

Fall 2024

HSS 404-031-H07: The Brick City, How Newark Became Newark

Miriam Ascarelli

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.njit.edu/hum-syllabi>

Recommended Citation

Ascarelli, Miriam, "HSS 404-031-H07: The Brick City, How Newark Became Newark" (2024). *Humanities Syllabi*. 943.

<https://digitalcommons.njit.edu/hum-syllabi/943>

This Syllabus is brought to you for free and open access by the NJIT Syllabi at Digital Commons @ NJIT. It has been accepted for inclusion in Humanities Syllabi by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ NJIT. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@njit.edu.

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

Instructor: Miriam Ascarelli

Email: mascarel@njit.edu

Office: Cullimore 410

Phone: 862-576-1256

Office Hours: Tuesday: 11:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; Wednesday: 11:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m.; and by appointment

Course description:

This course is a journey into Newark's rich and complicated history. Students will engage in a semester-long research project where they will trace the history of a Newark site of their choosing by using historical maps and other primary and secondary sources. Students will gain the background they need for their project through readings, walking tours (all within a short distance from campus) and class conversations with people who are helping to shape Newark's future.

Our exploration begins in the year 1666 when a group of 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. From there, we will look at key issues that have impacted the city, including the (little known) history of slavery in Newark (and New Jersey overall), how rapid industrialization in the 19th century turned Newark into an industrial powerhouse, and how the quest for racial equality as well as the closing of factories (and with it, the loss of jobs) ushered in new challenges in the 20th century.

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

- Gain an understanding of the city's complex history as well as its physical and social geography.
- Hone research, writing, and critical thinking skills by evaluating evidence, formulating research questions, synthesizing primary and secondary sources, and generating arguments.
- Engage in dialogue with people who are helping to shape Newark's future.
- 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: 10 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 on Fridays at 11: 59 p.m
- Research project*:
 - Paper #1 (3-5 pages) – “Site selection” essay & presentation: 20 percent
 - Site-over-time presentation: 20 percent
 - Paper #2 (5-8 pages); Site-over-time paper w/reflection: 30 percent

Due dates are listed in the tentative schedule at the end of this syllabus. Please note: 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
------------	------------	-----------	------------	-----------	-----------	----------

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: this means that 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; 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. Presentations are streamed live and then posted on the History Society's YouTube channel.

Here are the lectures scheduled for this fall. The lectures are held at the Newark Public Library, 5 Washington St.

- **Tues., Sept. 24, 2024** at 6:00pm
The City and the Show: Newark's Vibrant Theater Row, 1895-1935
Presenter: Michael Immerso
- **Tues., Nov. 12, 2024** at 6:00pm
From Newark's Little Italy to Capitol Hill: The Life of Peter Rodino
Presenter: Lawrence Spinelli, author of Watergate's Unexpected Hero: The Life of Peter W. Rodino, Jr.

- **Wed., Oct. 9- Sun., Oct. 13:** The annual Newark Arts Festival. Events are held at various locations around the city. This year's theme is "Radical Re-imagining." For details, go [here](#).
- **Wed., Oct. 16:** The annual Philip Roth Lecture; it will be held from 5:30-9 p.m. at the Newark Public Library, 5 Washington St.
 "Roth and Baraka: Two Visions"
 Speaker: John Keene; John Keene is the author, co-author, and translator of a handful of books, including *Counternarratives: Stories and Novellas* (2015) which received an American Book Award, a Lannan Literary Award, a Republic of Consciousness Prize (UK), and a Windham-Campbell Prize for Fiction. His most recent publication, *Punks: New & Selected Poems* (2021), received the 2022 National Book Award for Poetry, the Thom Gunn Award from the Publishing Triangle and a 2022 Lambda Literary Award for Gay Poetry. He has translated poetry and fiction by an array of authors and his translation of Brazilian author Hilda Hilst's *Letters from a Seducer* appeared in 2014 in joint publication by Nightboat Books (US) and A. Bolha Editor (Brazil). A 2018 MacArthur Fellow and member of the African Poetry Book Fund editorial board, he is a Distinguished Professor and has served as department chair at Rutgers University-Newark.
- **Thurs., Oct 17- Sun., Oct. 19:** The Dodge Poetry Festival. Events are held at various venues around the city. For programming details, click [here](#).

