

Spring 2024

HSS 404-H10: The Brick City: How Newark became Newark

Miriam Ascarelli

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HSS 404-H10 The Brick City: How Newark became Newark

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Office Hours: 10:00-11:15 a.m. on Wednesday, and by appointment

Course description:

This course is a journey into Newark's rich and complicated history with the aim of gaining a better understanding of how the past is informing the present. With this goal in mind, students will engage in a semester-long research project in which they will trace the history of a site of their choosing over time using historical maps and other primary and secondary sources. There will also be walking tours of Newark (all within a short distance of campus), and I will arrange for us to engage in conversations with local experts.

In terms of course readings, we will begin with the year 1666 when Puritans from Connecticut purchased the land that is now Newark from a group of Lenape Indians for a price that included four barrels of beer, 10 pairs of breeches, two ankers of liquor, 10 kettles, 20 axes, 20 coats, 50 double hands of powder, 100 bars of lead, 20 pistols, 10 swords, 40 blankets, 50 knives, 20 hoes, 850 fathoms of wampum, and three troopers' coats. Thus was Newark founded.

From there, we will move forward in time. We will pay particular attention to the important (but often unrecognized) role people of African descent have played in Newark since colonial times; the rapid transformation of the city from sleepy farm village to industrial powerhouse in the 19th century; and how the legacy of de-industrialization and racial inequality that roiled the city in the 20th century continues to echo in the discourse of the city today.

NOTE: The name of our course was inspired by Brad Tuttle's *How Newark Became Newark: The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of an American City*. Notice that the book is on our reading list!

Course Goals

- Study primary and secondary sources to learn about Newark's rich and complex history.
- Gain an understanding of how Newark's past is impacting the present by engaging in dialogue with today's Newarkers.
- Hone research, writing, and critical thinking skills by evaluating evidence, formulating research questions, synthesizing primary and secondary sources, and generating arguments.
- Reflect on how local history is a window into the history of the United States as a whole.

Texts

- Tuttle, Brad. *How Newark Became Newark: The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of an American City*. Rivergate Books, New Brunswick, NJ, 2009. ISBN 978-0-8135-4490-8. *This book will be available on the reserve shelf in the Van Houten Library, but I strongly recommend you purchase your own copy.*
- Safian, Gail. *Slavery in New Jersey: a Troubled History*. This short, and easy-to-read booklet was prepared for a 2019 exhibition by the same name at the Durrand-Hedden House and Garden Association in Maplewood. Free PDF can be downloaded [here](#); a hard-copy version can be purchased for \$4 [here](#).
- Videos tours of Newark by the late Rutgers historian Clement Price: [Once and Future Newark \(chapters 1-13\)](#)
- Selected readings from: Cummings Charles. [Knowing Newark: The Star-Ledger columns](#). The Newark Public Library, 2016. (Online & free)
- Other readings will be posted on Canvas.

Assignments and grading:

- Participation and attendance: 15 percent
- Weekly journal entries: 20 percent -- your journal is a vehicle to respond to class readings and discussion and to reflect on how they apply to your semester-long research project. Entries should be a minimum of 250 words and will be due every Friday at 11:59 p.m
- Research project*:
 - Paper #1 (2 pages); due Feb. 6 – “Site selection” essay & presentation: 15 percent
 - Paper #2 (5 pages); due Feb. 27 – “Your site over time” essay & presentation: 30 percent
 - Paper #3 (5 pages); due April 30 – “Traces, artifacts and reflections” essay & presentation: 30 percent

There is no final exam in this course!

**The research project for this course was adapted from the work of Anne Whiston Spirn. The Once and Future City. Spring 2015. Massachusetts Institute of Technology: MIT OpenCourseWare, <https://ocw.mit.edu/>. License: Creative Commons BY-NC-SA.*

Final grades will be calculated according to the university’s grading scale.

A = 100-90	B+ = 89-87	B = 86-80	C+ = 79-77	C = 76-70	D = 69-60	F = 59-0
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Attendance

You may miss *two classes* without penalty. Every subsequent unexcused absence will result in a reduction of half of a letter grade on your final course grade. If you are absent for legitimate reasons (family emergency, illness) you must submit official and verifiable documentation to the Dean of Students related to the absence within two weeks. More than six unexcused absences (three weeks of the course) will result in the automatic failure of the course. (Please note: excessive absences, even for legitimate reasons, can still result in failing the class.)

You are also expected to come to class on time. Chronic tardiness is disrespectful both to me and your fellow students, and it will hurt your grade. (Two lates = one absence).

Per university policy, students who expect to miss class for religious observances must submit to me a written list of dates that will be missed by the end of the second week of classes.

