

## Seminar 4: SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE CITY (Spring 2023)

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(just email me)

In In this fourth and final seminar, we will study the social, economic, and political decision that have shaped and can reshape New York City. Building on the previous three seminars, augmented by new material about the processes of urban change, we will engage in seminar discussions and you will each conduct your own focused and in-depth semester-long research project. You will learn about the possibilities of creating change by studying the roles that individuals, community leaders, and institutional actors – government agencies (federal, state, regional, and local), private sector interests, and grassroots organizations – have played in shaping or reshaping our city. You will be like city sleuths, learning to unravel, sort, and explain the history of government policies, the causes of patterns of inequality, the promises and pitfalls of innovation, and the problems and possibilities of community-driven activism.

The course will have two major elements, in parallel:

- 1) a seminar in which we will discuss some books and articles about urban topics, as examples of how the city of today came to be, and what created historical changes in the city
- 2) a workshop in which each of you will conduct your own semester-long research project, learning how to acquire expertise that is in-depth and nuanced, and then practicing how to communicate your newfound expertise in multiple formats and venues.

The work for this class will vary week-to-week. Some weeks you will be expected to read assigned readings and come to class prepared to participate in seminar-style discussion. You will also be working throughout the term on your research project, so there will be work-in-progress deadline and some of our class time will be focused on techniques for researching and writing a paper like this. Each of you will also present your work to the class, as you go along and at the end. To support this, we will also spend class time on peer-editing, and on learning to assemble a professional-quality presentation of your research results, both individually and in groups.

The semester-long culminating projects are individual efforts that result in research reports and formal presentations addressing crucial issues affecting the future of New York City. **You will get to choose your own research topic** and you will be working on this topic throughout the semester. Based on your thorough research into the historical and present-day context of your topic, you will become an expert on this topic, digging past superficial, simplistic, and standard-wisdom analysis to formulate an informed, nuanced, and complex understanding of the issue. You have a lot of latitude in choosing a topic, depending on your own interests. Your topic can come from any of the many general areas of urban policy inquiry, including public health, criminal justice and policing, real estate development, housing policy, homelessness, transportation, architecture, education policy, and environmental sustainability, among others.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### SUMMARY

- 1) Seminar Participation (40%)
  - a - Classroom participation, including attendance: 20%
  - b - Reading “summary and response” papers: 10%
  - c - Peer editing: 5%
  - d - Group work/group presentation: 5%
- 2) Fieldwork (10%)
  - e - Neighborhood Observation and Blogpost
- 3) Research Project (50%) - additional breakdown below

### ADDITIONAL DETAILS

1a) Classroom Participation (20%): In-class discussion is an important part of this course. Whether we are discussing readings, research projects, or something else, you will be expected to contribute thoughtful questions, well-reasoned arguments, and constructive feedback to your classmates. The course depends upon your consistent, active, respectful, and informed participation in every meeting. Note: It is essential that you be fully *present* for every class session. There are many ways to demonstrably be present, but the most effective is to be consistently involved in discussion and visibly engaged: noticeably listening and reacting, speaking up *frequently*, responding to classmates, asking questions, and actively reacting to classroom content.

1b) Written Reading Summaries+Response Papers (10%): When there are assigned readings listed on the syllabus (there are five such weeks), you are required to read them before coming to class. For each of these five weeks, you must submit (via email no later than an hour prior to class), a short writing assignment with two components: a concise one-paragraph summary of each author's argument(s); and your reaction, or your response, or your analysis of the readings, either individually or taken together.

1c) Peer editing (5%): You will be paired with a classmate, to read, edit and critique each other's work on the research project. In addition to detailed editing for clarity and style, you will also be asked to provide feedback and advice about their paper's organization, argument, and evidence. This will be a combination of a marked-up/edited copies of their formal written submissions, as well as more general overall comments, written and presented to your peer in-person during class April 24, with additional copies of the mark-up and the general comments turned in to me at the same time.

1d) Group work/presentation (5%): You will do a small-group panel presentation at the All-Macaulay conference on May 5-6, based on an excerpt from your research, combined with excerpts from your classmates' research. Details will be explained in class.

2) Fieldwork Observation and Blogpost (10%): You will conduct a detailed observation of a small part of the city -- a two-block segment or a public space somewhere in the city. The outcome will be a journalistic blogpost for the course website. Details will be explained in class.

3) Research Project (50%): You will conduct an independent research project, submitted in multiple stages, based upon original research. Further details will be explained in class. As soon as possible, you should discuss potential topics with me, either by email or by meeting with me.

