

PSC 241/241W, AAS 242/242W, EHUM 241/241W, HIS 378/378W, and PSC 530

Fall 2021

Tuesday afternoons, 12:30-3:15

Urban Change and City Politics

Professor Gerald Gamm

Harkness Hall 319

Email: gerald.gamm@rochester.edu

[Zoom](#) office hours: Monday afternoons, 2:00–3:00

In-person office hours: Thursday mornings, 10:00–11:00

All books are available for purchase in the campus bookstore. [Rush Rhees Library has purchased electronic copies of each book](#), where possible, but some are not available for electronic purchase. (You might also consider online sources, including abebooks.com and amazon.com, for book purchases.) The required books are these—

William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: Norton, 1991).

Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996). Any edition is fine.

Gerald Gamm, *Urban Exodus: Why the Jews Left Boston and the Catholics Stayed* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (New York: Liveright, 2017).

Laura Warren Hill, *Strike the Hammer: The Black Freedom Struggle in Rochester, New York, 1940–1970* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2021).

Alejandro Portes and Alex Stepick, *City on the Edge: The Transformation of Miami* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

William L. Riordon, *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall: A Series of Very Plain Talks on Very Practical Politics*, edited with an introduction by Terrence J. McDonald (Boston: Bedford Books, 1994). **Be sure to get this exact edition. It is available used at abebooks.com.**

Robert A. Dahl, *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961). Any edition is fine.

Brian F. Schaffner, Jesse H. Rhodes, and Raymond J. La Raja, *Hometown Inequality: Race, Class, and Representation in American Local Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

James Forman, Jr., *Locking up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017).

All other readings are available at the course website on Blackboard. To access the Blackboard readings off-campus, you will first need to download and run VPN, so that your computer can be viewed as part of the University's network. You can find VPN at <http://rochester.edu/it/vpn/>.

Note on participation. This class is a seminar, which works only if every student participates actively in the weekly discussions. If you have a good reason for an excused absence, please speak up beforehand, unless, of course, it's a sudden emergency. Being ill is always a good reason for an excused absence. *These days more than ever, do not attend class if you feel at all sick.*

Credit hours. This course follows the College credit hour policy for four-credit courses. This course meets once weekly for three hours. For the fourth credit hour, students will write papers on a regular basis through the semester. This course also includes substantial reading assignments and expectations for class participation.

Academic honesty. Students must conduct themselves in accordance with the University's Academic Honesty Policy. In this class, students may discuss readings and course material with anyone they choose—including the professor and other students. But, unless all assignments have been submitted, they may not share, receive, read, or discuss written work for this class, including outlines, plans, and notes for papers, except as specified in the next sentence. They may receive basic help with spelling and grammar from others, including from Writing Fellows, but never substantive help with their written arguments nor help of any sort with their papers from current or former students in this class.

TRACK ONE: UPPER-LEVEL WRITING REQUIREMENTS

These requirements also apply to graduate students taking the course for credit.

Informed participation in weekly discussions (35%). Students are required to attend all scheduled class meetings (unless it is an excused absence), having read all assigned material; students who do not attend regularly will not receive credit for the course.

Four short papers (30% total). In 2–3 pages, students should critically evaluate the readings, identifying and analyzing a central question. These papers should scrutinize the logic and evidence marshaled on behalf of an argument and, where appropriate, analyze the relationship between various arguments. These papers must be short—no paper longer than 1,000 words will be accepted—so get to the main point fast. Papers are due in that week's Blackboard assignment folder by Tuesday morning at 10:00. Students may write as many as six papers; in calculating the course grade, only the four highest paper grades will be included. *By September 10, students pursuing Track One must submit to Professor Gamm a list of the 4 dates on which they plan to submit their short papers; any date on the initial list may be changed with prior notice.* Track One students must submit four papers to receive credit for the course.

Research paper (35%). The research paper must draw on a substantial body of outside reading and, in most cases, on primary sources as well. The paper should be 10–15 pages in length. A draft of the paper is due by November 8, and the final paper is due December 3. *By September 24, Track One students must meet with Professor Gamm and receive approval on their topic and approach. By November 11, students must have set up a half-hour meeting with Professor Gamm to review and discuss the draft.* Track One students must submit a research paper, including an early draft, to receive credit for the course.

TRACK TWO: NON-UPPER-LEVEL WRITING REQUIREMENTS

Informed participation in weekly discussions (35%). Students are required to attend all scheduled class meetings (unless it is an excused absence), having read all assigned material; students who do not attend regularly will not receive credit for the course.

