

Urban America: New York City

01.050.282.06 – Winter Session 2011

Department of American Studies – Rutgers University

(Monday – Thursday) January 3-13: 6:00PM – 8:45PM

Scott Hall – Room 116 (College Avenue Campus)

Instructor Information

Matthew B. Ferguson, M.C.R.P.

E-mail: ruferg@echo.rutgers.edu (Subject Line: Urban America)

Office Hours: Daily 5:30PM – 6:00PM & By Arrangement

Course Description

The purpose of this course will be to examine and discuss the urban American landscape from a historical, cultural and urban planning perspective. Due to the wealth of material and our physical proximity, we will use New York City as our primary example. In addition, a large portion of this course will focus on the representations of urban areas and urban populations in various forms of media including music, poetry, literature, television and film. In order to reinforce some of concepts and examples we discuss in class, you will all be required to make at least one trip to New York City.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, you should have a basic understanding of the cultural development of New York City, the role New York City has played in so many different types of media and be able to synthesize and compare your New York City experience to the various media on this topic.

Required Texts (*Available at the Rutgers Ferren Mall Bookstore & Online – Amazon.com*)

Here is New York by E.B. White with intro by Roger Angell (ISBN: 1892145022)

The Colossus of New York by Colson Whitehead (ISBN: 1400031249)

Additional readings provided by Instructor

Course Outline

Monday January 3 -

“New York, New York” by Frank Sinatra
Syllabus Review & Introduction to NYC Lecture

Tuesday January 4 –

Cultural History of New York City Lecture
Urban Planning: Jacon Riis, Robert Moses & Jane Jacobs Lecture

Reading Due: Excerpt of Riis’s How The Other Half Lives (Distributed In Class – Come Ready To Discuss)

Wednesday January 5 –

Individual Meetings with Instructor to Discuss NYC Experience
The Culture of NYC Film & Discussion

Feature Film: Billy Wilder’s The Apartment

****BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS NYC EXPERIENCE WITH ME!****

Thursday January 6 – Architecture of New York City Lecture
Video Clip: Brooklyn Bridge
New York in Music Discussion & Quick Presentations
Audio Clip: Various Songs

****BE PREPARED TO INFORMALLY PRESENT ON YOUR THREE SONG CHOICES – WITH SPECIFIC EXAMPLES****

NEW YORK SONG PAPER DUE IN CLASS BY 6:15PM
****Please email artists and song titles to Ferguson by 2:00PM****
Late Papers Will Not Be Accepted

Monday January 10 – History of New York Theatre & the Broadway Musical Lecture
Video/Sound Clips: NYC Broadway & Woody Allen’s Everyone Says I Love You
Distribution of Literature/Poetry Assignments
Reading Due: Here is New York By E.B. White and The Colossus New York By Colson Whitehead

IN CLASS EXAM: White’s *Here is New York* & Whitehead’s *The Colossus of New York*

Tuesday January 11 - The Culture of NYC Film & Discussion
Feature Film: Martin Scorsese’s Taxi Driver

Wednesday January 12 – New York in Literature Round-Table Readings & Discussions
New York in Literature
Analysis of: Washington Irving, Langston Hughes, John McNulty, Ralph Ellison, Jack Kerouac, John Cheever, Gay Talese
New York in Poetry
Analysis of: Walt Whitman, Emma Lazarus, Vladimir Mayakovsky, e.e. cummings, Langston Hughes, Elizabeth Bishop, Frank O’Hara, Allen Ginsberg and Ogden Nash
White vs. Whitehead Discussion (Bring Books to Class!)

Thursday January 13 – Final New York Experience Presentations
Course Evaluation

NEW YORK EXPERIENCE PAPER DUE IN CLASS BY 6:15PM
Late Papers Will Not Be Accepted

Grading

New York Song Paper	20%
Quiz on White/Whitehead	20%
Class Participation	20%
NYC Experience Paper/Presentation	40%

Attendance

This course relies heavily on both participation and in class discussion. Therefore, attendance is mandatory. **Since our class only meets eight times, unexcused absences are not permitted.** Each absence will result in a 10% grade reduction and in extreme cases, failure in the course. If you must miss class for a legitimate reason or have a medical/family emergency, please obtain a Dean's excuse from the Dean of your particular academic unit.

Field Trip: You will be required to make one field trip to New York at some point between January 4 and January 13 as this trip will be the subject of your final paper. This trip can be scheduled based on a time and date convenient for you. In an effort to ensure fairness to all students and since the time spent on this trip is in lieu of an additional class meeting, you will be required to provide "proof" of your experience. Papers without "proof" will not be accepted.

