



**NYU**

**ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE  
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

**URPL-GP 2415**

# **Public Policy and Planning in New York City**

**Fall 2022**

## **Instructor Information**

- Sarah Ludwig, Adjunct Professor of Urban Planning
- Email: [sil2005@nyu.edu](mailto:sil2005@nyu.edu)
- Office hours: Wednesdays, 1–3 p.m., and by appointment

## **Course Information**

- Class Meeting Time: Wednesdays, 4:55 – 6:35 p.m.
- Class Location: GCASL, Room 261 Loc: Washington Square

## **Course Description**

This course explores the structure of New York City government and public institutions, and roles that public officials, civic organizations, and advocates play in the governance of New York City. We will examine the role of the public sector in the city's physical and economic development and provision of municipal services, and forces that shape community development, land use, housing, education, mass transit, policing, and parks and open space.

The course will also explore ways in which state and federal governments influence the city, and how demographic and ethnic change are shaping political participation in local elections. The course will integrate current events into readings and class discussions. We will hear from guest speakers throughout the semester.

Through lectures, readings, class discussions, and guest presentations, students will gain understanding of how New York City works and how the city has changed over time, with emphasis on economic and racial inequality, and demographic change. The course will provide an excellent foundation for professional engagement in the field of urban public policy and planning, in New York City and beyond.

## Course Requirements

- Students are required to check Brightspace for the course on a frequent basis.
- Over the semester, students are expected to submit at least four (4) written responses to reading response questions posted on Brightspace with most weekly lessons.
- Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss all required readings and reading response questions, even if they are not submitting written responses for that week.
- Students are required to submit a very short essay before class in Week 2, and take a midterm and final exam (see also final paper option below).
- Students are expected to complete all writing assignments in a professional and timely manner.
- Students are expected to demonstrate respect for their classmates and professor by limiting their use of computers and other electronic devices during class to note-taking and other activities directly related to class discussion.

## Required Readings

Students will be expected to have read the required readings assigned for a given week prior to lecture. Immediately below each week's required reading list is a set of suggested readings. All required and suggested readings will be accessible online via Brightspace, or through hyperlinks provided in the detailed course overview below.

As you will see, lots of items on the reading list are short articles, as well as videos and podcasts. Many required readings are excerpted from books on New York City history, public policy, and planning. Students are encouraged to read the following books in their entirety:

- Caro, R. (1974). *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York*. Vintage.
- Freeman, J. (2000). *Working-Class New York: Life and Labor Since World War II*. The New Press.
- Holtzman, B. (2021). *The Long Crisis: New York City and the Path to Neoliberalism*. Oxford University Press.
- Phillips-Fein, K. (2017). *Fear City: New York's Fiscal Crisis and the Rise of Austerity Politics*. Metropolitan Books.

You will find weekly reading assignments in the Lessons tab on Brightspace for that corresponding week.

## Web Resources

Please check out the list of online news publications, magazines, journals, blogs, and other content focused on New York City and/or New York State politics, policy, and planning. Please feel free to share additional resources you find relevant and helpful with the entire class.

## 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.

Students will use Brightspace in this course to:

- View the most updated version of the course syllabus.
- Read course announcements.
- Retrieve assigned and suggested readings.
- Retrieve reading response questions (for most weeks).
- Submit assignments.

## Assignments and Grading

Assignments must be submitted as a Word Document to Brightspace by the due date and time stated 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. Detailed instructions regarding each written assignment you will be posted on Brightspace throughout the semester. Your final grade for this course will be calculated as follows:

### Short Essay (5%)

You will have a very short essay (200-400 words max.) due before our week 2 lecture on Wednesday, September 14 at 4:55 p.m. See Brightspace for a topic and instructions.

### Written Responses to Discussion Questions (20%)

Over the semester, students must submit at least four (4) written responses to discussion questions posted with the weekly lessons on Brightspace. You can choose which weeks you want to cover, but it's advisable not to wait until the final four weeks of the semester to get started! Your written responses should be short and to the point (300-500 words, max.), and show you grasp the significance of the readings in question.

Written reading responses are due before the corresponding class; students will not receive credit for late submissions. Students who choose to submit more than four responses over the course of the semester will receive extra credit.

## **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 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.

## **Final Exam / Paper Option (45%)**

The final exam will be held in person (barring changed circumstances). The final exam will provide you with an opportunity to pull together themes and learning from the course. For the exam, you will be asked to write a policy memo that responds to various prompts, and will be given a choice of specific topics on which to focus.

Students eager to write a paper in lieu of taking the final exam should submit a proposal for their paper topic – including a brief outline of the paper and a few sentences explaining how your topic ties in to the course -- by November 16, 2022, for approval. If your proposal is approved, your final paper will be due on December 21, 2022. Details on the final paper option will be posted on Brightspace and shared in class.

## **Late Policy**

Assignment deadline extensions will be granted in cases of emergency or special circumstances. Assignments submitted late without extensions will be penalized.

## **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.

## **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](#) 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.

## Overview of the Semester

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Lecture Topic and Deliverables</u>
1	09/07/2022	<b>Course Intro &amp; Overview</b>
2	09/14/2022	<b>Demographics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit very short essay to Brightspace by 4:55 p.m.</li> </ul>
3	09/21/2022	<b>Power and Politics in New York City: The Mayor, The Charter, City &amp; State</b>
4	09/28/2022	<b>Power and Politics in New York City: The Council, Agencies &amp; The Budget</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take-home midterm exam posted to Brightspace</li> </ul>
5	10/05/2022	<b>Social Democratic Polity to Neoliberal City</b>
6	10/12/2022	<b>Land Use, Zoning and Development</b>
7	10/19/2022	<b>Housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit midterm exam to Brightspace by 4:55 p.m.</li> </ul>
8	10/26/2022	<b>Schools</b>
9	11/02/2022	<b>Transit</b>
10	11/09/2022	<b>Climate &amp; Environmental Justice</b>
11	11/16/2022	<b>Policing &amp; Public Safety</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final paper option: proposal due</li> </ul>
12	11/30/2022	<b>Parks &amp; Open Space</b>
13	12/07/2022	<b>Community Organizing &amp; Activism</b>
14	12/14/2022	<b>Course Wrap-up</b>

—	12/21/2022	• In-person final exam / final paper due
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## Detailed Course Overview

See Weekly Lessons tab in Brightspace for a detailed course overview.

## 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.

## NYU's Wellness Exchange

[NYU's Wellness Exchange](#) 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.