Seven short papers (65% total). In 2–3 pages, students should critically evaluate the readings, identifying and analyzing a central question. These papers should scrutinize the logic and evidence marshaled on behalf of an argument and, where appropriate, analyze the relationship between various arguments. These papers must be short—no paper longer than 1,000 words will be accepted—so get to the main point fast. Papers are due in that week's Blackboard assignment folder by Tuesday morning at 10:00. Students may write papers for any seven of the twelve weeks, *though students must submit papers in at least two of the first four weeks.* Students may write as many as nine papers; in calculating the course grade, only the seven highest paper grades will be included. (This policy does not include students who fail to submit papers in at least two of the first four weeks: in this case, students will receive a "0" for each missing paper, and that paper grade will be included in calculating the course grade.) Track Two students must submit at least seven papers to receive credit for the course.

Aug. 31 Introduction: Race and the American City

Walt Whitman, "[Mannahatta](#)."

Ta-Nehisi Coates, "[The Case for Reparations](#)," *The Atlantic*, June 2014, 54-71.

Sept. 7 No class—Rosh Hashanah

Sept. 14 Cities in the Wilderness

Henry Adams, *History of the United States of America during the First Administration of Thomas Jefferson, 1801-1805* (1889), vol. 1, chap. 1.

William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: Norton, 1991), 1-147.

Sept. 21 Industry and the Rural Hinterland

William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, 207-309.

Andrew Needham and Allen Dieterich-Ward, "[Beyond the Metropolis: Metropolitan Growth and Regional Transformation in Postwar America](#)," *Journal of Urban History* 35 (2009), 943-69.

Dan Egan, "[A Battle Between a Great City and a Great Lake](#)," *New York Times*, 7 July 2021. [Text version](#)

Sept. 28 Suburbs

Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 1-189, 231-282.

Editorial Board, "[How Lower-Income Americans Get Cheated on Property Taxes](#)," *New York Times*, 3 Apr. 2021. [Text version](#)

Oct. 5 Housing

Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 190-230.

Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 1-88, 181-88, 209-58.

Erin Einhorn and Olivia Lewis, "[Built To Keep Black from White](#)," *NBC News*, 19 July 2021.

Ryan D. Enos, "[What the Demolition of Public Housing Teaches Us about the Impact of Racial Threat on Political Behavior](#)," *American Journal of Political Science* 60 (2016), 123-42.

Oct. 12 No class—Fall Break

Oct. 19 Neighborhoods

Gerald Gamm, *Urban Exodus: Why the Jews Left Boston and the Catholics Stayed* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

Tim Logan, "[BC To Purchase 24-Acre Synagogue Site in Newton](#)," *Boston Globe*, 4 August 2015.

[Letter from Paul Gershkowitz](#), president, to the membership of Congregation Mishkan Tefila, 4 August 2015.

"[Newton's Mishkan Tefila To Join Brookline's Kehillath Israel](#)," *Patriot Ledger*, 13 Apr. 2016.

Jamie Ducharme, "[These Maps Show How Drastically COVID-19 Risk Varies by Neighborhood](#)," *Time*, 22 July 2020.

Oct. 26 Segregation

Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (New York: Liveright, 2017).

Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, "[How Real Estate Segregated America](#)," *Dissent* 65:4 (Fall 2018), 23-32.

Jacquelynn Kerubo, "[What Gentrification Means for Black Homeowners](#)," *New York Times*, 17 Aug. 2021. [Text version](#)

Nov. 2 Jobs

Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*, 91-152.

Laura Warren Hill, *Strike the Hammer: The Black Freedom Struggle in Rochester, New York, 1940-1970* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2021).

Nov. 9 Immigrants

Alejandro Portes and Alex Stepick, *City on the Edge: The Transformation of Miami* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

Nov. 16 Politics

William L. Riordon, *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall: A Series of Very Plain Talks on Very Practical Politics*, edited with an introduction by Terrence J. McDonald (Boston: Bedford Books, 1994), vii-ix, 1-134.

Jessica Trounstein, "[Dominant Regimes and the Demise of Urban Democracy](#)," *Journal of Politics* 68 (2006), 879-93.

Gerald Gamm and Thad Kousser, "[No Strength in Numbers: The Failure of Big-City Bills in American State Legislatures, 1880-2000](#)," *American Political Science Review* 107 (2013), 663-78.

J. Eric Oliver, with Shang E. Ha and Zachary Callen, “Size, Scope, and Bias: What Differentiates Local Electoral Politics?” chap. 1 in [*Local Elections and the Politics of Small-Scale Democracy*](#) (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

Nov. 23 Power

Robert A. Dahl, *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), 1-165, 223-28, 305-325.

Nov. 30 Class

Brian F. Schaffner, Jesse H. Rhodes, and Raymond J. La Raja, *Hometown Inequality: Race, Class, and Representation in American Local Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

Jesse Yoder, “[Does Property Ownership Lead to Participation in Local Politics? Evidence from Property Records and Meeting Minutes](#),” *American Political Science Review* 114 (2020), 1213-29.

Dec. 7 Incarceration

James Forman, Jr., *Locking up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017).