New Haven and the American City: Planning, Building, and Design

Faculty
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Description
An interdisciplinary study of the American city, its physical formation and social fabric, with New Haven as our model. The first half of the course is organized around the historical development of New Haven as a city and region: its foundation on a nine-square plan; ascendance as a mercantile and industrial power; growth of downtown, neighborhoods, and; mid-twentieth century efforts at reform and redevelopment; the uneven results and reactions to those efforts in the late twentieth century; and the current status of a small city in the Northeast corridor with Yale University as its chief employer.

We move from a framework for understanding the historical development of the city to a consideration of key themes in urban planning, policy, and public life. Guest speakers provide a range of perspectives and topics include transportation, public space, policing, preservation, neighborhood change, equity and environmental justice. Students will gain an understanding of the history and theory of urban planning in the United States and exposure to a range of its current practices.

Every effort is made to integrate archival and documentary sources with key critical readings. Students will have an opportunity to engage in Community Based Learning projects. Participants from the New Haven community are also welcome to participate in the course.

Assignments and Grading

There are three short assignments and a final paper or project on a topic of your choosing:

1. Field Assignment (20%) due Oct. 3
   Attend and report on a public meeting. 3 to 5 double-spaced pages.

2. Mapping Urban Change (20%) due Oct. 24
   A visual and spatial exercise in marshaling visual materials and map over time to document and analyze urban change over time at a selected site or block.

3. Short Essay on Archival Material (20%) due Nov. 16
   Descriptive and analytical essay on a photograph, plan, document, or report, of your choosing. Many opportunities at Yale libraries, the New Haven Museum, and other sources.

Final Project (30%)
Write a 15-page paper on topic of your choosing. Other formats—multi-media—accepted upon approval and usually include a written component. Community Based Learning projects are also possible and should be initiated early in the semester. These pair students with local non-profits to develop research-based projects.

Class Participation (10%)
Be there! Attendance and engagement is what it’s all about. Communicate with your TF.
Readings and Digital Resources

All readings will be available in the Files folder on our Canvas site with the exceptions of chapters from Douglas Rae, *City: Urbanism and its End* and Robert Fogelson, *Downtown: Its Rise and Fall, 1880–1950*, both of which are available as Electronic Books through the Yale University Library. Additional resources like Maps and Plans are also available in the Files folder.

https://yale.instructure.com/courses/31372/files

A list of additional Digital Resources, including links to websites, films, and student projects, is available in the Discussions section of our Canvas site.

https://yale.instructure.com/courses/31372/discussion_topics/71311

Lecture Breakdown

Th. 8/31
**Introduction: Methods and Materials**

Tu. 9/5
**Reporting from New Haven**

Th. 9/7
**Setting the Scene: Landscape, Ecology, and People**

Readings

Tu. 9/12
**Colonial Settlement**

*The Nine Squares; Proprietors of the New Haven Green; Colonial settlement policies; Eton and Davenport; Commerce and Theology; Luring Yale College*

Readings

Th. 9/14
**The Expanding Town**

*A Mercantile City; Long Wharf; Canals; Urban Expansion: Hillhouse, Wooster Square, Trowbridge Square; Sub-dividing the Nine Squares; Radiating Toll Roads; State Charters; Cemeteries and urban institutions*

Readings
Tu. 9/19
**Assembling the Industrial City**
*Railroads; Factories; Immigration; Housing; Neighborhoods; Parks; Planning*

**Readings**

Th. 9/21
**City Beautiful and the Push for Urban Planning**
*Commercial buildings; Streetcars; Shopping and Public Life; Metropolitan Rituals; 1910 Civic Improvement Plan and the City Beautiful*

**Readings**

Tu. 9/26
**Height of Urbanism**
*The Automobile and Urban Change; Building Regulations and Zoning; Manufacturing and Neighborhood Commerce; Downtown and Tall Buildings; Decentralization*

**Readings**

Th. 9/28
**Depression, New Deal, and Wartime**
*WPA; Parkways; Yale’s Expansion; Murals, Art, Writing, Photography; Wartime Planning; Federal Housing Administration; Public Housing*

**Readings**
- Fogelson, *Downtown*, Ch. 5 “The Specter of Decentralization: Downtown During the Great Depression and World War II.”

Tu. 10/3 (Assignment #1 Due)
**Urban Renewal I: Principles and Rationale**
*Oak Street; New Haven Redevelopment Agency Photographs; Maurice Rotival Archives; The Bulldozer and the Slum*

**Readings**
- Fogelson, *Downtown*, Ch. 7 “Inventing Blight: Downtown and the Origins of Urban Redevelopment.”
Th. 10/5

Urban Renewal II: Projects

Readings
- New Haven Redevelopment Agency, development guides and plans, 1960-1965

Tu. 10/10

Urban Renewal III: Critique

Readings

Th. 10/12

The Post-Industrial Urban Economy

w Douglas Rae, Yale School of Management and Dept. of Political Science

Readings

Tu. 10/17

Portfolio of Development Projects

w Matthew Nemerson, City of New Haven

Readings
TBA

-- October Recess: No Class Th. 10/19 --

Tu. 10/24 (Assignment #2 Due)

Transportation: Mobility, Accessibility, and Equity

Readings
TBA

Thu. 10/26

Transportation Planning and the City

w Doug Hausladen, City of New Haven

Readings
TBA

Tu. 10/31

Race and Public Life

w Elijah Anderson, Yale Sociology

Readings
Th. 11/2
**Policing, Neighborhoods, and Crime**
_w Andrew Papachristos, Yale Sociology_

Readings
TBA

Tu. 11/7
**Housing and Homelessness**
_w Alison Cunningham, Columbus House, New Haven_

Readings
TBA

Th. 11/9
**Public Health, Health Equity, and Community-based Participatory Research**
_w Marcella Nunez-Smith, MD, MHS and Emily Wang, MD, Yale School of Medicine_

Readings
TBA

Tu. 11/14
**Journalism and Reportage in a Changing City**
_w Markeshia Ricks and Allan Appel, New Haven Independent_

Readings
TBA: Selection of New Haven Independent reporting

Th. 11/16 (Assignment #3 Due)
**Heritage, Preservation, and Memory**

Readings
TBA

--- *November Recess: No Classes 11/21, 11/23* ---

Tu. 11/28
**Fantasy City: Theming, Branding, and Spectacle**

Th. 11/30
**Resiliency, Sustainability, Green Infrastructure, and Green Architecture**

Tu. 12/5
**Affordable Housing, Gentrification, and Neighborhood Change**

Th. 12/7
**Equity, the Environment, and Social Justice in the City**

Final Assignment Due: