

Syllabus – USP 385U/ HIS 337U History of American Cities

Instructor Information

Norene Hough (she/her)

Office Hours: M/W 10:30 - 1 pm or by appointment, please email

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Urban Center Room 370B

Course Description

This course uses a thematic approach to examine the evolution of urban centers from indigenous settlements through industrialization to present suburbia. Through a multidisciplinary lens we look at the social, economic, political, technological, and cultural forces that have shaped the development of American cities.

Learning Outcomes

Students will gain a detailed awareness of the major topics, debates, and historiography of American urban history and, through thoughtful writing, contribute their own informed analysis to this discourse. A student who successfully completes this course will:

- Demonstrate sensitivity to historical complexity by recognizing multiple perspectives, social groups and the context of when decisions were made.
- Evaluate arguments with multiple and diverse pieces of historical evidence, including primary and secondary sources when available.
- Analyze how the transformation of cities in the 1800s & 1900s impacted how those communities function today. Specifically, looking at systems of prejudice, segregation, displacement, demographic changes and inequity impacted the built environment.
- Engage in collaborative critical thinking to improve skills in understanding, deconstructing, and synthesizing multi-disciplinary scholarship.

Class Materials

Our main text this term will be **America's Urban History** by Lisa Krissoff Boehm, Steven H. Core. This is available as both an online reading and download from the PSU library at no cost.

This class has no required texts to purchase. We will rely on articles, websites, and videos that will be posed to Canvas. In addition to the main text, we will use other resources, readings, and videos to supplement the course. All of the materials will be presented on Canvas, so you need to have regular access to the internet and computer/ laptop/ chromebook for this course.

Class Format

This course will meet in person & attendance for this course is key. There is no way to pass this course if you do not attend regularly. The course is organized thematically and will use lectures; class activities & discussions; videos; case studies, & small group discussion formats. This course asks you to practice the skills used by professionals every day in the community.

Expectations for Inclusivity:

Building an inclusive learning environment requires us to work together to listen (reading carefully and reflecting in the online environment), and make room for all to have a say (asking questions and interacting in an encouraging way); to support each other to find our voice; and to recognize and anticipate a wide range of perspectives, backgrounds, experiences, identities, and ways of being in the world.

We can all promote safe and inclusive learning by listening deeply (including reading carefully and reflecting) and being ready to learn from those around us. In an online learning environment, it is important to work to write clearly, thoughtfully, and respectfully (take your time and consider the impact of your words). Please learn and use the correct pronouns for your classmates, please do not make assumptions. I hope that we can begin from a place of mutual respect and gentle personalism – taking each other where we are at each day, offering the benefit of the doubt, and being aware that the workings of power and privilege impact different communities and individuals in different ways.

Grading Policies

This course is based on total points. Specific directions for each assignment are provided in the course including rubrics and grading information. I use the university grade percentages based on these points. So final grades would be A (100-84%); A- (93%-90%); B+ (89%-87%), etc.

No Incomplete grades (“I” grades) will not be offered in USP 385. If you are experiencing difficulty, please seek help from the instructor or other campus supports as soon as possible. For more information, please consult the university “I-to-F” grade policy.

Late Work Policies

Classes move very fast. Late work makes it hard to keep up and engage with your peers. As a result, late work will be accepted for up to 1 week after the due date with a 10% penalty (no questions asked/ no extension needed). After one week, I will not accept late work in this course unless it was agreed upon in email as part of a work plan.

I know many unexpected things may happen, if you are behind in the course or something happens that puts you behind/ you need an extension, please contact the instructor immediately. Extensions require emailing the instructor and creating a new work plan.

Assignments

The description below summarizes the grades and assignments for this course. Further guidance and detailed instructions about each assignment will be provided in each module and via Canvas. The class has a total of 1,000 possible points.

Attendance & Participation, In-Class Activities (300 points) – Participation in this course is key. Your attendance and participation in class discussions & activities will be noted. You are expected to engage on Canvas (engagement with readings & posted materials); in Google Surveys, and attend and participate in class each week. Your participation over the course of the term will be used to determine your participation grade.

During the first weeks of class each student will be required to complete a CRE (Claim, Reasoning, Evidence) activity. Throughout the term, there will be leadership and writing activities as part of the class activities.

Larger Assignments (700 points) – This course gives you the choice on how you want to demonstrate your learning. Each student may choose the assignments that best fit their learning style, schedule, and needs. Further details, directions, and expectations for the tasks listed below can be found on Canvas.

