

University of Washington
HSTAA 208 – THE CITY
Winter 2018
TuTh 11:30-12:50 – Savery Hall 264

Canvas website: <https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1127964>
Library research guide: <https://guides.lib.uw.edu/research/city>

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We live in an urban age. Half the world's population now lives in cities; by 2030, many more will have joined them. This survey course provides a foundational understanding of the economic, political, and social forces shaping North American cities' evolution since the colonial period and the central role cities have played in modern U.S. history. It also will introduce you to the tools and skills of original historical research, primary source analysis, and public history.

Each enrolled student will contribute to a digital exhibition on the evolution of American cities, built around a close historical study of Seattle's Yesler Way, from Elliott Bay to Lake Washington.

LEARNING GOALS

Because high-quality writing is one of the most important requirements for nearly any high-quality job, the course is writing-intensive (and has a W designation to reflect that). By the end of the term you will have written the equivalent of more than 15 pages of historical writing, submitted in a variety of formats, and you will have received instructor and peer feedback to help you research and write more effectively. Research assignments will teach you critical analysis of source materials and sharpen your ability to read and understand both quantitative and qualitative data.

Discussion will teach you to present, discuss, and debate ideas in informed, balanced, and incisive ways. Writing assignments will not only test the breadth of your knowledge but also ask you to synthesize data and create compelling narratives about the past. Our use of an online platform will allow sharing of knowledge among your peers and a wider public, teach you to develop polished portfolios using both visual and textual materials, and help you explore how digital and social platforms can advance your academic and professional careers.

READINGS

The two required books are available for sale at the University Bookstore and on 2-hour reserve at Odegaard Library.

1. Steven H. Corey and Lisa Krisoff Boehm, *The American Urban Reader: History and Theory*
2. Matthew Klingle, *Emerald City: An Environmental History of Seattle*

Other required articles, book chapters, and primary sources available to enrolled students in electronic form via the course Canvas website.

You must complete readings for each week prior to Friday quiz section and, beginning in Week Two, post on the course discussion board by 11:59PM Thursday.

CLASS FORMAT AND ASSIGNMENTS

The class consists of two 80-minute lectures per week plus one 50-minute quiz section. Lecture periods will consist of 50-60 minutes of lecture time and 20-30 minutes of reading, writing, discussion, and group work. Ungraded writing assignments will make a frequent appearance, and completion of these in-class assignments will count toward your participation grade.

1. **Written discussion and collaboration:** ten discussion posts over the course of the quarter responding to posted instructor questions about lecture and reading content [ongoing throughout quarter; 15% of grade]; field notes and discussion of digital exhibit assignment [Week 3 of quarter; 5%]; online conversation/collaboration with quiz-section peers about digital history sources and questions [ongoing throughout quarter; ungraded but required].

2. **Two short papers (2-4 pages; 500-1000 words):** one on sources, methods and work plan for digital history exhibit [Week 4 of quarter; 10%]; a second that performs close analysis of a primary source [Week 8 of quarter; 10%], both submitted online to the instructors via Canvas.

3. **Final digital exhibit** that examines the history of one block of Yesler Way [assigned Week 2, drafted throughout quarter, final submission to instructor for grading Wednesday of exam week; 40% of grade]. You will receive a detailed assignment sheet explaining standards and required components of this project, as well as spend time in quiz section learning how to build your digital exhibit using Google Sites.

4. **Participation, discussion, group work** during lecture and quiz section [ongoing; 20% of grade]. For expectations, see grading rubric on page 5 of this syllabus.

CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEK ONE: January 4: Introduction

Sources and methods of urban history; theories of urban growth; what is “the city”?; Q&A

Reading: *The American Urban Reader*, pp. 3-30, 41-57 [For those who have not yet obtained their textbook, PDFs of this week’s readings will be available on Canvas. This will be the only time digitized versions of the required books will be uploaded, so please find a way to obtain physical copies.]

