Urban America: New York City
01.050.282 – Winter Session 2008
Department of American Studies
January 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, & 10: 1:00PM – 4:15PM
Murray Hall – Room 208

Instructor Information
Matthew Ferguson
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Office Hours: Daily 4:15PM – 5:15PM & 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.

Required Texts
Here is New York by E.B. White with intro by Roger Angell (ISBN: 1892145022)
Additional readings provided by Instructor and on SAKAI

Course Outline

Wednesday January 2nd - Course Introduction “New York, New York”
Cultural History or New York City Lecture
Screening: Clip of “Brooklyn Bridge” by Ken Burns
Clip of “Gangs of New York” by Martin Scorsese

ASSIGNMENT ONE DUE IN CLASS: The Official Song of New York

Thursday January 3rd – Urban Planning: Jacon Riis, Robert Moses & Jane Jacobs Lecture
SAKAI Reading: excerpt of Riis’s How the Other Half Lives
excerpt of Jacobs’s The Death & Life of Great American Cities
Screening: Segment from “New York” By Ken Burns
Architecture of New York City Lecture
Screening: “Guggenheim” from Frank Lloyd Wright by Ken Burns

Friday January 4th – Historic Preservation in New York City Lecture
Class Activity: YOU DECIDE! Class Preservation Council
New York Social Protest Music Lecture
The New York Experience in Music Lecture (Time Permitting...
Monday January 7th – History of New York Theatre & the Broadway Musical Lecture
  Viewing of: 42nd Street, Guys & Dolls, Chorus Line, West Side Story and RENT
  New York Poetry
  Analysis of: Walt Whitman, Emma Lazarus, Vladimir Mayakovsky, e.e. cummings, Langston Hughes, Elizabeth Bishop, Frank O’Hara, Allen Ginsberg and Ogden Nash

ASSIGNMENT TWO DUE IN CLASS: White vs. Whitehead

Tuesday January 8th - New York in Literature Discussion
  (Bring Your White & Whitehead Books...)
  Readings By: Washington Irving, Langston Hughes, John McNulty, Ralph Ellison, Jack Kerouac, John Cheever, Gay Talese
  New York in Photography Lecture
  Viewing of: Depression Era Photography, Angel Rizzuto Photography, World Trade Center Collaborative Photography

Wednesday January 9th – NEW YORK CITY FIELD TRIP DAY

Thursday January 10th – New York City in Film
  Possible Screenings of: Early NYC Films by T. Edison, The Apartment by B. Wilder, Crooklyn by S. Lee, Coming to America by J. Landis and World Trade Center by O. Stone
  Race in New York City Television
  Possible Screenings of: Good Times, The Jeffersons, The Cosby Show and The Wayans Brothers
  Rebirth in New York City Television
  Possible Screenings of: Seinfeld, King of Queens and Sex and the City

Course Evaluation

Monday January 14th - FINAL PAPERS DUE IN CLASS – 1:00PM
  Late Papers Will Not Be Accepted!
  (Papers Will Not Be Accepted Via E-mail)

Grading
  New York Song Paper 10%
  White vs. Whitehead Paper 20%
  Participation/Attendance 35%
  NYC Experience Paper 35%

Attendance
  This course relies heavily on both participation and in class discussion. Therefore, attendance is mandatory. Since our class only meets seven times, unexcused absences will not be permitted. Unexcused absences will result in 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.
**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](http://campusstatus.rutgers.edu) Cancelled classes will be rescheduled. If for some reason I need to cancel class, I will e-mail you all (from SAKAI) by 10:00AM on the day of class.

**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 help portray what it means to be a “New Yorker” and speak to the different generations of both the city and its population. The two songs that have been chosen so far are Frank Sinatra’s “New York, New York” and Billy Joel’s “New York State of Mind”.

Your assignment is to write a 2-3 page proposal for the additional two songs. Make sure that you explain how your particular songs touch on the points the Mayor is looking for. 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! In addition, please attach the lyrics of your particular song to your proposal. Please proofread your papers for grammatical and spelling errors.

Note: You only need citations if you are quoting or referring to something other than the particular songs you are proposing.

**ASSIGNMENT TWO: White vs. Whitehead**
New York City has captivated the hearts and minds of writers for centuries as is evident by the thousands upon thousands of literary works written on this one place. Since we couldn’t possibly cover all or even a sampling of these works in this short course, you have been asked to read two pieces of literature that extensively cover our city of interest. These two works have clear differences being written in very different times and by authors with very different backgrounds. They also share many similarities.

Your assignment is to write a 3-5 page paper answering some of the following questions: What opinions about NYC do the authors share? What opinions do the authors differ on? How do the ages and cultural backgrounds of the authors contribute to their works? How do the social and historical events of the time periods contribute to the authors’ works? Is one author “right”? You should use
textual examples to support your findings. Commentary/Criticism is welcome but should be minimal…

Note: 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 standard format.

FINAL PAPER: 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 movies and television shows that all pay tribute to this special place.

Your assignment is to write a 5-7 page paper about a New York Experience. You will be asked to travel to New York City on Wednesday, January 9th or on the weekend of Friday January 11th – January 13th. 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.
One of those experiences must be from a list that I provide to you and the other can be your choice. If you would like a suggestion for a second experience, please talk to me.

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!

Reflect on these experiences and incorporate material from our course to support your reflection/analysis. There will be a few concepts/written works that you must include and the other sources will be up to you. Think about the “story” your experiences tell about New York. What do your experiences tell you about the future of New York? 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 standard format.

Mandatory Experiences GO TO THESE WEBSITES IN ADVANCE! (Choose One…)
Lower East Side Tenement Museum Tour (http://www.tenement.org/)
Rockefeller Center Tour (http://www.nbcurunversalstore.com/index.php?v=nbunbcmbktrct)
Walk Across The Brooklyn Bridge – FREE! (http://www.theinsider.com/nyc/attractions/2brookbr.htm)

Definitely Include…
The Applicable Cultural Periods of New York, White and/or Whitehead’s Work and Jane Jacobs Work

Think About Synthesizing…
The Architecture You See, Jacob Riis, Historic Preservation, Literature From Class, Songs From Class or From Your Life, Crooklyn, Other Elements of Popular Culture, Your Experiences.
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)