Late work

Late work will automatically be downgraded by five points for each day past the due date. Assignments that are more than a week late will not be accepted.

Incomplete grades

In accordance with the provost's directives, an incomplete will only be issued only in **rare instances** where a student, and for **documented (by the Dean of Students) reasons**, could not complete parts of the work of the course.

Tying up loose ends at the end of the semester

All required work must be submitted prior to the date established for the uploading of final grades. In other words, when the course is over, the course is over. You cannot turn in outstanding work after the semester has ended for a post-semester grade adjustment.

How to reach me

Email is my preferred method of communication. I will respond to your emails within 24-48 hours. Please remember to maintain an appropriate tone in all school-related correspondence and to include a SUBJECT line and your NAME in all emails.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found at: <http://www5.njit.edu/policies/sites/policies/files/academic-integrity-code.pdf>.

Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. **Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university.** If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at dos@njit.edu

All assignments submitted shall be considered "graded work" and all aspects of your coursework are covered by the Code on Academic Integrity. All projects and homework assignments are to be completed individually unless otherwise specified.

ChatGPT:

Unless under direct instruction by me to use an AI tool, the use of any artificial intelligence program (such as ChatGPT, or any related application) to write all, or some, of an assigned piece of writing constitutes an act of plagiarism (turning in work that is not the product of your own thinking, drafting, and revising). When detected, any papers that contain passages imported from an A.I. program will be subject to a failing grade and will be reported to the Dean of Students as an act of academic misconduct.

If you have any questions about AI use, please talk to me.

Special Needs

Every attempt will be made to accommodate qualified students with disabilities. If you are a student with a documented disability, please see me as early in the semester as possible to discuss the necessary accommodations, and/or contact Student Disability Services at 973-596-3420.

Resources and local events worth checking out:

- [TapintoNewark.com](https://www.tapintonewark.com) is a hyperlocal news site dedicated to Newark. It's a good window into what's happening in town, and, because it generally only publishes one story a day, it's not overwhelming. Subscriptions are free.
- Newark History Society (<https://www.newarkhistorysociety.org>); The Newark History Society has an annual lectures series and the presentations can be found on the History Society's YouTube channel. The lectures cover all kinds of Newark topics, from the history of the Morris Canal to a look at the Ironbound Community Corporation, an inspiring non-profit organization that serves the Ironbound section of Newark in a multitude of ways and has lead the way on environmental justice in Newark and New Jersey as a whole.

Here are the lectures scheduled for this spring:

- Thursday, March 5, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.: **Producing Inequality: How Newark Became a Poor City in a Wealthy Metro Region**; Newark Public Library, Centennial Hall, 2nd floor
Presenter: Myles Zhang; Contact NewarkHistorySoc@gmail.com for Zoom link.
- Tuesday, April 16, 2024 at 6:00pm: **"In The Line of the Prophets:" Dr. Frank Kingdon and Newark, 1928-1940**; Newark Public Library, Centennial Hall, 2nd floor
Presenter: Tom Kingdon; Contact NewarkHistorySoc@gmail.com for Zoom link

The Writing Center

The Writing Center (115 Cullimore Hall) is available for 45-minute individual and group appointment with professional writing tutors online. This resource is indented to help you improve your communication and writing skills. Tutors and help with planning assignments, improving your writing, refining an essay or multimedia project, or other communication-based needs. For more information, please visit <https://www5.njit.edu/writingcenter/>.

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HSS 404:H10 -- The Brick City: How Newark Became Newark*

This course meets on Tuesday and Thursdays at 11:30 a.m. in room 212 of the Central King Building.
**This is my best guess for how this course will unfold, but please note: the schedule is subject to change. Please rely on Canvas for the most up-to-date information about readings, assignments, and due dates!*

<p>Week 1</p> <p>Day 1: Jan. 16 Day 2: Jan. 18</p>	<p>Course intro</p> <p>Day 1: Class intro</p> <p>HW: Read brief bio of Charles Cummings on the home page of the Newark Public Library's Knowing Newark collection + "Rollercoaster of City's History Rumbles On"(Cummings) from the Knowing Newark collection + Clement Price videos from the Once and Future Newark (chapters 1-13)</p> <p>Day 2: Walking tour of Downtown to get the lay of the land.</p>
<p>Week 2</p> <p>Day 1: Jan. 23 Day 2: Jan. 25</p> <p>Reading: Tuttle, pages 3-38 -- Prologue ("Pride in Newark: a 300th anniversary and a City on the Brink," "Rise, "Chapter 1 ("Corporation: Sheltered Puritan Village to Teeming Industrial Hub').</p>	<p>Topic: Getting the overview</p> <p>Day 1: Intro site selection assignment + discuss overview readings/video</p> <p>Day 2: Newark Public Library visit (learn how to use historic maps and the library's newspaper archives so that you can trace your site over time. (This will be another opportunity to get the lay of the land.)</p>