Class Conduct

All students are expected to be on time to class. If for some reason, you need to arrive late or leave early, please do so with minimum disruption. Please place all cell phones on silent and refrain from text messaging. Since a major portion of this course involves discussion, it is inevitable that differing opinions will be presented. The University as a whole supports the free and open exchange of ideas and this course will be no different. All students are expected to be respectful of any and all opinions shared in class.

Emergencies

In case of weather emergency, please check the University status page to see if the University is still operating. (<http://campusstatus.rutgers.edu>) Cancelled classes will be rescheduled. If for some reason I need to cancel class, I will e-mail you all (via SAKAI listserv) by 2:00PM the day of class. Accordingly, I suggest that you check your email and the campus status page prior to leaving for class each afternoon.

Inclement Weather Course Dates

Week of January 3...

January 8 6:00PM – 8:45PM

Location: Scott Hall 116 (College Ave Campus)

Week of January 10...

January 15 6:00PM – 8:45PM

Location: Scott Hall 116 (College Ave Campus)

Assignments

All written assignments should be submitted IN CLASS on the dates listed in the syllabus. Late assignments will be penalized one letter grade for each day late. **All written assignments should be double-spaced with one-inch margins using 12 pt. Times New Roman font.** Please include a standard single-spaced heading on the first page of each assignment and your last name in the header of each page. **PROOFREAD YOUR PAPERS – GRAMMAR & SPELLING COUNT!**

PAPER ASSIGNMENT: The Official Song of New York

You've been asked to serve on a committee appointed by the Mayor of New York City to establish the Official Songs of New York. The Mayor is looking for four songs that help to capture the culture, diversity and beauty that is New York City. The Mayor wants the four songs to (1) help portray what it means to be a "New Yorker" (2) speak to the different generations of both the city and its population (3) convey the rich cultural and social history of this great city and (4) express diverse points of view. Frank Sinatra's "New York, New York" was unanimously voted to be one of the four songs.

Your assignment is to write a 3-5 page proposal explaining your choices for the additional three songs. Make sure that you explain how the songs that you are proposing touch on the points the Mayor is looking for and compliment the committee's initial choice of "New York, New York." Feel free to quote the lyrics of your songs to support your nomination. In addition, keep in mind that your song choices don't have to have the name New York in it. **BE CREATIVE & DON'T FEEL THE NEED TO BE CLICHÉ!**

Please attach the lyrics of your songs to your proposal. The lyrics to most songs can be found by doing a simple web search on Google. You only need citations (for this paper) if you are quoting or referring to something other than the particular songs you are proposing. **Please DO NOT use information from Wikipedia, cited or otherwise.** If you need to refer to historical information, please use a scholarly source.

FINAL PAPER: A Chapter of Your New York City Experience

By the end of this very short course, it is my hope that you have experienced New York in a different way than you have ever before. In the end, we have learned that it is a complicated place with an interesting history and uncertain future. New York is different things to different people. Some love everything about it and some just can't wait to leave. We have read essays and poems, listened to songs and watched various films & television shows that all pay tribute and provide alternative perspectives to this special place.

Using the White and Whitehead books as models, your assignment is to write a 6-10 page "chapter" about your New York Experience. Since this "chapter" is theoretically a part of a larger body of work, you should not feel as though you have to jam pack it with every New York experience...but rather focus on one particular aspect or characteristic of the city. To complete this assignment, you will be asked to travel to New York City between today and January 13. During this trip, you are expected to partake in at least two "experiences" while in the city and then reflect on those experiences while synthesizing them with material from our course. While I am attempting to allow for some creativity here, I am expecting that these experiences will be significant.

While on this trip, **TAKE PICTURES** (with a digital camera, camera phone, disposable camera and include them in your paper.) Also, include a physical ticket stub/map for experiences that require it. **Basically, I am telling you that I want PROOF! Please do not insult me by using images from the Internet or "photo-shopping" yourself into pictures.**

Reflect on these experiences and incorporate material from our course to support your reflection/analysis. While this is a creative writing assignment, I would like you find a way to incorporate a few of the concepts or media sources from our class. Think about the "story" your experiences tell about New York. What do your experiences tell you about the future of New York? I am not looking for you to regurgitate tour information but rather to describe the significance of your experience. Have fun with this exercise and feel free to personalize this assignment.

The paper length minimum/maximum refers to the text only. The accompanying pictures/stubs will compliment what you are writing. When quoting works from class, citing the author's last name and page number will suffice for a citation in your writing assignment. Any additional sources should be noted in a standard format. I prefer the use of footnotes but use the citation format that you are most comfortable with.

Potential Experiences GO TO THESE WEBSITES IN ADVANCE!