The Writing Center

The Writing Center (Central King Building, Ground Floor, Room G1) is available for 45-minute individual and group appointment with professional writing tutors online. This resource is intended to help you improve your communication and writing skills. Tutors 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/>.

* * * * *

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

There are two sections of this course. Both meet on Tuesday and Thursdays: section 404:031 meets at 8:30 a.m. in room 314 of the Central King Building; section 404:H07 meets at 10 a.m. in Lecture Hall 3 of Cullimore Hall.

*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: Sept. 3</p> <p>Day 2: Sept. 5</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</p> <p>Day 2: Clement Price videos from the Once and Future Newark (chapters 1-13)</p>
<p>Week 2</p> <p>Day 1: Sept. 10</p> <p>Day 2: Sept. 12</p>	<p>Topic: Getting the overview</p> <p>Day 1: Walking tour of Downtown</p> <p>Day 2: Class visit -- Nii Otu, Clinton Hill Community Action, visits class to talk about challenges facing Newark today</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") + "A Tour of the City," pages from Bob Curvin's book <i>Inside Newark</i>.</p>
<p>Week 3</p> <p>Day 1: Sept. 17</p> <p>Day 2: Sept. 19</p> <p>Reading TBD</p>	<p>Tools:</p> <p>Day 1: Intro site-selection assignment</p> <p>Day 2: Students will use class time to visit their sites. Students are also encouraged to explore the happenings at Halsey Fest, which is taking place on Thurs., Sept. 19 on Halsey Street.</p>
<p>Week 4</p> <p>Day 1: Sept. 24</p> <p>Day 2: Sept. 26</p>	<p>Topic: The Industrialization of Newark</p> <p>Day 1: Class visit -- John Prieto, archivist, Canal Society of NJ</p> <p>Day 2: Follow up</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>Week 5</p> <p>Day 1: Oct 1</p> <p>Day 2: Oct. 3</p>	<p>Topic: Site selection paper is due & presentations</p> <p>Day 1: Presentations</p> <p>Day 2: Continue w/presentations, if necessary</p> <p>Reading, Tuttle chapter 2 ("Politics to the Dogs: Southern Sympathy during the Civil War), pages 39-62</p>
<p>Week 6</p> <p>Day 1: Oct. 8</p>	<p>Topic: Intro: My-site-over-time paper</p> <p>Day 1: Intro paper + Map workshop</p>

Day 2: Oct. 10	Day 2: Workshop
Week 7 Day 1: Oct. 15 Day 2: Oct. 17	Film: Revolution 67 Screening takes place over both days. Reading, Tuttle, chapter 6 (“Bound to Explode: Generations of Frustration Boil over in the Summer of 1967 ”), pages 142-170) + “The Long-Lasting Legacy of the Great Migration” (Isabel Wilkerson)
Week 8 Day 1: Oct. 22 Day 2: Oct. 24	Topic: Blacks in Newark Day 1: The little-known history of slavery in New Jersey (w/possible guest speaker) Day 2: Resistance and activism in Newark’s 19 th century Black community; possible visit to Tubman Square Readings, <i>“A Brief History of African Americans in Newark, New Jersey: Their Presence, Their Institutions, and Their Struggle for Freedom from Colonial Times”</i> (James Amemasor)
Week 9 Day 1: Oct. 29 Day 2: Oct. 31	Topic: urban renewal and its consequences Tuttle, chapter 5 (“The Slums of Ten years from now”) + “Urban Renewal Progress, City of Newark, 1972-73 (Newark Dept. of Planning, Engineering and Research)
Week 10 Day 1: Nov. 5 Election Day! Day 2: Nov. 7	TBD
Week 11 Day 1: Nov. 12 Day 2: Nov. 14	Conferences
Week 12 Day 1: Nov. 19 Day 2: Nov. 21	Presentations
Week 13 Day 1: Nov. 26 Day 2: Thanksgiving!	Presentations Day 1: Presentations Day 2: No class! Thanksgiving
Week 14	Presentations

Day 1: Dec. 3 Day 2: Dec. 5	
Week 15 Day 1: Dec. 10 (Last day of classes!)	LAST DAY OF CLASS + paper due