#### **NYU Wagner logo**

**URPL – GP 4666**

**Topics in Urban Studies 2024**

## Instructor Information

* Grace Meng, Representative for New York’s 6th Congressional District
* Email: gm3408@nyu.edu
* Office Address: Puck Building, 3037
* Office Hours: By appointment: virtual or in-person

## Course Information

* Class Meeting Times: Mondays from 10:00-11:40am
  + \*Week of October 10th – Class meets on a Tuesday
* Class Location: Bobst LL1.45

## Course Description

## In an increasingly diverse city and country, the responsibility of public servants stretches far beyond writing and passing legislation. True representation requires consistent and meaningful engagement with historically underrepresented communities. In this course, students will discuss how lawmakers and those in public service can ensure that all stakeholders are heard in the decision-making process, and determine best practices for reaching communities who have historically been left behind by government.

**Overview of the Semester**

* Week 1
  + Date: September 11th
  + Topic: Overview of Governmental Roles, Demographics, and Representation
* Week 2
  + Date: September 18th
  + Topic: Role of Language Access and Media in Voting and Politics
  + Deliverable: Assignment 1 Short Answer Due 09/22
* Week 3
  + Date: September 25th
  + Topic: Immigration and American History
  + Deliverable: Assignment 2 Short Answer Due 09/29
* Week 4
  + Date: October 2nd
  + Topic: Case Study 1 – Healthcare Access During the COVID-19 Pandemic
* Week 5
  + Date: October 10th
  + Topic: Case Study 2 – Infrastructure Lessons from Natural Disasters in New York City
* Week 6
  + Date: October 16th
  + Topic: Case Study 3 – Broadband Access
* Week 7
  + Date: October 23rd
  + Topic: Final Reflections
  + Final Paper Due 10/20

**Assignments and Evaluation**

* Assignments – 2 at 20% each, 40% of total grade
* Final paper – 35% of total grade
* Class participation - 25% of total grade

September 22nd – Assignment 1 Due.

September 29th – Assignment 2 Due.

October 20th – Final Paper Due.

**Late Submission Policy for Assignments**

Assignments are due by 8:00pm on their due date in Brightspace. Extensions can be granted on a case-by-case basis, and certainly in case of emergency. Please reach out to me before the deadline in the case that you need an extension on an assignment. Late submissions without approved extensions will be penalized 20% per 24-hour period.

## Overview of the Semester

## Letter Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

| **Letter Grade** | **Points** |
| --- | --- |
| **A** | 4.0 points |
| **A-** | 3.7 points |
| **B+** | 3.3 points |
| **B** | 3.0 points |
| **B-** | 2.7 points |
| **C+** | 2.3 points |
| **C** | 2.0 points |
| **C-** | 1.7 points |
| **F** | 0.0 points |

### Student grades will be assigned according to the following criteria:

* (A) Excellent: Exceptional work for a graduate student. Work at this level is unusually thorough, well-reasoned, creative, methodologically sophisticated, and well written. Work is of exceptional, professional quality.
* (A-) Very good: Very strong work for a graduate student. Work at this level shows signs of creativity, is thorough and well-reasoned, indicates strong understanding of appropriate methodological or analytical approaches, and meets professional standards.
* (B+) Good: Sound work for a graduate student; well-reasoned and thorough, methodologically sound. This is the graduate student grade that indicates the student has fully accomplished the basic objectives of the course.
* (B) Adequate: Competent work for a graduate student even though some weaknesses are evident. Demonstrates competency in the key course objectivesbut shows some indication that understanding of some important issues is less than complete. Methodological or analytical approaches used are adequate but student has not been thorough or has shown other weaknesses or limitations.
* (B-) Borderline: Weak work for a graduate student; meets the minimal expectations for a graduate student in the course. Understanding of salient issues is somewhat incomplete. Methodological or analytical work performed in the course is minimally adequate. Overall performance, if consistent in graduate courses, would not suffice to sustain graduate status in “good standing.”
* (C/-/+) Deficient: Inadequate work for a graduate student; does not meet the minimal expectations for a graduate student in the course. Work is inadequately developed or flawed by numerous errors and misunderstanding of important issues. Methodological or analytical work performed is weak and fails to demonstrate knowledge or technical competence expected of graduate students.
* (F) Fail: Work fails to meet even minimal expectations for course credit for a graduate student. Performance has been consistently weak in methodology and understanding, with serious limits in many areas. Weaknesses or limits are pervasive.

