

21:510:315

Perspectives in History: Newark in Maps

Spring 2019

Tuesday 6:00pm-9:00pm
Conklin 352

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Course Description

History is often defined as “change over time,” but time is only one dimension of human experience. History also plays out in *space*, and we might learn new things about it if we plotted events not only on a timeline but also on a map. Maps, then, are not only crucial primary sources for the study of the past, pieces of yellowing parchment by which explorers navigated, say, or the colorful road atlases of the auto-obsessed twentieth century – sources, in other words, that we might locate in a library or archive. They are also sources that historians create themselves, especially in the age of user-friendly digital tools, in order to forge new and deeper understandings of the past. In our profession, in short, they are both tools and texts.

In this class, we will both “read” maps and make them, in an effort to understand more fully how maps are put together, what information they contain, how that information is conveyed, how they tell stories, and how they are both the products and tools of power. As we would with any historical source, we will spend time closely observing maps, analyzing and deconstructing them, and putting them in conversation with other sources. At a time in which we so easily pull up maps on our phones and computers, or can so easily ignore them as Siri reads them for us and gives us directions, it’s worth making them *weird* again, not so easily and thoughtlessly used, but closely examined and thought about.

The history department’s “Perspectives in History” courses focus on the close analysis of primary source material related to a given topic. The skills gained in doing so – the ability to slow down and patiently observe and examine sources, to form relevant analytical questions about them, and to convey evidence-based answers to those questions (in short: observe, analyze, report) – are essential to many lines of work and to life itself, maybe especially in our troubled times. If you’re a history major, “Perspectives” will set you up well for the capstone research seminar. If you’re not a history major, you’ll still learn valuable analytical skills and some interesting history, and you’ll fulfill one writing-intensive requirement.

So why “*Newark* in Maps”? Three main reasons. First, I’ve spent a lot of time researching, writing about, and teaching Newark history, and relevant primary-source material is readily accessible. Second, I hope that you’ll spend your time in Newark actually thinking about Newark, rather than simply passing through it or, worse yet, hiding from it. When this semester is over, if you drive or walk or take the train into and through town, look around, and feel like you have a better understanding of why the city looks the way it does, then the class will have been a success. Third, I hope that the class offers an opportunity for you to think deeply about your own relationship to Newark, what you’re doing here, where you come from, where you go from here, and how, in a larger sense, your own life is shaped by your relationship to *place*.

Learning Objectives

In this *writing intensive course*, students will be given the opportunity to learn and practice the following skills:

- Distinguishing between secondary and primary sources and between historical contexts and objects
- Identifying and analyzing different types of evidence using critical thinking skills
- Building and reading maps as a way to better understand history (which also always means better understanding the present day)
- Constructing a historical argument using primary sources
- Writing (which involves drafting and revising) a college-level academic essay that is original, persuasive, and based on thoroughly analyzed evidence

All readings will be distributed via Blackboard. There is nothing you need to buy.

Course Requirements

The writing assignments for this writing-intensive course will consist of two main forms: two short essays (comprised of one draft and one final version) and a series of shorter, pre-draft assignments that will feed into those essays. Please see the class schedule below for due dates. More detailed instructions on each writing assignment – including the essays – will be distributed during the semester via Blackboard. *All writing must be typed and double-spaced.*

For the preparedness and participation grade, students are expected to read the assigned texts (whether visual or written) before each class session. Simple attendance in class is not factored into the participation grade. Students are required to come to class ready with questions or observations about the texts and to take part in the discussion to earn a good participation grade. We will devote much of our class time to interpreting the primary sources. This in-depth analysis will compose the participation grade. *Students **must** have the readings and texts (including maps) available in some form for each class session. You can print them or store them on your phone, laptop, or tablet.*

Essay #1	20%
Essay #2	30%
Short writing assignments (9 of 10)	25%
Preparedness and participation	25%

Submitting assignments:

- Each of the two essays (first and final drafts) must be submitted via Turnitin on Blackboard.
- Each of the ten short writing assignments must be submitted in paper form during the appropriate class.
- All students must put the Rutgers Honors Code Pledge, with their signature, on the paper copies of all assignments. Place your signature after the following phrase: “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this assignment.”

General Writing Rubric

(a more detailed and specific rubric for each essay will be distributed during the semester)

A	Outstanding
A-	Outstanding, with one or two areas of improvement
B+	Very good
B	Good
B-	Good overall, with some significant weaknesses
C+	Satisfactory, with some potential for improvement
C	Satisfactory, but needs significant development
C-	Barely satisfactory
D	Poor; overwhelming flaws
F	Failing
0/no credit	Has not completed the assignment

Please note that an “F” is worth 50%, not 0%. You thus receive credit for doing an assignment even if you receive a failing grade.

The grades are applied to your work in the class: at the college level, this means the final product of your work – what you hand in to me – not the amount of effort you put into the work. In other words, students don’t get an “A for effort” at the college level.

