

MACAULAY

HONORS COLLEGE

Seminar 2 Faculty Guide



Photo: Youth in Harlem, Nationaal Archief, No restrictions, via Wikimedia Commons

Updated by Lisa Brundage on November 24, 2025

Welcome to Macaulay Seminar 2, The People of New York. Bookmark this guide for reference!

RED BOXES HAVE LINKS

FACULTY WEBSITE

Important Dates

There is a culminating event for this class the first weekend of May (plus a few weekdays) annually. Students are required to attend. Students will attend one session *in small groups* and make a group presentation of their work. **Please put the event and the dates in your syllabus.**

CONFERENCE SITE

Year	Event Dates	Tentative Registration
2026	May 2-6	March 17-April 16
2027	May 1-5	TBD
2028	May 6-10	TBD
2029	May 5-9	TBD
2030	May 4-8	TBD

Communication and Planning

General questions, Lisa Brundage, Director of Academic Affairs:

lisa.brundage@mhc.cuny.edu



Listserv: seminar-2-2026@macaulay.cuny.edu is a way for you to reach all your Seminar 2 colleagues throughout the Macaulay campuses.

Web Site: The Macaulay Faculty website is a great resource for sample syllabi and other policy information (<https://openlab.macaulay.cuny.edu/faculty/>).

Contact the TLC: tlchelp@macaulay.cuny.edu

Make a TLC Appointment: [Appointment page](#) or email tlchelp@macaulay.cuny.edu

Ticket and payment help, Amanda Hick, amanda.hick@mhc.cuny.edu

East Side women discussing price of meat during N.Y.C. Meat Boycott. Apr. 1910
George Grantham Bain Collection, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

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The Seminar Overall

Catalogue Description, Seminar 2: The People of New York

In this seminar, students use tools from the social sciences, from oral history to mapping and participant observation and beyond, to investigate how the diverse people of New York City shape its identity, past, present, and future. Extensive reading and writing assignments are enriched by visits to neighborhoods, museums and historical and cultural sites across the city.

Course Description

In this seminar, students use the tools of the social sciences, from oral history to mapping and participant observation and beyond, to investigate how the diverse people of New York City shape its identity, past, present, and future. Seminar topics include: the experiences of Indigenous and enslaved populations; the ongoing consequences of settler colonialism; the ways in which culture, class, religion, race, gender, ethnicity, xenophobia, and racism have shaped New Yorkers' experiences with and within the city; the formation and social organization of New York's communities; the impact of successive waves of newcomers to the city on urban culture and politics; and the continuing debates over assimilation, cultural retention, and "Americanization." Extensive reading and writing assignments are enriched by visits to neighborhoods, museums, and historical and cultural sites across the city and the use of demographic, population and other quantitative data as well as qualitative approaches. **All classes create public-facing final projects, documenting their research and presenting an aspect of New York City's diversity.**

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Demonstrate a comparative understanding of different populations through research and writing about one or more groups or about an area of the city and its shifting population across time.

- Use a variety of approaches (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, or experiential) to studying people in order to come to an understanding of the diversity of people's experiences in and of the city.
- Understand the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches and methodologies used by the social sciences.
- Increase their understanding of past and present issues including colonialism, migration, immigration, race, and ethnicity by analyzing a variety of sources (current, historical, primary, secondary) and by engaging in active discussion about those issues.
- Present their research to a public audience through a final project that may be completed by small groups or the entire class.
- Critically examine their own roles in and effect on the communities of New York City.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND LEARNING GOALS

SAMPLE SYLLABI

Please share your syllabus with Macaulay by the end of the semester.

Macaulay Seminars

Macaulay students are enrolled at [eight campuses across the university](#), and their [Macaulay seminars](#) provide an important common experience and intellectual platform that unites them. Of course, every section will have some individual focus, but it's critically important that students throughout the Macaulay program have the same course in essence, and that all of you, as faculty, share the same goals to make that happen. The official description of the Seminar, sample syllabi, and more can be found [here](#). Macaulay's curriculum committee revised all of the core seminar course descriptions in 2021, so even if you are returning to Seminar 2, please make sure that you read the course descriptions.