## Detailed Course Overview

### WEEK 1: Introduction to Course and Overview of Governmental Roles and Demographics

#### **Readings Due (found on Brightspace)**

1. Julien Talpin, “Representation as Performance” (Brightspace)
2. BBC, Jackson Heights: The neighborhood that epitomises New York
3. Untapped Cities, [20 Ethnic Micro-Neighborhoods in NYC](https://untappedcities.com/2023/02/03/ethnic-micro-neighborhoods-nyc/?displayall=true)
4. The City, [Do You Know Who to “Yell” at in New York City Government?](https://www.thecity.nyc/civic-newsroom/2021/4/20/22394628/what-elected-officials-do-new-york-city-government)
5. Matthew A. Cahn, “Institutional and Noninstitutional Actors **[Brightspace]**
6. Asian American Federation Report: Connecting to Power: The Growing Impact of New York City’s Asian Voters (2022). <https://www.aafederation.org/connectingto-power-the-growing-impact-of-new-york-citys-asianvoters/>
7. Hispanic Federation Report: *Nueva York and Beyond: The Latino Communities of the Tri-State Area.* <https://www.hispanicfederation.org/advocacy/reports/nueva_york_and_beyond_the_latino_communities_of_the_tri-state_area/>

### WEEK 2: Role of Language Access and Media in Voting and Politics

#### **Readings Due (found on Brightspace)**

1. APIA Vote: Politics, Social Media, & Peer Outreach: Mobilizing the Asian American Youth Electorate in the South (2022). <https://apiavote.org/wp-content/uploads/Politics-Social-Media-Peer-Outreach-2022-report.pdf>
2. Center for American Progress: Language Diversity and English Proficiency. (2014). <https://americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2014/07/AAPI-LanguageAccess.pdf?_ga=2.104876801.300096429.1692038694-946840044.1692038694>
3. Bloomberg, “How to Reach New Asian American Voters? Local Groups and Languages.” <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2022-11-15/grassroots-groups-key-to-asian-american-turnout-in-midterm-elections>
4. Harvard, “Designing misinformation interventions for all: Perspectives from AAPI, Black, Latino, and Native American community leaders on misinformation educational efforts,” <https://misinforeview.hks.harvard.edu/article/designing-misinformation-interventions-for-all-perspectives-from-aapi-black-latino-and-native-american-community-leaders-on-misinformation-educational-efforts/>

**Assignment 1 Due:**

In this assignment, you will consider the impact of misinformation, language access, and ethnic media outlets on how communities of color, particularly immigrants, engage with the government and US politics (3-5 sentences per question).

1. Compare mainstream U.S. news media websites to ethnic media outlets (Black Enterprise and The Philadelphia Tribune), AAPI (NextShark), Native American (Indian Country Today), and Latino (Telemundo). What do you notice about the types of stories they cover, and how the websites are organized? Can you find similar news stories that are discussed with different perspectives?
2. Consider the communities who consume news in a language other than English. How do traditional US media outlets (CNN, MSNBC, FOX) engage with multilingual or non-English speaking households?
3. What should the role of public officials be in utilizing ethnic media and combatting misinformation, or gaps in publicly accessible information?

### WEEK 3: Immigration and American History

#### **Readings Due (found on Brightspace)**

1. Antisemitism in American History (Brightspace)
2. The Atlantic: Racism Has Always Been Part of the Asian American Experience (Brightspace)
3. Systemic Inequality and American Democracy (Brightspace)
4. Systemic Inequality: Displacement, Exclusion, and Segregation (Brightspace)

**Assignment 2 Due:**

In this assignment, you will explore the stories of immigrants to the US. Choose two refugee or migrant populations in the US. In a 3-5 page paper, compare the nuances in immigrant experience through the differences in similarities of experiences faced by the two groups. Consider the following in your paper:

* The context surrounding migrant or refugee movement – geopolitical factors, military conflict, persecution, and economic factors
* Public sentiment and national discourse over time
* Government reform and policies affecting or targeting each immigrant group
* Differences in adaptation, generational problems, socio-economic mobility
* Demonstrated needs from and inequality within federal, state and local government
* Community organizations and political coalitions advocating on behalf of migrant group in NYC and nationally

### WEEK 4: Case Study 1 – Healthcare Access During the COVID-19 Pandemic

#### **Readings Due (found on Brightspace)**

1. Trusted messengers and trusted messages: The role for community based organizations in promoting COVID-19 and routine immunizations. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9932688/pdf/main.pdf>
2. Social Media Use and Misinformation Among Asian Americans During COVID-19, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8795661/pdf/fpubh-09-764681.pdf>
3. Youtube, Hispanic Federation, “Discussion: Role of Latino Community-Based Organizations in COVID-19 Recovery,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sH7pS_poQtE>
4. National Governors Association, “Reducing the Disproportionate Impact of COVID-19 Among Communities of Color,” <https://www.nga.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/COVID-19-Health-Equity-Memo.pdf>

Questions for Discussion:

* How, if at all, do you think government failed marginalized groups during the COVID-19 pandemic?
* At the local level, how could partnerships between public agencies and community based organizations improve health outcomes?
* How can public/private partnerships be scaled up to meet the needs of underreached communities?

