

# **UPADM-GP 215.001 The Politics of New York**

# **Spring 2021**

## **Instructor Information**

* Professor Mitchell L. Moss
  + Email: [moss.mitchell@gmail.com](mailto:moss.mitchell@gmail.com)
  + Sign up for office hours using [this link](https://calendar.google.com/calendar/selfsched?sstoken=UUk0NHdnZndMQUotfGRlZmF1bHR8MGQ0YmZlZTlmNGU1NWQ2NDAwZjZjZDE0NmI3NmNjMWM)
  + Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., or by appointment.
* Teaching Assistant: Olivia Limone
  + Email: [orl211@nyu.edu](mailto:orl211@nyu.edu)
  + Sign up for office hours using [this link](https://calendar.google.com/calendar/selfsched?sstoken=UUk0NHdnZndMQUotfGRlZmF1bHR8MGQ0YmZlZTlmNGU1NWQ2NDAwZjZjZDE0NmI3NmNjMWM)
  + Office Hours: Mondays 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and Wednesdays 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., or by appointment

## **Course Information**

* Class Meeting Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00 a.m.–12:15 p.m.
* Class Location: [Zoom](https://nyu.zoom.us/j/91309257082)

## **Course Description**

New York City depends on politics to resolve fundamental conflicts and allocate land and money among competing groups. This course explores the way in which the public sector in New York City influences physical and economic development in the city: the buildings, parks, streets, mass transit systems that people depend on. The course will examine the structure of municipal government, the role of the mayor and city council, how New York City raises and spends money, plus the role of the state government in New York City. The course will integrate current events into readings and class discussions.

During this semester, we will focus on the way in which NYC has responded to disasters, such as the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire of 1911, the Spanish Flu of 1918-19, the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001 and the coronavirus pandemic of 2020. We will explore the way in which the pandemic and Black Lives Matter movement are going to influence political participation and the mayoral election of 2021.

## **Course and Learning Objectives**

During this course, you will:

1. analyze the economic, political, technological and demographic forces that influence New York City’s approach to urban policy and planning;
2. identify the key actors, organizations and processes that influence planning and development;
3. understand how political activity shapes city policies and the values that elected officials pursue, increasing economic mobility, improving the environment, and strengthening public health;
4. apply this knowledge to think critically about public policy debates (e.g. school integration, congestion pricing, etc.) and generate your own evaluations of proposed policies; and
5. demonstrate your command of lecture concepts through coherent and well-documented writing reinforced by data charts, maps and other visuals, and through meaningful contributions to class discussions.

### **Learning Assessment Table**

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| --- | --- |
| **Graded Assignment** | **Course Objective Covered** |
| Midterm Exam | #1, 2, 3, and 4 |
| Policy Essay | #1, 3, 4, and 5 |
| Final Exam | #1, 2, 3, and 4 |

## **Required Readings**

Students will be expected to have read through the required readings assigned for a given week prior to lecture. While all other required readings will be accessible online (either via NYU Classes or the URL provided in the Course Content section of this syllabus), students must rent or purchase the following text (available at the NYU Bookstore):

* Caro, R. (1974). The power broker: Robert Moses and the fall of New York. New York, NY: Knopf.

Immediately below each week’s required reading list is a set of suggested readings that I encourage you to read, but doing so is optional.

## **Web Resources**

The following are news publications, magazines, journals, blogs, and other providers of content focused on New York City and/or New York State politics, policy (budget, education, economic, housing and transportation, to name a few), or (history of) capital planning.

**News Sources**

* [Bklyner.:](https://bklyner.com/) bklyner.com
* [Chalkbeat | New York](https://www.chalkbeat.org/ny/): chalkbeat.org/ny
* [THE CITY:](https://thecity.nyc/) city.nyc
* [City & State New York](https://www.cityandstateny.com/): cityandstateny.com
* [City Journal:](https://www.city-journal.org/) city-journal.org
* [City Lab | New York:](https://www.citylab.com/locations/cities/new-york/) citylab.com/locations/cities/new-york/
* [City Limits:](https://citylimits.org/) citylimits.org
* [Crain’s Business New York](https://www.crainsnewyork.com/): crainsnewyork.com
* [Curbed New York](https://www.ny.curbed.com/): ny.curbed.com
* [Daily Intelligencer, New York Magazine](http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/): nymag.com/daily/intelligencer
* [Daily News | Big Town, Big Time: An Amazing History of NYC](http://interactive.nydailynews.com/project/archive/amazing-history-nyc/): interactive.nydailynews.com/project/archive/amazing-history-nyc
* [Daily Politics (NY Daily News blog):](http://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/) nydailynews.com/news/politics/
* [Gotham Gazette](http://www.gothamgazette.com/): gothamgazette.com
* [Gothamist](https://gothamist.com/): gothamist.com
* [New York Post:](https://nypost.com/) nypost.com
* [The New York Times | N.Y.:](http://nytimes.com/section/nyregion) nytimes.com/section/nyregion
* [Next City](https://nextcity.org/): nextcity.org
* [Observer | Politics](http://observer.com/politics/): observer.com/politics
* [Politico | New York](https://www.politico.com/states/new-york): politico.com/states/new-york
* [Streetsblog | NYC:](https://nyc.streetsblog.org/) nyc.streetsblog.org
* [Times Union | Capitol Confidential](https://blog.timesunion.com/capitol/): blog.timesunion.com/capitol
* [The Village Voice:](https://www.villagevoice.com/) villagevoice.com
* [Wall Street Journal:](https://www.wsj.com/) wsj.com