Progress-Stages for Research Project:

- Topic selection, due February 21
- Research-in-progress, in two parts, due March 13
  - 1) preliminary bibliography (sources used to date, *and* identified/intended) (5%)
  - 2) in-class presentation of History and Background of your topic (5%)
- Research Paper due April 18 (10%)
- Receive feedback (Peer editing on April 24 and from Professor Gutfreund by May 1)
- Group Presentation run-throughs in class May 1, then at all-Macaulay conference May 5-6
- Individual slide-presentations in class on May 8 and May 15 (10%)
- Revised/Expanded/Final Draft May 15-22 (20%)

#### OTHER COURSE INFORMATION

Attendance – Attendance at every class is mandatory. Arrive on-time, prepared to be present and to participate, and stay until the end of the class. Please do not leave class during the session. We will usually take a mid-class break for about ten minutes, for checking phones, bathroom break, etc. Absences, departures, and late arrivals *will* reduce your grade.

Deadlines – I will be flexible and sympathetic about extensions, but you must ask for them well ahead of time (at least a week); they will not be granted on short notice. Still, I will always accept late papers, but without an extension they will be penalized one grade (for example, from an A- reduced to a B+), and this penalty will increase by one additional grade for each additional 48 hours past the deadline.

Collaboration and academic honesty – I have confidence that you will achieve a great deal of success in this course while maintaining high standards of integrity and honesty. I encourage you to share ideas and to help your classmates. Nevertheless, all work submitted must be your own, **and the ideas, words, images, and any other work-product of others must be properly credited using footnotes AND a bibliography.** Presenting the ideas, words, images, or any other work product of another person (or of AI) without proper credit is plagiarism.

Note about classroom disagreements: We are a diverse group in this class, each of us having differing opinions, life experiences, values, goals, and expertise. The range of perspectives that we each bring should serve as a strong foundation for our classroom environment. However, our differences may also contribute to disagreements, misunderstandings, and friction. Each of us should practice respectful and engaged listening so that we may better understand one another. We should all be willing to consider the opinions and perspectives of others, *and to reconsider our own*. And, at those times when you disagree with others, please ask questions that seek to understand rather than tear down. We *will* talk about issues that are disturbing, including racism, segregation, and inequity. But we should all try to do so constructively, compassionately, and respectfully.

About grades: This is a course in which bright students are given an opportunity to take on academic tasks that will require them to expand their capabilities, develop new analytical skills, and hone written and spoken communication skills. The elevated academic context of an Honors course enhances that learning experience. So, this class is, by design, intellectually and academically more challenging than a non-Honors course. Out of respect for you and for what you are capable of, I believe that you are entitled to such a course.

All students in the class will be given an opportunity to earn an A. There is no maximum number of them, as there is in a course that “grades on a curve”, but your final grade will depend entirely on your work, and the extent to which you fulfill the expectations described in this syllabus and in class. I would be very happy to see, at the end of the term, that all students in this class have earned high grades. Whether that is the case, though, will be a function of your own performance on all the required aspects of this course. **I am committed to support and guide you in this endeavor, to help each of you to succeed. I am here to help, when things are going well as well as when you encounter difficulties.** *So, please, do not hesitate to get in touch with me.*

Laptops, Phones, etc. – Please don’t use telephones or mobile devices during class. You can check for messages, etc. during our mid-session break. Laptops and tablets are OK, of course, but only during activities that require them and only for work related to *this* class. For many of our discussions, you won’t even need your laptop open, and will be better able to be *present* with it closed.

Teaching and Learning Collaborative – For help from a TLC Fellow, email [tlchelp@macaulay.cuny.edu](mailto:tlchelp@macaulay.cuny.edu), or visit their virtual office hours by following the link on our eportfolio site.

Library Research Assistance – We are fortunate to have a reference librarian, Stephanie Margolin assigned to Seminar4 to help you find library resources for your research project. She is friendly, knowledgeable, and helpful. I encourage you to reach out to her for research help. Her email is [smargo@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:smargo@hunter.cuny.edu).

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Hunter College Policy on Sexual Misconduct: Hunter reaffirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct, which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment, retaliation against students, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationships.

**Sexual Violence:** Students are strongly encouraged to immediately report the incident by calling 911, contacting NYPD Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272) or their local police precinct, or contacting the College's Public Safety Office (212-772-4444).

**All Other Forms of Sexual Misconduct:** Students are also encouraged to contact the College's Title IX Campus Coordinator, Dean John Rose ([jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu) or 212-650-3262) or Colleen Barry ([colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu) or 212-772-4534) and seek complimentary services through the Counseling and Wellness Services Office, Hunter East 1123.

## READING ASSIGNMENTS, DISCUSSION TOPICS, ETC.

Please note: changes may be made by e-mail, or announcements in class, or posting on the course website (<https://eportfolios.macaulay.cuny.edu/gutfreund23/>). You will be responsible for any such changes.