Some History and Context for Seminar 2

The course was originally titled "The Peopling of New York City," and focused on patterns of immigration as well as neighborhood constitution and dynamics. In conversations with faculty, students and ITFs/TLCs, we've moved towards a slight modification to that title. "The People of New York City" more accurately reflects the content the course should cover. Immigration is not an unqualified positive story, and the story of the people of New

York includes indigenous populations (past and present), as well as those whose ancestors (near or far) were brought to New York without choosing to come voluntarily. Questions of gentrification, race, culture, gender, homelessness, inequality, education, cultural appropriation (and more) can all be part of the content of this course, and the narratives that the course pursues are complex and multifaceted.

Key Points

This is an interdisciplinary course, and should be taught as such. It is not a history course, a sociology course, or an anthropology course, but it often has elements of all of those fields. It should not be seen as an introductory course to any specific field, but instead a cross-disciplinary examination of the ways that different areas in the social sciences might approach the same content area. The course should provide some comparison of different approaches in every individual section. Sociology, anthropology, history, political science, geography, demographics (and more) are all welcome, but no single one of these areas should be the sole focus of the course.

Sample syllabi are available on the [faculty site](#). If you have a recent syllabus that we can share, especially one that reflects the course updates made in 2021, please email it to [Lisa Brundage](#).



Dragon in Chinatown NYC Lunar New Year
Patrick Kwan from New York City, USA, CC BY 2.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0> via Wikimedia Commons

Honors Expectations

This is an honors seminar, so it's good to have high expectations for student work, in terms of reading, writing and digital production. "High expectations" in an honors seminar do not

have to include any specific number of pages or words of writing, but rather a deep and critical understanding of source material, and a creative and fluent expression of the products of research. It is also important to keep in mind that you are working with first-year college students, whose past few school years have been unusual, and they may be experiencing unusual levels of stress or trauma. The faculty site has [links to ways you can refer students for help](#), including to our [Student Support Team](#) and [Wellness Center](#).

Think about what you want students to experience in this course, and how you want them to demonstrate their learning. Students MAY produce research papers as a final assignment (if this is the kind of assignment you find valuable in a class of this type), but this is not a course on the research paper, and more original and engaged (public-facing, multimedia) projects are preferable. *There is no overall research paper or exam requirement for Macaulay Central.* The TLC can definitely help with brainstorming and scaffolding assignments and projects, including specific support for your Common Project.

Course modalities are set by each campus, and you should follow the guidance given to you there about requirements. Macaulay urges students to use technology to create, connect and communicate.

The Common Project

The seminar should be enhanced with digital tools and multimedia materials wherever appropriate. The Teaching and Learning Collaboratory (TLC--see below!) is a partner for planning and making this happen.

The course requires a public-facing project of some kind from all students. This course is a wonderful opportunity to introduce the concept of public scholarship to students. Many sections have produced a website detailing their research on a neighborhood or an immigrant group (or some other topic). You can find many examples on the TLC site. A website project remains a very strong and effective way of fulfilling the public-facing project requirement of the course, especially during distance learning. There are other alternatives, such as videos, that some classes have experimented with. Those projects still need an online presence as a way of being shared and publicly accessible. The Teaching and Learning Collaboratory (TLC) can be of great assistance in this! Read on!

Check out the [archives of past](#) projects for ideas.

You can access bespoke support through the TLC to prepare students for completing these projects.

Assessment

The Macaulay Seminar 2 Assessment Committee will use the [AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric](#) to evaluate student learning in Seminar 2: The People of New York. Specifically, the committee will look at the learning goal **“Use a variety of approaches (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, or experiential) to studying people in order to come to an understanding of the diversity of people’s experiences in and of the city”** through the Evidence category of the rubric.

