

# U.S. Urban History

HIS 304/504 • MWF 9:45–10:50 a.m. • MC 301 • Spring 2007 Version 5 (Updated April 6)

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## **Introduction**

This course considers the development of American cities from the colonial era to the present, focusing especially on the formation and evolution of the physical urban environment, race and class interactions, political and economic development, growth and decline, suburbanization, and responses to urban crisis and decay. Throughout the course we will not only analyze urban development but will connect it to the broader patterns of American social, cultural, political, and economic history. The course examines cities in a comparative context as well as through individual case studies, notably New York, Chicago, Detroit, San Francisco, Las Vegas, and New Orleans. We will also explore Cleveland in the context of national trends.

## **Purpose, Method, and Format**

In this course we will develop a number of useful skills that reinforce our study of American urban history. In addition to the expected concentration on developing skills such as engaged reading, critical thinking, and writing with clarity, organization, and a sustained thesis, we will explore urban history by using a variety of materials beyond scholarly works, including newspaper editorials, popular magazine articles, web sites, popular and documentary films, editorial cartoons, and even comic strips. We will also learn how to “read” the landscape of Cleveland—both as a class and individually through a semester-long project—to determine what it can tell us about urban change and continuity. Reading the landscape means turning to more than simply reading books and articles. It involves examining historical and contemporary photos, postcards, maps, city directories, and census records, as well as actually viewing your subject on-site. In class meetings, you should expect a mixture of lecture and discussion. Lectures will include a visual component. Class discussions will revolve around assigned reading. Occasionally we will also view portions of films.

## **Required Texts**

- Catherine Cocks, *Doing the Town: The Rise of Urban Tourism in the United States, 1850-1915* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).
- George G. Foster, *New York by Gas-light and Other Urban Sketches*, ed. Stuart M. Blumin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).
- Dolores Hayden, *Building Suburbia: Green Fields and Urban Growth, 1820-2000* (New York: Vintage Books, 2004).
- Alison Isenberg, *Downtown America: A History of the Place and the People Who Made It* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).
- Jacob A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives* (New York: Dover, 1971).
- Thomas J. Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*, Revised ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

Additional articles and book chapters are available on Electronic Course Reserve (ECR). All are PDF files. The computer lab on the fourth floor of Main Classroom Building offers free printing. You should always bring a copy of any required reading to class on the day for which it is assigned.

*“Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men’s blood.”*  
~Daniel Burnham, renowned architect and father of the “city beautiful”

### **Assignments**

All assignments prepared outside class must be typed (double-spaced unless otherwise noted) using 12 pt. Times New Roman font. The final draft of the essay assignment will be emailed, so it must be in Word (.doc) format.

### **Midterm Examination. 10%**

The midterm will consist of short identification terms, an essay, and a document or image analysis exercise. The exam may draw upon any material presented in class lectures or in assigned readings.

### **Secondary-source Essay. 20%**

For this assignment, you will first submit for approval your topic selection, which you may choose from a list of topics I will provide. Next, you will identify, with my help, at least 4 scholarly books (8 books for HIS 504 students) that pertain to your topic. You will then prepare a 5-page essay (8 pages for HIS 504 students), exclusive of endnotes, that introduces your topic and summarizes the arguments of your books as they relate to your topic. The essay must include a thesis statement about the overall nature of the books’ arguments and then demonstrate these arguments, citing appropriate material from each book as appropriate. You must document your essay whenever you quote or otherwise present the ideas of others using *Chicago Manual of Style* format. See [www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html).

### **Primary-source Collection. 20%**

Along with the secondary-source essay, this assignment will constitute the “raw material” from which you will construct your research paper and visual/sound presentation. For this assignment you must collect, list, and annotate three types of materials: 1) historical images, 2) historical sound, and 3) printed sources.

1. For historical images, you must print or photocopy and number at least 15 pertinent images found online on the *Cleveland Memory Project* ([www.clevelandmemory.org](http://www.clevelandmemory.org)) and in the *Cleveland Press* Collection at the CSU Special Collections (open weekdays only).
2. For historical sound, you must listen to oral history interviews from the Euclid Corridor Oral Project and create 10 pertinent sound clips using InterClipper (training to be provided in class). You will have access to InterClipper throughout the semester in an on-campus lab at specified times or by appointment. Further details will be provided.
3. For printed sources, you must make adequate use of newspaper clippings, census data, city directories, maps, and any other pertinent primary materials (training to be provided in class).