You are not required to submit a discussion post this first week of the quarter. You will be expected to come to quiz section ready to discuss and debate this reading content.

WEEK TWO: January 9 & 11: Cities in Early America

Native American cities; regional differentiation; natural and built environments; religion; politics

Reading: *Reader*, pp. 69-86, 96-103
Emerald City, pp. 1-43

WEEK THREE: January 16 & 18: Industrial Transformation & Urban Life

Market revolution; canals and turnpikes; immigration; women and men in the city

Reading: *Reader*, pp. 107-122, 147-154

FIELD NOTES DUE: By Thursday of this week you should have visited your block of Yesler Way, taken photographs, and post these along with “field notes” from your visit on the discussion board. This is **in addition to** your discussion post on the week’s lectures and reading.

WEEK FOUR: January 23 & 25: Instant Cities of the Far West

“Manifest Destiny”; the West and the Pacific; mining and trade; Native peoples as urban peoples; environmental consequences

Reading: *Emerald City*, pp. 44-118

Shelley Sang-Hee Lee, “Multiethnic Seattle” [PDF on Canvas]

Djidjila’letch to Pioneer Square (11 min) at

<https://youtu.be/5z2q2mxRnns>

PAPER ONE DUE: SOURCES & METHODS: This is a paper of 2-4 double-spaced pages (500-1000 words) discussing the historical sources and methods you need to find out about this block, ideas of where you can find those sources, and the strategies you can use to fill in missing information (e.g. information sources about the era of urban history and/or the other parts of the neighborhood that you can use to make educated guesses about your block). The paper should also outline your research plan and personal benchmarks for the quarter, and the questions that you want to workshop in section and on the discussion board with your peers. Post to Canvas by Thursday 11:59 PM.

WEEK FIVE: January 30 & February 1: Landscapes of Wealth and Poverty

The new middle class and the first suburbs; urban leisure and the urban consumer; immigration and multiethnic Seattle

Reading: *Reader*, pp. 163-194

Emerald City, pp. 119-179

All quiz sections this week will take place in Smith Hall 220, the Poli Sci computer lab, so that you can learn and practice on the Google Sites interface.

WEEK SIX: February 6 & 8: Planning and Politics

Garden cities and the City Beautiful; political machines; Progressive reform; New Deal programs; introduction to HOLC

Reading: *Reader*, pp. 207-228, 251-263, 517-518

Emerald City, pp. 180-202

Shelley Sang-Hee Lee, “Problems of the Pacific” [PDF on Canvas]

WEEK SEVEN: February 13 & 15: Suburbia

Imagining suburbia at the 1939 World’s Fair; the homebuilders; popular culture; segregation

Reading: *Reader*, pp. 360-390, 409-423

David Freund, “Financing Suburban Growth” [PDF on Canvas]

WEEK EIGHT: February 20 & 22: Urban “Crisis”

Deindustrialization; race; public education; urban renewal; media

Reading: *Reader*, pp. 431-454, 465-474
Emerald City, pp. 203-229

PAPER TWO DUE: SOURCE ANALYSIS: This is a 2-4 page (500-1000 word) paper analyzing the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) map of Seattle, the criteria it used for assessing neighborhood "risk," and the effects it had upon the city's neighborhoods and residents in the decades to follow. (We will discuss HOLC and its impact in lectures and section during weeks Six and Seven.) Submit to Canvas by Thursday at 11:59 p.m.

WEEK NINE: February 27 & March 1: Metropolitan America

Redefining cities and suburbs; high-tech cities; housing markets; gentrification; environment

Reading: *Reader*, pp. 487-509
Emerald City, pp. 230-280

WEEK TEN: March 6 & 8: The Next City?

Globalization; wealth and poverty; health and the city; sustainable urbanism; transportation alternatives; beyond suburbia; Amazon HQ2

Reading: Margaret O'Mara, "The Other High-Tech Bubble" [PDF on Canvas]
Margaret O'Mara, "Silicon Dreams" [PDF on Canvas]
Amazon, Request for Proposals, HQ2 [PDF on Canvas]

EXAM WEEK: Wednesday, March 14, 11:59 p.m.