**Academic Resources**

* [Center for an Urban Future](https://nycfuture.org/about): nycfuture.org
* [Citizens Budget Commission](https://cbcny.org/): cbcny.org
* [Empire Center for Public Policy](https://www.empirecenter.org/): empirecenter.org
* [Fiscal Policy Institute](http://fiscalpolicy.org/): fiscalpolicy.org
* [Manhattan Institute for Policy Research](https://www.manhattan-institute.org/): manhattan-institute.org
* [Museum of the City of New York | The Greatest Grid](http://thegreatestgrid.mcny.org/): thegreatestgrid.mcny.org
* [NYU Furman Center for Real Estate & Urban Policy](http://furmancenter.org/): furmancenter.org
* [NYU Rudin Center for Transportation Policy & Management](https://wagner.nyu.edu/rudincenter): wagner.nyu.edu/rudincenter
* [The Center for New York City Affairs at The New School](http://www.centernyc.org/): centernyc.org

**Government Agencies**

* [Department of City Planning:](https://www1.nyc.gov/site/planning/index.page) nyc.gov/planning
* [Independent Budget Office of the City of New York](http://www.ibo.nyc.ny.us/): ibo.nyc.ny.us
* [Mayor’s Office of Management and Budget](https://www1.nyc.gov/site/omb/index.page): www1.nyc.gov/site/omb/index.page
* [NYC OpenData:](https://opendata.cityofnewyork.us/) opendata.cityofnewyork.us
* [Office of the New York State Comptroller](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/): osc.state.ny.us

**Podcasts**

* [10 Blocks, City Journal](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/city-journals-10-blocks/id273130612?mt=2)
* [The Bowery Boys: New York City History](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-bowery-boys-new-york-city-history/id258530615?mt=2)
* [Break in the Case, New York](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/break-in-the-case/id1483868671)
* [The Brian Lehrer Show, WNYC](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-brian-lehrer-show/id73331636?mt=2)
* [Brooklyn Deep Third Rail](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/brooklyn-deep-third-rail/id834770888?mt=2)
* [Brooklyn, USA](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/brooklyn-usa/id1166364708?mt=2)
* [City Between - A New York History Podcast](about:blank)
* [The City Concealed | THIRTEEN](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-city-concealed-thirteen/id343870610?mt=2)
* [FAQ NYC](about:blank)
* [Flatbush + Main: A Podcast from the Brooklyn Historical Society](about:blank)
* [Max & Murphy, City Limits and Gotham Gazette](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/max-murphy/id1143579069?mt=2)
* [New York NOW, WMHT](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/new-york-now/id672341970?mt=2)
* [NYCEDC Economic Snapshot](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/nycedc-economic-snapshot/id406252932?mt=2)
* [Public Affairs and Government, CUNY - Baruch College](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/public-affairs-and-government/id556537484?mt=2)
* [Secrets of NYC, NYC Media](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/secrets-of-new-york/id446120016?mt=2)
* [What's the [DATA] Point?, Citizens Budget Commission and Gotham Gazette](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/whats-the-data-point/id1246487663?mt=2)

## **NYU Classes**

Students will use NYU Classes in this course to:

* View the most updated version of the course syllabus
* Read course announcements
* Access presentation slides used in previous weeks’ lectures
* Retrieve any assigned readings
* Submit assignments

## **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is a vital component of Wagner and NYU. All students enrolled in this class are required to read and abide by [Wagner’s Academic Code](https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/policies/code). All Wagner students have already read and signed the [Wagner Academic Oath](https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/policies/academic-oath). Plagiarism of any form will not be tolerated and students in this class are expected to report violations to me. If any student in this class is unsure about what is expected of you and how to abide by the academic code, you should consult with me.

## **Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at NYU**

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please visit the [Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) website](https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/students-with-disabilities.html) and click on the Reasonable Accommodations and How to Register tab or call or email CSD (at 212-998-4980 or [mosescsd@nyu.edu](mailto:mosescsd@nyu.edu)) for information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are strongly advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

## **NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays**

[NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/university-calendar-policy-on-religious-holidays.html) states that members of any religious group may, without penalty, absent themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Please notify me in advance of religious holidays that might coincide with exams to schedule mutually acceptable alternatives.