After collecting your materials, you should create a list or spreadsheet in Word or Excel in which you list the source type (image, sound clip, article, map, etc.), source name/info (article author, title, publication, and date, for example), place where the source is found (Cleveland Memory Project, Cleveland Press Collection folder #, Euclid Corridor Oral History Project, etc.), and one sentence stating the topics/themes of importance in each source (why you are using it for your project, in short). For image references, be

sure to number them to correspond with the images as you numbered them. So, you should end up with 1) a stack of photocopied images, 2) sound clips that you will email to me (or place on a CD), and 3) your annotated list or spreadsheet of sources.

### **Research Paper. 30%**

In the eleventh week of the semester, you will submit your research paper (hard copy only!), which must be at least 15 pages of body text (20 pages for HIS 504 students). Your paper must situate your Cleveland-based topic in the broader historical discussion of the topic, which means you will use and cite both your primary and secondary sources. Thus, the research paper, along with your visual/sound presentation (see below), is the culmination of a cumulative exploration of your topic of urban history both locally and nationally. As with your secondary-source essay, your research paper must advance a thesis (argument) about your topic that draws on the material contained in the sources you have consulted. You should strive to write with a lively yet analytical style. I will provide suggestions for revision upon returning your essay. In the fifteenth week of the semester, you will submit your revised research paper via email for Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) credit. (See Writing Across the Curriculum under Policies below.)

### **Visual Presentation. 10%**

This portion of your project, to be submitted in the fourteenth week, will consist of a CD containing either a PowerPoint, MovieMaker, iMovie, or podcast presentation. The presentation allows for considerable artistic license, but it must contain at least 4 sound clips from interviews and at least 8 historical images, as well as sufficient text or narration to identify the clips and images and their historical context. I will work with each of you individually to secure all electronic files that you will need to complete this assignment. I will also train you in PowerPoint, but you are free to use other formats if you are knowledgeable about them.

### **Final Examination. 10%**

The final exam will assume the same format as the midterm but will cover only material from after midterm.

*“The slum is the measure of civilization.”*

*Jacob Riis, Danish-born muckraking journalist and tenement reformer*

### **Policies**

**Assignment Submissions.** All assignments must be submitted in complete form no later than in class on the due date. Any extenuating circumstances that prevent submission of an assignment must be brought to my attention prior to the due date. Any work submitted after the class meeting on the due date or on the day after will incur a penalty of 10 percent, with an additional 10 percent subtracted per subsequent day. This means that if you turn in an assignment that is due on Friday on the following Monday, you will automatically lose 30 percent of your grade for that assignment.

**Extensions.** Occasionally extreme circumstances make it difficult or impossible to submit an assignment on the due date. You may request an extension in advance. If granted, a new due date will be identified in consultation with me.

**Attendance.** If you anticipate not being able to be in class consistently at the appointed time, you should withdraw from the course. You are allowed two unexcused absences during the semester, beyond which you will lose 0.5 points from your course average per unexcused absence.

**Student Conduct.** Unacceptable conduct will not be tolerated because it undermines the learning environment necessary to students' success. Unacceptable conduct includes but is not limited to: excessive or disruptive talking or noisemaking, arriving late to class or leaving early without notice, intimidating or threatening anyone in the classroom, sleeping, bringing any activated electronic equipment in the classroom such as cell phones and pagers.

**Academic Integrity.** Using someone else's ideas or phrasing and representing those ideas or phrasing as our own, either on purpose or through carelessness, is a serious offense known as plagiarism. "Ideas or phrasing" includes written or spoken material ranging from whole papers and paragraphs to sentences and phrases. "Someone else" can mean a professional source, such as a published writer or critic in a book, magazine, encyclopedia, or journal; an electronic resource such as material we discover on the World Wide Web; another student at our school or anywhere else; and a paper-writing "service" (online or otherwise) which offers to sell written papers for a fee. Source: Capitol Community College's guide to plagiarism (based on the MLA style): [webster.commnet.edu/mla/plagiarism.shtml](http://webster.commnet.edu/mla/plagiarism.shtml). Any assignment is partially or fully plagiarized will automatically incur a grade of zero (0).

