UPADM-GP 219
Racial Inequality and Public Policy in the American City
Fall 2019

Instructor Information

- Professor Jacob William Faber (jacob.faber@nyu.edu)
- Office Address: Puck Building, 295 Lafayette St., Room 3092
- Office Hours: Please click here to sign up (https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/mzetw)
- Class Dates: September 3 – December 10
- Class Day: Mondays 2:00 PM - 4:45pm
- Class Location: 7 East 12th Street, Fairchild Building, Room 125

Course Description

Students in this course will explore the spatial aspects of inequality, including racial segregation, concentrated poverty, and government structure. Course materials will investigate the consequences of these inequalities for individuals, communities, and American society as a whole, as well as how these seemingly-intractable problems were created by and continue because of public policy decisions. This course will be an interactive experience, requiring preparation before coming to class and active exchange during class.

Course and Learning Objectives

In this course, we will attempt to answer the following questions:

1. How is opportunity distributed across space? What implications does the segregation of places have for inequalities observed at the individual-level?
2. How has public policy led to spatial inequality? In what ways do contemporary policies exacerbate and/or ameliorate these inequalities?
3. After WWII, the nature and function of cities drastically changed. How did this change come about? What is the relationship between cities and suburbs? How did the suburbs come to grow? What has been the impact on the lives of residents in both areas?
4. How much gentrification is occurring today? Is it possible to address concentrated poverty without displacing the poor? How do patterns of neighborhood change fit into the longer-term evolution of cities?
5. How do we measure segregation? Are we becoming a more or less segregated society? Why do we care?
6. To what extent have the Black Lives Matter, immigrants’ rights, and other social movements increased attention on the problem of racialized concentrated poverty?

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 and click on the Reasonable Accommodations and How to Register tab or call or email CSD at (212-998-4980 or 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.

Readings

Course readings are drawn from a range of sources, including academic journals, scholarly books, news articles, and research reports from policy groups. Materials listed in the syllabus without a hyperlink will be uploaded to the NYU Classes website. Students are encouraged (and expected) to introduce material from outside the classroom – other written material (e.g., newspaper stories, readings from other courses), experiences in community-based organizations, relevant personal stories, etc. – during our classroom discussion.

There is one required book (listed on the course schedule as “NLC”): Newburger, Harriet B., Eugenie L. Birch, and Susan M. Wachter, eds. 2011. Neighborhood and life chances: How place matters in modern America. University of Pennsylvania Press. The book is available on Amazon or online here (https://muse.jhu.edu/book/2262). Other required readings (listed on the course schedule as “Required Readings”) will be posted to the NYU Classes page. The course schedule also lists recommended readings. Students are required to read at least one of these additional materials each week.

Multimedia Materials

In addition to readings, students are required to listen to or watch multimedia materials per week (listed on the course schedule as “Multimedia”). All of these materials are available for free online (many can be downloaded and listened to offline).
Course Requirements

1. Regular attendance & contributive participation in class. (15% of final grade)
   It is imperative that you come to class on time, have read the reading assignment, and are prepared to discuss concepts and questions in class. **Attendance will only be taken once: at the very beginning of every class.** If you miss class, you must notify me in advance and it is up to you to get notes and materials from another student. **Laptops and other electronics are not allowed in class.**

2. Response papers (25% of final grade)
   Each student will write two two-page response papers on a week’s materials. Papers should focus on the key issues in the readings and multimedia, make connections to earlier issues discussed in class, and raise any outstanding questions. **Response papers should be posted on NYU Classes by noon on the day prior to the class.** It is expected that on days you chose to write a response memo, you will help lead the discussion.

3. Home town vis-à-vis NYC (20% of final grade)
   Using at least three data sources, compare your hometown to New York City along lines of spatial/racial inequality. Each student will write a memo (3 pages single spaced) describing the data sources and differences in the distribution of opportunity and people by race/class between your hometown and New York City—connecting course materials to what you find. The memo must be submitted to NYU Classes by **5:00 p.m. on October 15.**

4. Group presentation (20% of final grade)
   Students will work in randomly assigned groups on a presentation on a current or recent policy debate here in New York City. **Groups are required to submit one-page proposal of their presentation topic on October 28.** Generally speaking, all group members will receive the same grade. However, if it is apparent that a given member of a group has contributed much more or much less, that student’s grade will go up or down accordingly. **Groups must submit their slides at least 12 hours prior to their presentation.**

