

**Topics in American Politics and Public Policy:
Gentrification & Housing Politics
(21:790:463)**

Spring 2022
Tuesday 2:30 – 5:20 p.m.
Bradley Hall (110 Warren St.) Room 410

Instructor: Adam Straub
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Office Hours: W 12:30 – 2:30 p.m. or by appointment

Course Overview

Gentrification has become an inescapable buzzword surrounding the politics of housing and urban development. However, across the US, gentrification has taken many forms, with a variety of causes and effects specific to certain places. A number of other housing problems also exist: eviction, rent burden, displacement, and segregation, to name a few. Even just across our own megalopolis, places like New York City, Jersey City, and Newark (which will be examined in the course) showcase the broad range of interests, institutions, and ideas at stake in the housing politics of our ever-changing cities.

This course is designed to be an introduction to gentrification and other relevant concepts and theories related to housing problems and their politics. The course will begin with an introduction to the concept of gentrification, then explore relevant policies and social transformations as well as examine our case cities. Lastly, this course will consider resistance to gentrification, as well as the possibilities and limits of housing justice advocacy. Overall, the goal of this course is to help students understand neighborhood change, its various origins and consequences, and how these issues are being addressed politically.

Course Requirements

Required Readings

All required readings will be available on Canvas. The readings are a mix of academic articles, book chapters, websites, videos, and articles from newspapers and magazines. This class will be centered on reading and discussion, therefore it is strongly encouraged that you keep up with the required readings and come prepared to discuss each reading on the day it is assigned.

Some of the reading will be challenging, and I encourage students to focus on the following when reading and note-taking, especially for the academic works we read:

Question: What are the central questions that the author is asking?

Argument: What does the author argue about their topic? This can be a causal relationship, a judgment on the effects of a certain policy, a normative argument for specific interventions, etc.

Evidence: How does the author support their arguments? What empirical evidence do they draw on?

Attendance and Participation

Preparation before class will be key to productive class time. Aside from some short lectures, our class will take the form of a guided discussion in which we analyze the reading and put different perspectives and concepts into dialogue with each other. I encourage students to actively participate and expect students to engage in discussion with respect for other students' contributions.

Attendance is required and any unexcused absences will have a negative effect on your grade. Please contact me directly if you are unable to attend class for any reason covered by university policy, including illness, death in the family, religious observance, university activities etc.

Discussion Posts

Each week of readings will have a corresponding discussion board. Out of 12 discussion boards, students must participate in at least 10. If students participate in more than 10, their lowest grade will be dropped. Discussion boards will be closely related to the week's topic but will also draw on contemporary events and your own experiences. Each week's discussion board will have specific instructions, but will generally be limited to less than one page of writing.

Class Presentation

Each student will choose one set of class readings (between Weeks 2-11) for which they will serve as discussant. As the discussant, you will present major topics or points from the required readings not a detailed summary of each reading. I will post guiding questions with each set of readings that can be used to structure your presentation.

Each student will also prepare either a PowerPoint or a "study guide" for the week they are a discussant. The choice is yours, but the PowerPoint would be particularly useful to present images from the texts or contemporary examples, while the study guide option may be more useful for theory-heavy weeks. Either option should conclude with a list of 3-5 questions for discussion.

Writing Assignments

This course will have three writing assignments that will vary between creative writing, analysis of the readings and an exploration of your own interests. These essays will be 3-5 pages double spaced. Details TBD.

Final Paper

Students will write a 8-12 page double spaced final paper that will engage the course readings and link them to a topic of their own interest.

Grading

Your grade will be based on the course requirements described above, as follows:

Attendance and Participation	10%
Discussion Posts (10)	20%
Presentation	10%
Writing Assignments (3)	30%
Final Paper	30%

Grade Conversion

A	89.5-100
B+	84.5-89.49
B	79.5-84.49
C+	74.5-79.49
C	69.5-74.49
D	59.5-69.49
F	0-59.49

Late Assignments

Late assignments will result in a 10% deduction from your total points for each day past the due date. If, due to extraordinary circumstances, you need an extension on an assignment, please contact me directly before the assignment is due.

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses. The Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy will apply to all course work. Any form of intellectual dishonesty is subject to disciplinary action. If you have any doubt about what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, do not hesitate to consult with me or the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>. To avoid plagiarism, always reference the materials you have used by adding a footnote or citing your source in text, with a full reference list. Referencing shows that you explore the work of other scholars and engage critically with their work and ideas.

Disability-Related Accommodations

Rutgers University is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students and welcomes students with disabilities into all the University's educational programs. The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter barriers due to disability. Once a student has completed the ODS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and reasonable accommodations are determined to be necessary and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be provided. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at www.ods.rutgers.edu. You can contact ODS at (848)445-6800 or via email at dsoffice@echo.rutgers.edu.

Rutgers COVID-19 Community Guidelines

In order to protect the health and wellbeing of all members of the Rutgers-Newark community, masks must be worn by all persons inside campus buildings when in the presence of others, and in buildings in non-private enclosed settings (e.g., common workspaces, workstations, meeting rooms, classrooms, etc.). Masks should securely cover the nose and mouth. Masks must be worn during class meetings. Each day before you arrive on campus or leave your residence hall, you must complete the brief survey on the My Campus Pass symptom checker self-screening app found at: [myRutgers Portal](#).

COURSE OUTLINE

Note: course readings are subject to change

Week 1: January 18

Topic: Syllabus Overview

Week 2: January 25

Introduction: What is Gentrification?

Smith, N. (1996). "Is Gentrification a Dirty Word?" in *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*.

Yi, K. (2018, December 6). Newark is changing, but it will not become Brooklyn, mayor promises. *NJ Advance Media for NJ.com*.