- **CRE & Inquiry Questions** - 50 points each - available weeks 2-10, due Sunday by midnight. Make a single Claim about the history of cities from the reading, then back it up with Reason & Evidence in outline format + write inquiry questions for further study.
- **Response Papers** - 150 points each - available weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, & 10, due Sunday by midnight. These short papers ask you to examine an additional primary source (provided by the instructor), evaluate this source and information, and then respond to how this supports or does not support the topics covered in that week.
- **Film Response** - 150 points each - due Sunday in weeks 5, 7, or 10. Watch time period documentaries or films (selected from the list provided by the instructor). Write a short paper that analyzes this film in relationship to the themes and topics covered in this course.
- **Book Review** - 300 points each - due Sunday in weeks 5 or 10. Read one of the historical texts on the list provided by the instructor. Then write a book review based on your understanding of the wider historiography of the topic covered in this book. These should be similar to those found in scholarly journals (like the American Historical Review) and total about 4-pages.
- **Historical Op-Ed** - 100 points each - available weeks 3, 5, 7, & 9, due Sunday by midnight. Each presidential administration has different urban policies that impact transportation, sustainability, economic development and land use. These are widely debated and discussed in the popular press. You will research one policy from that time period and write an op-ed arguing for or against that policy.

This class has no final exam.

Class Schedule

Week/ Dates		Theme/ Topics this Week	Readings/ Videos/ Assignments
1	9/26 -10/1	Introduction to American Cities What is a city? How do we study cities in history	Introduction: Discovering & Defining the “City Upon a Hill” (15 pages) Why did Humans Invent Cities? By City Beautiful (10 min 20 sec) Assignment Directions Overview Intro Google Survey - <i>due by Oct. 1st</i> Week 1: CRE & Inquiry Questions - <i>Due by Oct. 1st</i> <i>EVERYONE must complete</i>
2	10/2 - 10/8	Foundations of American Cities Native/ Indigenous Cities Colonial Settler Founding Philosophies	Ch. 1: Pre-Colonial & Seventeenth-Century Native American Settlements (21 pages) Auguste Chouteau Remembers the Founding of St. Louis, 1763 (1 pages) A Philadelphian Worries About Competition from Baltimore, 1767 (1 page) <i>Maybe: How conquistadors designed cities in the Americas by City Beautiful (8:20)</i> <i>Savannah’s Mysterious Historic Plan by City Beautiful (6:21)</i>
3	10/9 -10/15	Migration in American Cities Westward Expansion Immigration / Migration/ Great Migration Slavery/ Displacement Great Migration/ Industrial Revolution	Ch. 2 Transplanting Cities & Urban Networks: Spain, France, & The Netherlands in Colonial American 1565-1821 (21 pages) Growth, Cities, and Immigration by Crash Course (12:44) <i>Maybe: What’s Happening in Harlem? 1949 Effects of Great Migration in New York (9:54)</i> TBD
4	10/16 -10/22	Transportation in American Cities Fall line cities Waterways Trains/ Industrial Revolution Cars/ Highways	Ch. 4 An Urban Frontier: The American West, 1800 - 1869 (33 pages) The Railroad Journey & the Industrial Revolution By Crash Course (12:30) TBD
5	10/23 -10/29	Infrastructure in American Cities Fire, Building Codes & Regulation Public Health Movements Electricity, Gas, Water, Sewer Roads, RR, & Interstate	Ch. 5 The Urban Cauldron: City Growth & the Rise of Social REform, 1820 - 1920 (35 pages) TBD
6	10/30 - 11/5	Transgression in American Cities Prostitution, Vice & Crime Controlling Others - Social Movements of Late 19th century	Ch. 6 The Urban Nation: Middletown & Metropolis, 1920 - 1932 (31 pages) Estwick Egvans Describes the Exotic but Immoral City of new Orleans, 1818 (1 page)