<p>Week 3</p> <p>Day 1: Jan. 30 Day 2: Feb. 1</p> <p>Reading TBA</p>	<p>Topic: Is Newark at a critical juncture? Unpacking Newark’s new zoning ordinance</p> <p>Day 1: Newark today with Nii Abladadey Oti, NJIT alum and organizer for Clinton Hill Community Action</p> <p>Day 2: Field trip City Hall visit to see model of the city + possible conversation with city official(s)</p>
<p>Week 4</p> <p>Day 1: Feb. 6 Day 2: Feb. 8</p> <p>Reading, Tuttle, chapter 6 (“Bound to Explode: Generations of Frustration Boil over in the Summer of 1967”), pages 142-170)</p>	<p>Site selection paper due + presentations</p>
<p>Week 5</p> <p>Day 1: Feb. 13 Day 2: Feb. 15</p> <p>Reading, Tuttle chapter 2 (“Politics to the Dogs: Southern Sympathy during the Civil War), pages 39-62</p>	<p>Topic: The enduring impact of the 20th century</p> <p>Day 1: Screening of the documentary, “Revolution ‘67” Day 2: “Revolution ‘67” continued</p>
<p>Week 6</p> <p>Day 1: Feb. 20 Day 2: Feb. 22</p>	<p>Topic: Blacks in Newark</p> <p>Day 1: The little-known history of slavery in New Jersey (w/possible guest speaker)</p> <p>Day 2: Resistance and activism in Newark’s 19th century Black community; visit to Tubman Square w/possible guest speaker.</p>

<p>Reading, “A Brief History of African Americans in Newark, New Jersey: Their Presence, Their Institutions, and Their Struggle for Freedom from Colonial Times” (James Amemasor)</p>	
<p>Week 7</p> <p>Day 1: Feb. 27 Day 2: Feb. 29</p> <p>Reading, Tuttle chapter 3 (“Greater Newark: A Metropolis Blooms with the Dawn of the Twentieth Century”), pages 63-86 + Cummings: Leather Industry Branded the City with a Fine Reputation + In a Glass Darkly: Beer Marks City’s History Brewers Benefited from Workers, Water + NYT: In Newark, wresting a fatal fire from oblivion</p>	<p>Paper 2: My site over time (maps) + presentations</p>
<p>Week 8</p> <p>Day 1: March 5 Day 2: March 7</p> <p>Reading, Tuttle, Fall (pages 87-88) +</p>	<p>Topic: Roots unit #2: Immigration and industrialization in Newark</p> <p>Day 1: Newark’s industrial hey day</p> <p>Day 2: Field trip to Ballantine House exhibit at the Newark Museum of Art</p>

<p>chapter 5 (“The Slums of Ten Years from Now: A City Transformed Through Postwar Urban Renewal); pages 119-141)</p>	
<p>Week</p>	<p>SPRING BREAK!</p>
<p>Week 10</p> <p>Day 1: March 26 Day 2: March 28</p> <p>Reading, Tuttle, pages 209-239 (Re-birth” + chapter 8 – “Sharpe Change: A New Mayor Charts a Meandering Road to Recovery”)</p>	<p>Topic: urban renewal and its consequences</p> <p>Day 1: Video of Myles Zhang’s March 5 Newark History Society lecture, “Producing Inequality: How Newark Became a Poor City in a Wealthy Metro Region”</p> <p>Day 2: Class debrief</p>
<p>Week 11</p> <p>Day 1: April 2 Day 2: April 4</p> <p>Reading, Tuttle, chapter 9 (“A Renaissance for the Rest of Us: Cory Booker Confronts the Power Structure”) + pages 35-43 in <i>An American River: From Paradise to Superfund, afloat on New Jersey’s Passaic</i> (Bruno)</p>	<p>Topic: Looking ahead: Confronting climate change</p> <p>Class 1: Possible guest speakers</p> <p>Class: 2 – class debrief</p>

Week 12 Day 1: April 9 Day 2: April 11 Reading: Tuttle, chapter 10 ("A New Administration, A New Arena and Some Age-Old Struggles")	Conferences
Week 13 Day 1: April 16 Day 2: April 18	Presentations
Week 14 Day 1: April 23 Day 2: April 25	Presentations
Week 15 Day 1: April 30 (Last day of classes!)	Final paper due