5. Bringing space into the conversation (20% of final grade)
   Choose a news story from the past 6 months that does not mention race or segregation and make the case that the main conflict/issue does, in fact, have important connections to the topics discussed in this class. Your memo should be two-pages (single spaced) and draw on course materials discussing the causes and consequences of spatial inequality. **The memo must be submitted to NYU Classes by 5:00 p.m. on November 18.**

Extra Credit
I will post a list of opportunities for extra credit throughout the semester (e.g. by attending outside seminars) on NYU Classes. I will update the list as I learn about new events, so please check it regularly! To receive credit, email me about your attendance along with a few sentences about what you learned from the event.

Plagiarism

All students must produce original work. Outside sources are to be properly referenced and/or quoted. Lifting copy from web sites or other sources and trying to pass it off as your original words constitutes plagiarism. Such cases can lead to academic dismissal from the university. Be aware that all written work in this class will be submitted to NYU Classes, where it will be checked for plagiarism using anti-plagiarism software.

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. All Wagner students have already read and signed the Wagner 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.

NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays

NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays 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.

Course Schedule

Required Readings are bifurcated into those available in the Textbook Neighborhood and Life Chances: How Place Matters in Modern America and those available on NYU Classes or via hyperlink. All recommended readings are available on NYU Classes or via hyperlink.

I. September 9

   Topic Covered: Place shapes our social and economic lives

   Required Readings
   From the Textbook:
   • Preface—Eugenie L. Birch, Harriet B. Newburger, and Susan M. Wachter
   Available on NYU Classes:


Recommended Readings:


Multimedia Materials:

● "The Problem We All Deal With" This American Life (http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/562/the-problem-we-all-live-with)

● "#34: ‘How The $%*!& Is That Good Enough?’” Postbourgie (https://www.acast.com/postbourgie/)

● Matt Black. Photographing the geography of poverty. (https://www.instagram.com/mattblack_blackmatt/?hl=en)

II. September 16

Topic Covered: How should we be thinking about race and racism?

Required Readings

Available on NYU Classes:


Recommended Readings:


• Desmond-Harris, Jenée. 2016. “Implicit bias means we’re all probably at least a little bit racist.” Vox (https://www.vox.com/2014/12/26/7443979/racism-implicit-racial-bias)


Multimedia Materials:


• “Getting Racist Ideas Backwards” On The Media (https://www.wnycstudios.org/story/racism-enduring-misconception)
III. September 23

Topic Covered: The role of policy in creating and sustaining segregation

Required Readings

Available on NYU Classes:


Recommended Readings:


Multimedia Materials:

- "Historian Says Don't 'Sanitize' How Our Government Created Ghettos" Fresh Air (http://www.npr.org/2015/05/14/406699264/historian-says-dont-sanitize-how-our-government-created-the-ghettos)

Assignments Due:

- Deadline for signing up for Response Paper

IV. September 30

Topic Covered: How should we be thinking about (and measuring) segregation?

Required Readings

Available on NYU Classes:

• Rugh, Jacob S., and Douglas S. Massey. 2014 "Segregation in post-civil rights America." *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*

**Recommended Readings:**

• Farley, Reynolds. 2011. "The waning of American apartheid?" *Contexts*
• Krysan, Maria. 2011. "Race and residence from the telescope to the microscope." *Contexts*
• Logan, John R. 2016. As Long As There Are Neighborhoods. *City & Community*

**From the Textbook:**


**Multimedia Materials:**


**V. October 7**

**Topic Covered:** Place shapes political power and policy environment

**Available on NYU Classes:**

• Howard, Christopher. 2008. *The Welfare State Nobody Knows* – Chapters 1 and 9

**Recommended Readings:**


Multimedia Materials:

• "Understanding Congressional Gerrymandering: 'It's Moneyball Applied To Politics" Fresh Air (http://www.npr.org/2016/06/15/482150951/understanding-congressional-gerrymandering-its-moneyball-applied-to-politics)

• "Special Districts" Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3saU5racsGE)


VI. October 15

Topic Covered: Neighborhood change and gentrification

Required Readings

From the Textbook:

• Chapter 14. Are Mixed Neighborhoods Always Unstable? Two-Sided and One-Sided Tipping —David Card, Alexandre Mas, and Jesse Rothstein