Danley, S. (2020, September 2). Why Do Low-Income Residents Oppose Development Even When Displacement Risk Is Low? *Shelterforce*.

VIDEO: "Gentrification Explained" by the Urban Displacement Project
<https://www.urbandisplacement.org/gentrification-explained>

Week 3: February 1

Causes of Gentrification

Lees, Slater & Wyly. (2007). "Producing Gentrification" (pg 39-73) in *Gentrification*.

Hackworth, J. & Smith, N. (2001). The Changing State of Gentrification. *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie/Journal of Social and Economic Geography*, 92(4), 464–477.

Hyra, D., Fullilove, M., Moulden, D. and Silva, K. (2020). Contextualizing gentrification chaos: the rise of the fifth wave. Working paper, Washington DC: The Metropolitan Policy Center

Week 4: February 8
Effects of Gentrification

Goetz, E. (2011). Gentrification in Black and White: The Racial Impact of Public Housing Demolition in American Cities. *Urban Studies* 48(8):1581-1604.

Curran, W. (2018). “Mexicans love red” and other gentrification myths: Displacements and contestations in the gentrification of Pilsen, Chicago, USA. *Urban Studies*, 55(8), 1711–1728.

Stabrowski, F. (2014). New-Build Gentrification and the Everyday Displacement of Polish Immigrant Tenants in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. *Antipode*, 46(3), 794–815.

Week 5: February 15
ESSAY #1 DUE February 18 by 11:59pm
Positive Gentrification?

Chaskin, R., & Joseph, M. (2013). “Positive” Gentrification, Social Control and the “Right to the City” in Mixed-Income Communities: Uses and Expectations of Space and Place. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 37(2).

Stein, S. (2014, October 3). De Blasio’s Doomed Housing Plan. *Jacobin*.

Jacobus, R. (2016, March 10). Why We Must Build. *Shelterforce*.

Week 6: February 22
Federal Housing Policy: Public Housing & Urban Renewal

Rothstein, R. (2017). “Chapter 2: Public Housing, Black Ghettos” in *The color of law: A forgotten history of how our government segregated America*. Liveright Publishing.

Zipp, S. (2013). The Roots and Routes of Urban Renewal, *Journal of Urban History*, 36: 366-391.

Week 7: March 1
Federal Housing Policy: HOPE VI, Section 8 & Affordable Housing

Goetz, E. G. (2011). Where have all the towers gone? The dismantling of public housing in US cities. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 33(3), 267-287.

Swanstrom, T. (1999). The nonprofitization of United States housing policy: dilemmas of community development. *Community Development Journal*, 34(1), 28-37.

Carliner, M. & Marya, E. (2016) Rental Housing: An International Comparison. *Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University*.

Week 8: March 8

ESSAY #2 DUE March 11 by 11:59pm

Urban Politics & Community Development

Molotch, H. (1976). The City as Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place.

Jones-Correa, M. & Wong, D. Whose Politics? Reflections on Clarence Stone's Regime Politics. *Urban Affairs Review*, 51(1), 161-170.

Weaver, T.P.R. (2021). Charting Change in the City: Urban Political Orders and Urban Political Development. *Urban Affairs Review*.

Week 9: March 15

SPRING BREAK

Week 10: March 22

Case #1: New York City

Stein, S. (2019). Chapter 3: New York's Bipartisan Consensus. *Capital City: Gentrification and the Real Estate State*. Brooklyn, NY: Verso.

Davis, J. (2021). How do upzonings impact neighborhood demographic change? Examining the link between land use policy and gentrification in New York City. *Land Use Policy*.

Mironova, O. & Bach, V. (2018). Tenants at the Edge: Rising insecurity among renters in New York City. *Community Service Society*.

Bach, V., Mironova, O. & Waters, T. (2020). NYCHA in Flux: Public Housing Residents Respond. *Community Service Society*.

Week 11: March 29

Case #2: Newark

Newman, K. (2004). Newark, decline and avoidance, renaissance and desire: From disinvestment to reinvestment. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 594(1), 174-176.

Morel, D., Rodriguez, A.D., Sidney, M., Garay, N. & Straub, A. "Measuring and Explaining Stalled Gentrification in Newark, New Jersey"

Troutt, D. (2017). Making Newark Work for Newarkers: Housing and Equitable Growth in the Next Brick City. *The Rutgers Center on Law, Inequality & Metropolitan Equity*.

"UPROOTED" from Newest Americans (in class)

Week 12: April 5
Case #3: Jersey City

Malone, D. (2017). Neoliberal Governance and Uneven Development in Jersey City. *Theory in Action*.

Rafferty, D.T. (2017). A Critique of Jersey City, NJ's Neoliberal, Trickle-Down Economic Ideology and an Alternative Development Strategy. *Theory in Action*.

Week 13: April 12
Eviction

Desmond, M. (2018). Heavy is the House: Rent Burden among the American Urban poor. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*.

Garboden, P.M.E. & Rosen, E. (2019). Serial Filing: How Landlords Use the Threat of Eviction. *City & Community*.

Desmond, M. (2012). Eviction and the Reproduction of Urban Poverty. *American Journal of Sociology*.

Week 14: April 19
ESSAY #3 DUE April 22 by 11:59pm
Resistance to Gentrification

Harvey, D. (2008). The right to the city. *New Left Review* 53:23–40.

Madden, D. & Marcuse, P. (2016). Ch. 5: Housing Movements of New York. *In Defense of Housing*.

Fields, D. (2015). Contesting the financialization of urban space: Community organizations and the struggle to preserve affordable rental housing in New York City. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 37(2), 144-165.

Week 15: April 26

PUSH: The Film

Week 16: May 3
FINAL PAPER DUE at 11:59pm

Note: I reserve the right to make changes in the syllabus and course schedule at any time.