		“Urban Crisis”/ Suburban Crisis	<i>TBD</i>
7	11/6 - 11/12	Housing in American Cities Jacob Riss/ How the Other Half Lives Home Owners Society Redlining & FHA & GI Bill Urban Renewal Missing Middle/ Lack of Housing	Ch. 8 War & Postwar Metropolis: Cities, Suburbs, & Exurbs, 1940s-1950s (18 pages) & excerpts from Ch. 9 The Frontier of Imagination: American Cities in the 1960s (? pages) Cleveland: City on Schedule, 1962 Cleveland, Ohio Urban Renewal & Development (34 min) <i>TBD</i>
8	11/13 - 11/19	Suburbanization of American Cities Voting Block/ Majority Urban Flight/ White flight/ Blockbusting Suburban Decay/ Suburban Crisis	Ch. 10 Attempting Revival & Renaissance: The 1970s - 1980s (26 pages) <i>TBD</i>
9	11/20 - 11/26	Government in American Cities Incorporation, Annexation Unincorporated/ HOA Origins of Urban Planning Urban Reform/ City Politics MSA/ Regional Cities	Ch. 11 The Modern City: Fear, Technology, & Inequality, 1990 - present (28 pages) <i>TBD</i>
10	11/27 - 12/3	TBD by students based on Interest/ Student Requests/ Needs of the Term	<i>TBD</i>
	Finals	Exam Scheduled Wed, 12/6- 12:30 - 2:20	

Resources & Information

Food Security Information

The PSU Food Pantry offers services to currently enrolled Portland State University students, by providing a free, welcoming, and inclusive environment to acquire supplemental food items on a regular basis. The pantry is located in SMSU 325. For more information email foodhelp@pdx.edu

Access and Inclusion for Students with Disabilities

PSU values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students. My goal is to create a learning environment that is equitable, usable, inclusive, and welcoming. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. The DRC is located in 116 Smith Memorial Student Union, 503-725-4150, drc@pdx.edu, <https://www.pdx.edu/drc>. **If you already have accommodations, please contact me to make sure that I have received a faculty notification letter and discuss your accommodations.**

PSU Cultural Resource Centers

The Cultural Resource Centers (CRCs) create a student-centered inclusive environment that enriches the university experience. We honor diversity, explore social justice issues, celebrate cultural traditions, and foster student identities, success, and leadership. We provide students with employment, volunteer, and leadership opportunities. All are welcome!
(www.pdx.edu/cultural-resource-centers) cultures@pdx.edu

Infants/ Children in Class Policy

Parents who are breastfeeding an infant, or expressing milk, may do so in class without the permission of the instructor. Or if you prefer to breastfeed or breast-pump outside of class, you may take time out of class to use a lactation room. If you need to bring a child/children to class, please notify the instructor ahead of time. (There are backpacks that can be checked out from the [Resource Center for Students with Children](#), SMSU 462, that have toys and games for children up to age 12). Note that you are responsible for seeing that the child or children are not disruptive to the class and for ensuring that all additional University policies and rules are followed by those that you bring (and be prepared to step outside should disruption become an issue).

Please let me know what accommodations you need to make this work.

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Writing Resources

This course does require you to stretch yourself as a writer. To be an effective communicator your writing needs to 1) meet the assigned task; 2) be designed for the intended audience; 3) convey all important information. Every writer needs to proofread and revise their work to obtain the best finished product. If you need help with this process, PSU's Writing Center (www.writingcenter.pdx.edu) has a variety of free services.

Mandated Reporter/ Title IX Reporting Obligations

Portland State is committed to fostering a safe, productive learning environment. Title IX and our school policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, which regards sexual misconduct — including harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. We expect a culture of professionalism and mutual respect in our department and class. Please be aware that as a faculty member, I have the responsibility to report any instances of sexual harassment, sexual violence and/or other forms of prohibited discrimination to PSU's Title IX Coordinator, the Office of Equity and Compliance or the Dean of Student Life and cannot keep information confidential. You may report any incident of discrimination or discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment, to either the Office of Equity and Compliance or the Office of the Dean of Student Life. If you would rather share information about sexual harassment or sexual violence to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact a confidential advocate at 503-725-5672 or by scheduling on-line (psuwrc.youcanbook.me) or another confidential employee found on the sexual misconduct resource webpage. For more information about your obligations and resources for sex/gender discrimination and sexual violence (Title IX), please complete the required student module Creating a Safe Campus in your Canvas.

Academic Honesty & Plagiarism

Students are expected to be ethical not only in the classroom, but also out of the classroom. It is in all students' interest to avoid committing acts of academic dishonesty and to discourage others from committing such acts. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following examples: engages in any form of academic deceit; refers to materials or sources or uses devices not authorized by the instructor for use during any quiz or assignment; provides inappropriate aid to another person in connection with any quiz or assignment; engages in Plagiarism. Cheating and or plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade for the assignment which may result in a failing grade for the course as well. For more information, please look at the PSU Student Code of Conduct (www.pdx.edu/dos/psu-stent-code-conduct)

Many of the sections of the syllabus were adapted from other professors and a variety of university sources.