WEEK 5: Case Study 2 - Infrastructure Lessons from Natural Disasters in New York City

#### **Readings Due (found on Brightspace)**

1. J. Faber. Superstorm Sandy and the Demographics of Flood Risk in New York City. [Brightspace]
2. New Labor Forum. The Disaster inside the Disaster: Hurricane Sandy and Post-crisis Redevelopment. [Brightspace]
3. Gothamist: Still rebuilding from Ida, some NYC residents in flood-prone areas get hit again. <https://gothamist.com/news/still-rebuilding-from-ida-some-nyc-residents-in-flood-prone-areas-get-hit-again>
4. Gothamist: Struggling Ida victimes were entitled to 18 months of rental aid. Fewer than 300 in NY and NJ got it. <https://gothamist.com/news/struggling-ida-victims-were-entitled-to-18-months-of-rental-aid-fewer-than-300-in-ny-and-nj-got-it>
5. Smarter New York City, Chapter: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN: Opportunities for Innovation in Climate-Change Resilience. [Brightspace]
6. Urban Ecosystem Services for Resilience Planning and Management in New York City. [Brightspace]
7. The City: What’s on Eric Adams’ Infrastructure Wishlist to the Feds. <https://www.thecity.nyc/transportation/2023/8/17/23835261/eric-adams-infrastructure-bqe-electric-vehicles>
8. We Build Value (Digital Magazine). The Infastructure Projects Most Critical for New York City. <https://www.webuildvalue.com/en/infrastructure/sustainable-infrastructure-new-york-city.html\>

WEEK 6: Case Study 3 – Broadband Access

#### **Readings Due (found on Brightspace)**

1. Flamm, K. Beyond Broadband Access. Chapter: The Determinants of Disconnectedness. [Brightspace]
2. CRS. The FCC’s Broadband Map. [Brightspace]
3. The Basic Economics of Internet Infrastructure. [Brightspace]
4. German Marshall Fund. Broadband as Civic Infrastructure: Community Empowerment, Equity, and a Digital New Deal. [Brightspace]
5. Atlantic Council. The Data Divide, How Emerging Technology and its Stakeholders can Influence the Fourth Industrial Revolution. THE DIGITAL DIVIDE. [Brightspace]

WEEK 7: Final Reflections

**No Readings Due**

**Final Paper Due:**

Prompt: You are a Member of Congress representing a fictional district in New York. Describe your made-up district (demographics, languages spoken, notable history, and political makeup - *toss-up, lean D, lean R, safe D, or safe R*.)

Pick one case study topic covered in class. Outline a program detailing how you, as an elected official, would address the problem for your constituents with a policy solution. Describe the impact of the problem on your constituents. How would you work with city and local government? How would you ensure community buy-in and feedback? What is your media and outreach strategy? Why is your policy solution the best option?

Your paper should be 8-10 pages, double spaced using MLA citation format.

## Brightspace

All announcements, resources, and assignments will be delivered through the Brightspace site. I may modify assignments, due dates, and other aspects of the course as we go through the term with advance notice provided as soon as possible through the course website.

## 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 Student Accessibility

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 the “Get Started” button. You can also call or email CSD(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. You must notify me in advance of religious holidays or observances that might coincide with exams, assignments, or class times to schedule mutually acceptable alternatives. Students may also contact [religiousaccommodations@nyu.edu](mailto:religiousaccommodations@nyu.edu) for assistance.

## NYU’s Wellness Exchange

[NYU’s Wellness Exchange](http://www.nyu.edu/life/safety-health-wellness/wellness-exchange.html) has extensive student health and mental health resources. A private hotline (212-443-9999) is available 24/7 that connects students with a professional who can help them address day-to-day challenges as well as other health-related concerns.

## Class Policies

Due to the condensed nature of this course, students are expected to attend every class. Absences will be excused on a case-by-case basis, via email, in emergency cases only.