**Writing Assistance.** The Department of History offers a History Tutoring Center where you may seek assistance in preparing written work. The Center is located in Rhodes Tower, Room 1913, and may be reached at (216) 687-3921.

**Student Disabilities.** If you have a disability, it is your responsibility to contact the Office of Student Disabilities, which will work with you to develop a reasonable course of action that will enable you to complete the course successfully. You must then provide proper documentation to me if you are requesting any special consideration of your disability.

**Writing Across the Curriculum (Applies only to HIS 311).** This course meets the following criteria for the Writing Across the Curriculum General Education requirement:

1. Students must be required to write a minimum of 2,000 words in writing assignments.
2. The required writing must be in at least two separate assignments or drafts. The instructor should give feedback to assist the student in preparing subsequent papers or drafts of papers. This must include feedback on the writing. It should not consist entirely of mechanical correction of punctuation and grammar.
3. In order to receive a C or better in this course, the student must write at a satisfactory skill level (C or better). If the student's writing is weak but shows understanding of the course material, the student may be assigned a D, in which case WAC credit will not be received for the course.
4. Maximum enrollment for this course is 35.

In order to receive *Writing Across the Curriculum* credit for this course, you must complete the course with at least a C average. You must also turn in all written work on time in order to avoid substantial penalties to your grade.

*"Our national flower is the concrete cloverleaf."  
~Lewis Mumford, noted critic of urban sprawl*

**Schedule**

Readings should be completed before the week under which they are listed. Selections not found in the four assigned books may be accessed via Electronic Course Reserve (ECR).

**Week 1**

Wed., Jan. 17 Course Introduction  
 Fri., Jan. 19 Thinking About Cities

Reading Mumford, "What Is a City?" (ECR)  
 Hayden, *Building Suburbia*, chaps. 1 & 2

**Week 2**

Mon., Jan. 22 Colonial Seaports  
 Wed., Jan. 24 The Development of Urban Networks  
 Fri., Jan. 26 Borderlands and Picturesque Enclaves: The Emergence of Suburbs  
**DUE 1/26 (via email): Topic Selection**

Reading Nash, "The Social Evolution of Preindustrial American Cities" (ECR)  
 Hayden, *Building Suburbia*, chaps. 3 & 4

**Week 3**

Mon., Jan. 29 Introduction to CSU Special Collections (Library, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor)  
 Wed., Jan. 31 Urban Order/Disorder in the Mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century  
 Fri., Feb. 2 Creating the "Middle Landscape" in Urban America

Reading Foster, *New York by Gas-light*, pp. 1-199  
 Schuyler, "The Naturalistic Landscape: Central Park" (ECR)

**Week 4**

Mon., Feb. 5 The Rise of Urban-Industrial America  
 Wed., Feb. 7 Cities in the New South  
 Fri., Feb. 9 The Immigrant City

Reading Cronon, "Annihilating Space: Meat" and "The Busy Hive" (ECR)  
 Goldfield, "The Old South Under New Conditions" (ECR)

**Week 5**

Mon., Feb. 12 Introduction to InterClipper (Chester Building 279)  
 Wed., Feb. 14 Snowstorm—No Class  
 Fri., Feb. 16 The Emergence of Urban Mass Culture

Reading Peiss, "Leisure and Labor" (ECR)

**Week 6**

Mon., Feb. 19 **President's Day—No Class**  
 Wed., Feb. 21 The Rise of Downtown  
 Fri., Feb. 23 Urban Expositions and the City Beautiful  
**DUE 2/23: Secondary-source Essay**

