This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of New York City's governments and politics. We will examine the role of the mayor and other elected officials, organization of the municipal government, and the way in which state and regional governments affect public services and city policies. The course will explore the way in which political and economic forces affect public policies for planning and physical development, public schools, economic development, disaster management, redevelopment of lower Manhattan, congestion pricing, and waterfront development.

**Required Texts:**
Pete Hamill, *Downtown: My Manhattan*, Back Bay Books, 2004

**Recommended:**
Jeffrey A. Kroessler, New York Year by Year, NYU Press, 2002.


Website Resources:
New York City Gov: www.nyc.gov
NYC Independent Budget Office: http://www.ibo.nyc.ny.us
NY State Office of the Comptroller: http://www.osc.state.ny.us
NYC Department of City Planning: http://www.nyc.gov/planning
Capital New York: http://www.capitalnewyork.com
City and State NY: http://www.cityandstateny.com
Citizens’ Budget Commission: www.cbc.org
Curbed: http://curbed.com/
Gothamist: http://gothamist.com/
Gotham Gazette, www.gothamsazette.org
The Politicker: http://www.politicker.com/
City Room: http://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/
The Daily Politics: www.thedailypolitics.com
Plan NYC: http://www.plannyc.org/
Times union blog: blogs.timesunion.com/capitol
New York Magazine: nymag.com/daily/intel
Gawker: www.gawker.com
New York Post: www.nypost.com/blogs/knickerbocker
Observer- politics: www.observer.com/politics
WNYC - The Empire: empire wnyc.com
Room eight: www.r8ny.com
Streets Blog: http://streetsblog.org
City Limits: http://www.citylimits.org
Crains New York: http://crainsnewyork.com
WNET - Metro Focus: http://www.thirteen.org/metrofocus/
Education: www.gothamschools.org
Course Requirements:
Students should do the required reading, most of which is accessible through the required books and at the Blackboard site for this course. The course grade will be based on written work. Students will be required to submit four one-page papers, (250-300 words), a take-home mid-term exam, and a research paper (2000 words) dealing with a public policy or community conflict in New York City. All written work should be submitted in hard copy to Prof. Moss or placed in his mailbox at The Puck Building, 3rd floor. The requirements for the short papers and research paper will be posted on the course blackboard site.

Week 1 | September 10
The World Trade Center Site and the Renewal of Lower Manhattan
Required:
1.5 James Glanz and Eric Lipton, City in the Sky: The Rise and Fall of the World Trade Center, Times Books, 2003. (Optional)
1.9 Mike O’Brien, “Meaningful adjacencies: The incredible way the names of victims are arranged at the 9/11 Memorial pools,” Mail Online, 11 September 2011, www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2035887/GROUND-ZERO
Week 2 | September 17
What Makes NY Different from Other Cities

(FIRST ASSIGNMENT DUE: In 250-300 words identify the impact of September 11, 2001 on NYC.)

Required:

2.1 NYC Department of City Planning, New York City Population Projections by Age/Sex & 
2.3 NYC Department of City Planning, 
2.4 Pete Hamill, Downtown: My Manhattan, pp1.-180
2.5 Andrew Beveridge, “Ten Years Later: Enumerating the Loss at Ground Zero,” Sept. 2011, 
www.gothamgazette.com
2.6 Philip Kasinitz et al, eds, Inheriting the City: The Children of Immigrants Come of Age, 
Harvard University Press, 2008, on Blackboard (optional)

Week 3: September 24

(SECOND ASSIGNMENT DUE: In 250-300 words, identify the key sources of the power of the mayor of New York City.)

The City Charter and Structure of Municipal Government

Required:

3.1 City of New York, City Charter, Introduction, Chapters 1: Mayor, Chapter 2: Council Online: 
http://www.nyc.gov. Also: City Organization Chart
One, Section One,” Term Limits,” pp.3-11.
3.3 Joseph P. Vitteritti, “The Tradition of Municipal Reform: Charter Reform in Historical 
Context.” in Restructuring the New York City Government: The Reemergence of Municipal 
3.4 Francis S. Barry, The Scandal of Reform, Rutgers University Press, 2009, chapters 10, 11, 
pp.142-182.
3.5 Wallace Sayre and Herbert Kaufman: “Chapter 3: Contestants for the Prizes” and “Chapter 
3.6 Sewell Chan, "Debating the Pros and Cons of Term Limits," The New York Times, Cityroom, 
October 15, 2008. (optional)
3.7 Bruce Berg, New York City Politics: Governing Gotham, 2008-chapters 7,8,9, pp. 180-280. (optional)
Week 4 | October 1

(THIRD ASSIGNMENT DUE: In 250-300 words, identify three ways in which the state government influences NYC government)

State Government and Regional Authorities

Required:


4.8 Bruce E. Berg, New York City Politics: Governing Gotham, pp 58-119 pp 545-560, pp.35-54. (optional)

Resources:
- http://www.mta.nyc.ny.us

Week 5 | October 8

Mayoral Power and Influence: LaGuardia, Wagner, Lindsay, and Beame

Required:

5.1 Thomas Kessner, “Fiorello LaGuardia and the Challenge of Democratic Planning” (pp. 315-330) in The Landscape of Modernity, New York City 1900-1940, David Ward & Olivier Zunz, eds.


5.4 Robert Caro, The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York, pp. 615-806.

Week 6 | October 22
Mayors Cope with Crises: Koch, Dinkins and Giuliani

Required:


Week 7 | October 29
How NYC Raises and Spends Public Money

(FOURTH ASSIGNMENT DUE: In 250-300 words, identify the sources of revenue that New York City depends on.)

Required:


Resources:
- New York City Council- Finance Committee: [http://www.council.nyc.ny.us-committees/](http://www.council.nyc.ny.us-committees/)
**Week 8 | November 5**  
The Politics of Public Safety

**Required:**


8.7 [www.nytimes.com/homicides](http://www.nytimes.com/homicides)

---

**Week 9 | November 12**  
Land Use Planning, Landmark Preservation, and Community Involvement

**Required:**

9.2 “Remarks of David Karnofsky, General Counsel, Department of City Planning at June 24, 2010 Meeting of NYC Charter Revision Commission on Land Use, Flushing, Queens”


9.6 New York City Department of City Planning, Zoning Handbook, 2006. Also see: “Strategic Plan” and Status of Department of City Planning Initiatives: Chronological by Borough.” [www.nyc.gov/planning](http://www.nyc.gov/planning)


Week 10 | November 19
The Politics of Large-Scale Physical Development

Required:

Week 11 | November 26
The Media and City Politics
Guest Speaker

Week 12 | December 3
The Politics of Transportation: Streets, Congestion Pricing, and Mass Transit

Required:
12.5 “Necessity or Choice? Why People Drive in Manhattan, Prepared for Transportation Alternatives,” September, 2005, Schaller Consulting. (optional)

Week 13 | December 10 and 12 (Wednesday)
The Politics of Economic Development
Readings to be assigned.