January 30 – Course Introduction

February 6 – The RPA Fourth Regional Plan: Actions (in twelve parts)

- 1 - Change how we govern and pay for transit
- 2 - Create new Institutions to address Climate Change
- 3 - Change Land Use Inequities
- 4 - Tech Policy
- 5 - Integrate Transit Across the Entire Region
- 6 - Rebuild our Subway System
- 7 - Adapt Streets and Highways
- 8 - World-Class airports and seaports
- 9 - Adapt to our Changing Coastline (sea-level rise, extreme flooding)
- 10 - Environmental Initiatives (water pollution, extreme heat)
- 11 - Create a Greener Energy System
- 12 - Provide Affordable Housing

*In class activity:* Small-group presentations of each of the parts

Research Project Info: picking a topic, overall structure of the final outcome for this project

February 13 – No class

February 21 (**Tuesday**) – The Federal Government’s Urban Plan, Part 1: Housing Policy & Segregation

Janet Hutchison, “Hoover’s Interwar Housing Policy” in John Bauman, et. al. (editors) From Tenements to the Taylor Homes

Gail Radford, “The Federal Government and Housing During the Great Depression” in Bauman, et. al. (eds) From Tenements to the Taylor Homes

Kenneth Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier, pages 219-230

**Writing Assignment Due : Reading summary+response #1**

**Project Deadline: Topic Selection**

In-class material: *institutionalized* racism – zoning, redlining, steering, and restrictive covenants

February 27 – The Federal Government’s Urban Plan, Part 2: Highways, Sprawl, and Robert Moses

Owen Gutfreund, 20th Century Sprawl: Highways & the Reshaping of the American Landscape

Intro, Chapter 1, Conclusion

Owen Gutfreund, “Robert Moses” in American National Biography Online, (Mark Carnes, editor) (Oxford University Press and the American Council of Learned Societies, 2007)

Ray Bromley, “Not so Simple! Caro, Moses, and the Impact of the Cross-Bronx Expressway” in *Bronx County Historical Society Journal*, v35 #1, Spring 1998, p4-29

**Writing Assignment: Reading summary+response #2**

In-class material: electronic research tools, finding scholarly sources; discussion of different types of sources, citation/bibliography management, plagiarism/footnotes

#### March 6 – Backlash and Readjustment

Jane Jacobs, “Downtown is For People”, from The Exploding Metropolis, edited by William H. Whyte (1958, reprinted by University of California Press, 1993), pages 157-201

Sherry Arnstein, “A Ladder of Citizen Participation” *Journal of American Institute of Planners*, v35 (July 1969), p216-224

Johanna Fernandez, “The Garbage Offensive”, from The Young Lords (2020), p91-114

#### **Writing Assignment: Reading summary+response #3**

In-class material: writing/organizing a good research paper; oral presentations

#### March 13 – Research In-Progress Deadline and Oral presentations of History/Background

**Project deadline:** preliminary bibliography due (sources used to date, *and* identified/intended)

**Project deadline:** formal in-class oral presentation (no slides)

Other in-class activity for research project: Group Assignments, sign up for Conference slot

#### March 20 – Gentrification

Lance Freeman, There Goes the ‘Hood: Views of Gentrification from the Ground Up (2006)

Introduction, pp 1-16

Chapter 3, “There Goes the ‘Hood”, pp 59-94

Chapter 6, “Implications for Planning and Policy”, pp 157-187

excerpt from Chapter 7, “Gentrification Reconsidered”, pp 208-210

#### **Writing Assignment: Reading summary+response #4**

In-class material: Presentation strategies/techniques, data visualization tools

#### March 27 – Policing, Incarceration, Criminal Justice

Kim Barker, Michael Keller and Steve Eder, “How Cities Lost Control of Police Discipline”, *New York Times*, December 22, 2020

Lucius Couloute and Daniel Kopf, *Out of Prison & Out of Work: Unemployment Among Formerly Incarcerated People* (Prison Policy Initiative, July 2018)

Andrew Kahn and Chris Kirk, “What It’s Like to Be Black in the Criminal Justice System: Eight Charts That Suggest There Are Racial Disparities At Every Phase of the Justice System” *Slate*, August 9 2015

#### **Writing Assignment: Reading summary+response #5**

*In-class activity:* William H. Whyte, *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces* (1970 video, 1 hour);  
Explanation of Fieldwork-Observation Assignment

#### April 3 – Field Trip – Walking tour in East Harlem, then Museum of the City of New York

April 10 – Spring Break

April 18 – Student-choice topic – you choose, I will organize and facilitate  
(no required readings)

**Project deadline: Research Paper is due**

April 24 – Peer Editing meetings and Group Presentation Work

**Peer Editing is due**

May 1 – Group Presentation practice-runs and critiques (and revisions during class if there is time)

**May 5-6 -- All-Macaulay Seminar 4 “Futures of New York” Conference**

(You should save the whole weekend on your calendar until your group signs up for a time slot,  
which will probably happen in mid-March)

May 8 -- Individual Presentations, first group

May 15 – Individual Presentations, second group (and course wrap-up)

**Project deadline: Revised/Expanded/Final paper**

(no-penalty extensions until 5/22, at the very latest, are available by *advance* request)