FINAL EXHIBIT DUE: Complete your exhibit, publish the site, and submit the URL to Canvas for grading. There is no final examination for this course.

CLASS POLICIES

ELECTRONICS: Consider lecture as an 80-minute respite from the Internet and all its distractions. If you rely on a laptop for note-taking, you may use one, but the WiFi must be turned off. Do not take notes on your phone. Phones must be on silent/do not disturb mode.

PAPER-WRITING GUIDELINES, RESEARCH RESOURCES, & OTHER HELPFUL STUFF: I have a number of handouts and links available on my web site at <http://www.margaretomara.com/resources>. Please read and refer to these as needed.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: In all assignments you are expected to adhere to the standards of academic integrity outlined by the University of Washington Student Conduct Code. In an age of internet-based research and writing, the standards for plagiarism and academic dishonesty can become unclear, and I strongly encourage all students to read UW statements and guidelines that outline acceptable practices and procedures.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the UW Disability Resources for Students Office. If you have a letter from their office indicating that you have a disability that requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to the professor at the start of the quarter.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS: Assignments submitted late on Canvas will be penalized by 5% of the assignment grade per hour (or fraction of an hour) of tardiness. Allow enough time before deadlines to avoid any technical/computer problems that might make your assignment late.

ABSENCES: Success in this course will depend on your being present and engaged in the lectures and sections. Please alert the TA to any expected absences well ahead of time so that we can make arrangements for makeup assignments. In cases of unexpected absences (illness, family emergencies), you must contact us within a week of the absence to be considered for makeup credit.

ILLNESS: It's Winter Quarter! Please follow common-sense guidelines in order to protect yourself and your fellow students. Stay home if you have a fever or any malady that might be easily communicated to those sitting near you in the lecture hall. Doctor's notes are not required for occasional absence, but are required in cases of debilitating illnesses that result in missing a significant stretch of class sessions.

DISCUSSION/PARTICIPATION STANDARDS: The professor and TA calculate this work (consisting of up to 20% of your final grade) according to the following rubric:

- 18-20%: excellent contributor to class; participates in discussion in nearly every class session; speaks and listens thoughtfully to peers, reflecting careful reading and attention to lecture content; informed, collegial contributions to group and in-class assignments.
- 15-17%: contributes to discussion in 80-90% of class sessions, reflecting completion of reading assignments and attention to lecture content; completion of most in-class work.
- 12-14%: contributes to discussion 50-70% of time, reflecting completion of assigned reading and some attention to lecture content; completion of some in-class work.
- 8-11%: rarely speaks in class; low engagement in group work; missing in-class assignments.
- 7% and below: rarely or never speaks in class, could not demonstrate by comments or in-class assignments that reading had been completed or lecture content mastered; lack of collegiality to peers; not following course rules, especially re. electronics.

FINAL GRADE SCALE: Each assignment is worth a certain number of points, totaling 100 (the 40% grade on the final project, for example, is worth 40 points). I convert the total into a four-point scale at the end of the quarter following this rubric:

≥ 95% = 4.0	88 = 3.3	81 = 2.6	74 = 1.9	67 = 1.2
94 = 3.9	87 = 3.2	80 = 2.5	73 = 1.8	66 = 1.1
93 = 3.8	86 = 3.1	79 = 2.4	72 = 1.7	65 = 1.0
92 = 3.7	85 = 3.0	78 = 2.3	71 = 1.6	64 = 0.9
91 = 3.6	84 = 2.9	77 = 2.2	70 = 1.5	63 = 0.8
90 = 3.5	83 = 2.8	76 = 2.1	69 = 1.4	62 = 0.7
89 = 3.4	82 = 2.7	75 = 2.0	68 = 1.3	61 ≥ no credit