Available on NYU Classes:

• Pattillo, Mary. Black on the block: The politics of race and class in the city. University of Chicago Press, 2008. – Chapter 7


Recommended Readings:

• The Stoop “The Dream Revisited: A Discussion on Neighborhood Gentrification” (http://furmancenter.org/thestoop/entry/the-dream-revisited-a-discussion-on-neighborhood-gentrification)

From the Textbook
Chapter 8. Reinventing Older Communities Through Mixed-Income Development: What Are We Learning from Chicago's Public Housing Transformation? —Mark L. Joseph

Multimedia Materials:


Assignments Due:

- Mid-semester memo due

VII. October 21

Topic Covered: Health, environmental justice, and climate change

Required Readings

From the Textbook:

- Chapter 2. The Place of Race in Health Disparities: How Family Background and Neighborhood Conditions in Childhood Impact Later-Life Health —Rucker C. Johnson

Available on NYU Classes:


Recommended Readings:


Multimedia Materials:

"America's 'Lead Wars' Go Beyond Flint, Mich.: 'It's Now Really Everywhere'" Fresh Air (http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2016/03/03/469039064/americas-lead-wars-go-beyond-flint-mich-its-now-really-everywhere)

"A Life-or-Death Crisis for Black Mothers" The Daily (https://play.radiopublic.com/the-daily-GMB3yp/ep/s1f71468732aa96452f4ebb81d95c3866d6ba2ee551)

VIII. October 28

Topic Covered: When work disappears

Required Readings

Available on NYU Classes:


Recommended Readings

Multimedia Materials

- "Who Deserves to be Poor? (Poverty Series 2)" On The Media (http://www.wnyc.org/story/who-deserves-to-be-poor)

Assignments Due:

- Presentation groups required to submit one-page proposal of topic

IX. November 4

Topic Covered: The “Ghetto Tax” and why the poor pay more

Required Readings

Available on NYU Classes:

- Hyman, Louis. "Why the CVS Burned." Slate. May 1, 2015. (http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/crime/2015/05/baltimore_riots_it wasn_t_thugs_looting_for_profit_it_was_a_protest_against.html)

Recommended Readings

- Holland, Megan M. and Stefanie DeLuca. 2016. ““Why Wait Years to Become Something?” Low-income African American Youth and the Costly Career Search in For-profit Trade Schools.” Sociology of Education.
Multimedia Materials:

- “"How the Other Half Banks": Author Says America's Two-Tiered Banking System is a Threat to Democracy" Democracy Now (http://www.democracynow.org/2015/10/30/how_the_other_half_banks_how)
- "What Is Driving The 'Unbanking Of America'?” Fresh Air (http://www.npr.org/2017/01/10/509126878/what-is-driving-the-unbanking-of-america)

X. November 11

Topic Covered: Education: Increasingly separate and increasingly unequal

Required Readings

From the Textbook:

Available on NYU Classes:


Recommended Readings:

Multimedia Materials:

- "The Myth That Busing Failed" The Daily
- "School Segregation" Last Week Tonight with John Oliver
  (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8yiYCHMAIM)

XI. November 18

Topic Covered: Black Lives (and Places) Matter

Required Readings

Available on NYU Classes:


Recommended Readings:


From the Textbook
• Chapter 6. Daily Activities and Violence in Community Landscapes —Douglas J. Wiebe and Charles C. Branas

Multimedia Materials:
• "I Can't Breathe" On The Media (https://www.wnycstudios.org/story/i-cant-breathe-anniversary)

Assignments Due:
• Final memo due

XII. November 25

Topic Covered: Conclusions

Required Readings
From the Textbook:
• Chapter 13. Changing the Geography of Opportunity by Helping Poor Households Move Out of Concentrated Poverty: Neighborhood Effects and Policy Design —George Galster

Available on NYU Classes:

Recommended Readings:

Multimedia Materials:
- “Discussion of Chetty findings” The Daily ([https://play.radiopublic.com/the-daily-GMB3yp/ep/s1l9806d8fa20f6ba46233a3c942944a941ef1d1d639](https://play.radiopublic.com/the-daily-GMB3yp/ep/s1l9806d8fa20f6ba46233a3c942944a941ef1d1d639))

XIII. December 2
Student Presentations

XIV. December 9
Student Presentations