Rockefeller Center Historical Tour (<http://www.nbcuniversalstore.com/index.php?v=nbunbcmktret>)

Rockefeller Art and Observation Tour (<http://www.nbcuniversalstore.com/index.php?v=nbunbcmktaot>)

Guggenheim Museum (<http://www.guggenheim.org>)

Grand Central Station Tour – FREE! (<http://grandcentralterminal.com/info/historictour.cfm>)

Walk Across The Brooklyn Bridge – FREE! (<http://www.theinsider.com/nyc/attractions/2brookbr.htm>)

Ellis Island Tour (<http://www.ellisland.org/>)

Statue of Liberty Tour (<http://www.nps.gov/stli/planyourvisit/feesandreservations.htm>)

Knicks Game?

Off-Broadway Show?

I Don't Suggest any of the following as your PRIMARY Experience...

New York - Penn Station, Times Square, Central Park, or The Subway

Think About Synthesizing...

The Applicable Cultural Periods of New York, White and/or Whitehead's Work, The Architecture You See, Jacob Riis, Literature From Class, Songs From Class or From Your Life, Any of the Films We've Watched, Other Elements of Popular Culture, Your Experiences.

Be Prepared to Tell Me About Your Plans For Your Experience On... **Wednesday, January 5...**

Academic Integrity

Academic freedom is a fundamental right in any institution of higher learning. Honesty and integrity are necessary preconditions of this freedom. Academic integrity requires that all academic work be wholly the product of an identified individual or individuals. Joint efforts are legitimate only when the assistance of others is explicitly acknowledged. Ethical conduct is the obligation of every member of the University community, and breaches of academic integrity constitute serious offenses.

Maintenance of the standards of academic honesty and the successful administration of this policy depend on the mutual cooperation of faculty and students. Dissemination of the Academic Integrity Policy to all faculty, staff, and students will ensure that all members of the community are informed about academic integrity.

Faculty cooperation is essential for successful application of the procedures defined by the Academic Integrity Policy. Faculty members can help promote academic integrity by making clear on their syllabi their expectations concerning homework assignments, collaborative student efforts, research papers, examinations, and the like. Efforts should be made to detect and to prevent cheating and plagiarism in all academic assignments. If faculty members have evidence of academic dishonesty, they are expected to report such evidence promptly.

Students must assume responsibility for maintaining honesty in all work submitted for credit and in any other work designated by the instructor of the course. Students are also expected to report incidents of academic dishonesty to the instructor or dean of the instructional unit.

This policy seeks to demonstrate the University's concern with academic dishonesty and to guarantee a fair procedure for resolving complaints of academic dishonesty.

WHEN IN DOUBT – ASK YOUR INSTRUCTOR!

Violations of Academic Integrity

The various ways in which academic honesty can be violated are discussed below. The comments and examples within each section provide explanations and illustrative material, but do not necessarily exhaust the scope of these violations.

A. Cheating

Cheating is the use of inappropriate and unacknowledged materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The use of books, notes, calculators and conversation with others is restricted or forbidden in certain academic exercises. Their use in these cases constitutes cheating. Similarly, students must not request others (including commercial term paper companies) to conduct research or prepare any work for them, nor may they submit identical work or portions thereof for credit or honors more than once without prior approval of the instructor.

B. Fabrication

Fabrication is the falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. "Invented" information may not be used in any laboratory experiment or other academic exercise without authorization from the instructor. It is improper, for example, to analyze one sample in an experiment and covertly "invent" data based on that single experiment for several more required analyses. The student must also acknowledge reliance upon the actual source from which cited information was obtained. A writer should not, for example, reproduce a quotation from a book review and indicate that the quotation was obtained from the book itself.

C. Facilitating Academic Dishonesty

Students who knowingly or negligently allow their work to be used by other students or who otherwise aid others in academic dishonesty are violating academic integrity. Such students are as guilty of intellectual dishonesty as the student who receives the material even though they may not themselves benefit academically from that dishonesty.

D. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the representation of the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate indentation and must be properly cited in the text or in a footnote. Acknowledgment is required when material from another source stored in print, electronic or other medium is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in one's own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: "to paraphrase Plato's comment..." and conclude with a footnote identifying the exact reference. A footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material. Information which is common knowledge such as names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc, need not be footnoted; however, all facts or information obtained in reading or research that are not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged.

In addition to materials specifically cited in the text, only materials that contribute to one's general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography. Plagiarism can, in some cases, be a subtle issue. Any questions about what constitutes plagiarism should be discussed with the faculty member.

E. Denying others access to information or material

It is a violation of academic integrity to deny others access to scholarly resources, or to deliberately impede the progress of another student or scholar. Examples of offenses of this type include: giving other students false or misleading information; making library material unavailable to others by stealing or defacing books or journals, or by deliberately misplacing or destroying reserve materials; or altering computer files that belong to another.

The Full Policy on Academic Integrity and additional information can be found on at the Office of Student Judicial Affairs Website (<http://judicialaffairs.rutgers.edu>)