/9/14) – Debrief and workshop papers and presentations

No class 4/14, 4/16, or 4/21 – Spring Recess

Part III: Gentrification in New York City

Class 21 (4/23/14) – Early Gentrification: “Brownstoners”

Reading:

- Suleiman Osman, *The Invention of Brownstone Brooklyn: Gentrification and the Search for Authenticity in Postwar New York* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), Chapter 6: “Inventing Brownstone Brooklyn,” 189-232.*

Class 22 (4/28/14) – The Consumption Approach

Reading:

- Lance Freeman, *There Goes the Hood: Views of Gentrification from the Ground Up* (Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 2006), Chapter 5, “Neighborhood Effects in a Changing ‘Hood,’” 125-156.*

Class 23 (4/30/14) – – The Production Approach

Reading:

- Loretta Lees, Tom Slater, and Elvin Wyly, *Gentrification* (New York: Routledge, 2008), Chapter 2: “Producing Gentrification,” pp. 39-85.*

Class 24 (5/5/14) -- Class dry-run presentations and discussion

Class 25 (5/7/14) – – Class dry-run presentations and discussion

May 10 and 11: Seminar 4 Conference

Class 26 (5/12/14) – Scavenger Hunt

Class 27 (5/14/14) –

Review and wrap-up (final papers due with completed peer assessment forms)