## **Assignments and Grading**

Assignments must be submitted as a Word Document to NYU Classes by the due date and time denoted on the syllabus. It is your responsibility to check that the uploaded assignment is in the correct file format and accessible, or the assignment will be penalized for lateness. All submitted assignments will be run through TurnItIn. Your final grade for this course will be calculated as follows:

### **Midterm Exam (30%)**

The midterm exam will be a take-home assignment in which you will compose short answer responses to a set of prompts relating to the course topics covered during the first half of the semester. Formulate your answers using all relevant course materials, write with brevity and purpose, and be sure to properly cite all your sources. I will post more detailed instructions in regards to content, format, and submission for each of the written assignments you will complete for this course on NYU Classes further into the semester.

### **Policy Memo (35%)**

Detailed assignment instructions will be posted on NYU Classes later in the semester.

### **Final Exam (35%)**

The final exam will take the same form as the midterm: a take-home assignment in which you will compose short answer responses to a set of prompts relating to the course topics covered during the second half of the semester.

### **Late Policy**

Assignment deadline extensions will be granted in cases of emergencies. Assignments submitted late without extensions will be penalized.

## **Overview of the Semester**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Date** | **Topic** |
| Week 1 | Jan. 28 | What Makes New York New York |
| Week 2 | Feb. 2 | Population Change and Immigration |
| Week 2 | Feb. 4 | Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and NYC Politics |
| Week 3 | Feb. 9 | Power and Authority in NYC Government, Part I |
| Week 3 | Feb. 11 | Power and Authority in NYC Government, Part II |
| Week 4 | Feb. 16 | How a Mayor Makes a Difference: La Guardia, Wagner, Lindsey, Beam, Koch, Dinkins, Part I |
| Week 4 | Feb. 18 | NO CLASS -- Monday Schedule |
| Week 5 | Feb. 23 | How a Mayor Makes a Difference: Giuliani, Bloomberg, De Blasio, Part II |
| Week 5 | Feb. 25 | How NYC Raises and Spends Money |
| Week 6 | Mar. 2 | The Politics of Public Safety, Part I  **Midterm exam instructions posted to NYU Classes** |
| Week 6 | Mar. 4 | Guest Speaker | Political Protests and Black Lives Matter |
| Week 7 | Mar. 9 | The Politics of Public Safety, Part II |
| Week 7 | Mar. 11 | Planning, Parks, and Historic Preservation, Part I |
| Week 8 | Mar. 16 | Planning, Development, + Robert Caro’s *The Power Broker*, Part II |
| Week 8 | Mar. 18 | NO CLASS  **Submit midterm exam to NYU Classes by 11:00 a.m** |
| Week 9 | Mar. 23 | Transportation Politics: The Subway System, New York City, and the MTA, Part I |
| Week 9 | Mar. 25 | Transportation Politics: Multiple Modes of Mobility, Part II  **Policy essay instructions posted to NYU Classes** |
| Week 10 | Mar. 30 | How Disasters Shape NYC Policies: The 1832 Cholera Epidemic, 1918 Flu, September 11th, the 2008 Financial Crisis, Part I |
| Week 10 | Apr. 1 | How Disasters Shape NYC Policies: COVID-19, Part II |
| Week 11 | Apr. 6 | School Politics: Mayoral Control, School Choice, Race, Achievement, and Testing |
| Week 11 | Apr. 8 | **Guest Speaker: Joyce Choi Li, Chief of Staff to the Trace Program at the NYC COVID-19 Test and Trace Corps** |
| Week 12 | Apr. 13 | Economic Development in NYC, Part I |
| Week 12 | Apr. 15 | **Guest Speaker: Jean Bae, Director of Legislative Affairs and Policy for the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs**  **Submit policy essay topic to NYU Classes by 11:00 a.m.** |
| Week 13 | Apr. 20 | How Federal and State Policies Influence New York City **Guest Speaker: Michael Laskawy, Visiting Scholar at NYU and former Senior Policy Advisor to the Governor** |
| Week 13 | Apr. 22 | Voter Turnout and Participation in Municipal Elections |
| Week 14 | Apr. 27 | The Mayoral Election of 2021  **Guest Speaker**: **Rachel Noerdlinger, Partner at** **Mercury LLC and** **former Chief of Staff for New York City’s First Lady Chirlane McCray**  **Submit** **policy** **essay to NYU Classes by 11:00 a.m.**  **Final exam instructions posted to NYU Classes** |
| Week 14 | Apr. 29 | Environmental Policy & Climate Change  **Guest Speaker: Adam Freed, Principal of Sustainability Practice at Bloomberg Associates** |
| Week 15 | May 4 | Political and economic impacts of COVID-19 on the Future of NY |
| Week 15 | May 6 | Semester overview |
| ——— | May 15 | **Submit final exam to NYU Classes by 11:55 p.m.** |

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