Class Rules

Studying history is often a politically and personally charged pursuit, maybe especially when exploring questions of power, inequality, and violence. Such questions are at the forefront of the study of urban development from the initial dispossessions of native groups, to the uprisings of the 1960s, and to present-day phenomenon of renewed growth and gentrification. We will not shy away from such issues. They may take on specially charged meaning in our current historical moment, and we need not steer our conversations away from making connections between the past and today. But I expect that all of us – myself included – will behave in a manner that assumes and shows respect for others’ needs and desires to learn. By all means, disagree with me and with each other. But do so in a civil way that will promote, rather than hinder, learning. *Any behavior that in any way intimidates others from participating in class will be addressed and may count against your participation grade.*

Similarly, any behavior that distracts from class discussion will also be addressed and may count against your participation grade. In concrete terms, this means that in class there will be:

- No talking in private conversations, even in whispers
- No use of phones, laptops, or tablets unless required by class activities
- No working on homework or other course work
- No late arrivals except in emergency situations

Attendance is required. There will be no make-up opportunities for missed classes. I will take attendance at the beginning of every class. If you arrive late, after I have taken attendance, I will give you half credit for being in class. This means that two late arrivals will count as one unexcused absence. After two unexcused absences, your overall course grade will be lowered by a partial grade (from B+ to B, for example) for every further unexcused absence. *Any student who misses four or more sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will have missed more than a quarter of the class time and will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw from the course to avoid an F.*

Excused vs. Unexcused absences: The Rutgers-Newark Undergraduate catalog (http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nwk-ug_current/pg576.html) states: “The recognized grounds for absence are illness requiring medical attention, curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the faculty, personal obligations claimed by the student and recognized as valid, recognized religious holidays, and severe inclement weather causing dangerous traveling conditions.” *If you plan to claim a religious holiday as an excused absence, you must inform me of this fact within the first two weeks of class.*

Late assignments will not be accepted except in cases of proven emergency. The short writing assignments are designed to help you keep up with the readings, prompt participation in class discussion, and build toward the essay assignments. For these reasons, they cannot be handed in later than the class for which they are assigned. If you know that you will be absent on a particular day, plan ahead and email the assignment to me early.

Policy on Academic Integrity (Cheating and Plagiarism): Rutgers University treats cheating and plagiarism as serious offenses. Cheating is both a moral and an ethical offense. It violates both your own integrity and the ethics of group commitment: when you cut corners and cheat, you undermine those students who took the time to work on the assignment honestly. As a standard minimum penalty, students who are suspected of cheating or plagiarism are reported to the Office of Academic Integrity. Pending investigation, further penalties can include failure of the course, disciplinary probation, and a formal warning that further cheating will be grounds for expulsion from the University.

All students are required to sign the Rutgers Honor Code Pledge. To receive credit, every assignment must have your signature under the following phrase: “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this assignment.”

You may only use the texts assigned in this syllabus to complete the work in this class. If I find that you have used other people’s ideas (ex: Wikipedia, Amazon reviews, book jacket descriptions, etc.), I will not accept the assignment because I will not be able to consider it your own work. You will get a failing grade (0 points) for that assignment and will not be able to make it up.

Disabilities: Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’s disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>. For more information please contact Kate Torres at (973) 353-5375 or in the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219 or by contacting odsnewark@rutgers.edu.

Class Schedule

Introductions

January 22: Intro to History, Maps, and Mapping

January 29: Analytical Categories/Angles & Types of Historical Sources

Class Prep: read selection from *Narratives of Newark*

Short Writing Assignment #1: answer question(s) posted on Blackboard

Finding and Mining Maps

February 5: Building a Class Archive

Class Prep: read “What Is an Archives?” and “When Jack Daniels Failed to Honor a Slave...”

Short Writing Assignment #2: answer question(s) posted on Blackboard

February 12: Local Map Analysis

Class Prep: find your local map (see instructions on Blackboard)

Short Writing Assignment #3: answer question(s) posted on Blackboard

February 19: Academic Writing & Map Workshop

Class Prep: read “What Is ‘Academic’ Writing?”

Short Writing Assignment #4: answer question(s) posted on Blackboard

DUE: Drafts of Essay #1 by 12 noon on Saturday, February 23

Modern Newark

February 26: Fire Insurance Maps

Class Prep: take a break / nice work on your drafts!

March 5: City Directories

Class Prep: read selection from *How Newark Became Newark*; download and browse the 1838 Newark City Directory (both from Blackboard)

Short Writing Assignment #5: answer question(s) posted on Blackboard

DUE: Final Draft of Essay #1 by 12 noon on Saturday, March 9

March 12: Searching and Mapping Data

Class Prep: take a break / glad you got those essays submitted!

March 19: SPRING BREAK / NO CLASS

March 26: Final Map Presentation

Class Prep: spend some time browsing our collective Google Map

Short Writing Assignment #6: answer question(s) posted on Blackboard

Maps, Power, & the 1967 Uprising

April 2: First Days

Class Prep: read newspaper coverage and *at least one* witness testimony from the first days of the uprising

Short Writing Assignment #7: answer question(s) posted on Blackboard

April 9: Historical Maps of the “Riot” & Furthering the Story

Class Prep: read further newspaper coverage and sources from the uprising

Short Writing Assignment #8: answer question(s) posted on Blackboard

April 16: The Spatial Politics of Race in Newark

Class Prep: make sure you’ve uploaded map links from class to Zotero

Short Writing Assignment #9: answer question(s) posted on Blackboard

April 23: Urban Renewal Maps

Class Prep: this is draft-writing week! just work on that

DUE: Drafts of Essay #2 by the end of the day Saturday, April 27

Wrapping (Mapping?) Up

April 30: Phantom Threads

Class Prep: review our class archive on Zotero

Short Writing Assignment #10: answer question(s) posted on Blackboard

DUE: Final Draft of Essay #2 by the end of the day on Tuesday, May 14