Reading	Isenberg, <i>Downtown America</i> , chaps. 1 & 2 Peterson, "Civic Art, 1890-1900" (ECR)
<b>Week 7</b>	
Mon., Feb. 26	The Emergence of Urban Tourism
Wed., Feb. 28	Streetcar Suburbs
Fri., Mar. 2	Urban Problems in the Industrial Age
Reading	Cocks, <i>Doing the Town</i> , chap.1, chaps. 2 <u>or</u> 3, chaps. 5 & 6 Hayden, <i>Building Suburbia</i> , chap. 5 Riis, <i>How the Other Half Lives</i> , intro. + chaps. 1-5, 9, 13, 20
<b>Week 8</b>	
Mon., Mar. 5	Political Machines and Progressive Reform
Wed., Mar. 7	Review Day
Fri., Mar. 9	<b><u>MIDTERM EXAM</u></b>
Reading	Chudacoff & Smith, "City Politics in the Era of Transformation" (ECR)
Mar. 11-18	<b>Spring Break–No Classes</b>
<b>Week 9</b>	
Mon., Mar. 19	The Great Migration <b><u>DUE 3/19: Primary-source Collection (Images + Bibliography)</u></b>
Wed., Mar. 21	City and Suburb in the 1920s
Fri., Mar. 23	The Emergence of Urban Historic Preservation
Reading	Gregory, "The Black Metropolis" (ECR) Fogelson, "The Central Business District" (ECR) Hayden, <i>Building Suburbia</i> , chap. 6 Stanonis, "French Town" (ECR)
<b>Week 10</b>	
Mon., Mar. 26	City and Suburb in Depression and War
Wed., Mar. 28	Creating the Crabgrass Frontier: Postwar Suburbanization
Fri., Mar. 30	The American City at Its Peak? The 1950s
Reading	Isenberg, <i>Downtown America</i> , chap. 4 Hayden, <i>Building Suburbia</i> , chap. 7 Johns, "The Downtown" <u>or</u> "The Neighborhoods" (ECR)
<b>Week 11</b>	
Mon., Apr. 2	The New Main Street: Shopping Malls
Wed., Apr. 4	Urban Renewal
Fri., Apr. 6	Suburban Alchemy: Planned Suburbs
Reading	Gladwell, "The Terrazzo Jungle" (ECR) Isenberg, <i>Downtown America</i> , chap. 5 Bloom, "Columbia, Maryland" and "The Shame of the Suburbs" (ECR)
<b>Week 12</b>	
Mon., Apr. 9	Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Housing

	<b><u>DUE 4/9: Clip Collection (CD + List with notes)</u></b>
Wed., Apr. 11	Origins of the Urban Crisis: Deindustrialization & Racial Turmoil
Fri., Apr. 13	Directed Research Day in Special Collections
Reading	Sugrue, <i>Origins of the Urban Crisis</i> (Read Part I Arsenal for Monday, Part II Rust [excerpts tba] and Part III Fire [excerpts tba] for Wednesday)
<b>Week 13</b>	
Mon., Apr. 16	Racial Violence and the Fate of the City
Wed., Apr. 18	Pollution and Environmentalism, Sprawl and Regionalism
Fri., Apr. 20	African American Suburbanization
	<b><u>DUE 4/20: Research Paper</u></b>
Reading	Sugrue, <i>Origins of the Urban Crisis</i> , conclusion Isenberg, <i>Downtown America</i> , chap. 6 Wiese, "Something Old, Something New" (ECR)
<b>Week 14</b>	
Mon., Apr. 23	Cities of Leisure: Tourism and Gentrification
Wed., Apr. 25	Main Street America: Downtown Preservation
Fri., Apr. 27	New Migrations
	<b><u>DUE 4/27: Visual/Sound Presentation</u></b>
Reading	Souther, "A City on Parade" (ECR) Isenberg, <i>Downtown America</i> , chap. 7
<b>Week 15</b>	
Mon., Apr. 30	New Directions: Edge Cities, Technoburbs, New Urbanism
Wed., May 2	Urban Disasters: Post-Katrina New Orleans in Historical Perspectives
Fri., May 4	Selected Visual/Sound Presentations
	<b><u>DUE 5/4 (via email): Revised Research Paper (WAC)</u></b>
Reading	Hayden, <i>Building Suburbia</i> , chaps. 8 & 10 Vale & Campanella, "The Cities Rise Again" (ECR) Miller, "Out of the Blue: The Great Chicago Fire of 1871" (ECR) Colten, "The City and the Environment" (ECR)
Wed., May 9	<b><u>FINAL EXAM (8:30–10:30 a.m.)</u></b> <b><u>Euclid Avenue Walking Tour (12:30 p.m.)</u></b> Meet in front of the Terminal Tower across from Public Square. Our tour will serve as a stress-free capstone to the course experience and will last about 1 1/2 to 2 hours, ending at CSU.