The committee will collect Common Projects at the end of the semester (via a simple form) and invite faculty to rate their own students’ work from 1-4 in their progress toward meeting the learning outcome. The feedback will then be anonymized and the committee will review the submissions, evaluate norms for Benchmark-Capstone achievement, produce a report, and make recommendations for next year.

Keeping in mind that Seminar 2 students are in their first year, Milestone-level achievements may represent exemplary work.

Category	Capstone (4)	Milestone (3)	Milestone (2)	Benchmark (1)
Evidence <i>Selecting and using information to investigate a point of view or conclusion</i>	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are questioned thoroughly.	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are subject to questioning.	Information is taken from source(s) with some interpretation/evaluation, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are taken as mostly fact, with little questioning.	Information is taken from source(s) without any interpretation/evaluation. Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question.

The Teaching and Learning Collaboratory

At its founding, Macaulay provided Instructional Technology Fellows (ITF) to its seminars. When the ITF program started, the barriers to creating digital projects were high, and the fellows needed to spend significant amounts of time working on technical troubleshooting, along with pedagogical practices. As technologies have evolved and



become more ubiquitous, the horizons of the group have expanded alongside them, especially incorporating more pedagogical training. We are now the Teaching and Learning Collaboratory (TLC--which may refer to the collective or to individual members of its staff), and are entering our second year with this new structure. Instead of having TLC-faculty pairs, we are taking a team-based approach to supporting seminars. Each team is dedicated to a specific cluster of campuses, and led by a postdoctoral fellow. Your postdoctoral fellow will be your main point of contact, and will delegate work to their team. To get started, fill out the form linked in the red box, and let us know what you need—even if what you need is someone to talk to you to help you figure that out! Postdocs will be available to consult with you over the winter, and your requests are welcome now.

[REQUEST TLC SERVICES](#)

You are welcome to fill out that form whenever you have a need, and as many times as you need.

We also have a dedicated email for you and students, tlchelp@macaulay.cuny.edu, and an online booking system for faculty and students to request one-on-one help. *Please add the help email and appointment request link to your syllabus.*

[MAKE AN APPOINTMENT](#)

What do TLCs do?

During the semester, one or more of the TLCs on each team will be available to you to conduct class workshops, set up and maintain your class [OpenLab site](#), consult on projects, observe your classes, attend events, and more as needed. We have an internal workflow to ensure that you get the support you need through our team-based approach. TLCs are especially helpful for conceptualizing, scaffolding, and creating your common project.

Here is what you can expect:

- Help with in-class workshops, projects, and Common Event integration
- Consistent communication and responses to your requests
- Virtual office hour appointments for faculty and students available five days a week
- Customized support for special projects
- A small team (one postdoc plus three TLCs) who will work with you and coordinate together to meet your needs

Our fellows and postdocs are just as digitally savvy as ever, and will be able to work with you on your technology-enhanced projects and sites. In any semester, TLCs can be powerful and effective partners in these classes. Now that we are in another time of flux and adjustment, the TLC will likely be more valuable than ever. They can help you think through plans for your class that will hopefully help you feel supported and calm going into the semester. This might include adapting assignments that you have used in different instructional modalities; selecting the right platform for your course; building and maintaining a course web site; figuring out the pros, cons, and right mix of various online activities; and more. They are provided NOT simply to help with technology (as their former title may mislead you to believe), but to provide overall links across campuses and sections, to help you conceive of projects and tools that can be innovative and appropriate for your educational goals, and to work with you and your students throughout the semester.

Some more things TLCs can do:

- Share their own research and interests with students and with you
- Create a course site on our OpenLab platform, and train you and students to make contributions to it
- Conduct workshops on specific digital tools for creation, connection and communication (please request workshops at least one week in advance of your preferred date)
- Recommend those tools to meet your educational objectives
- Hold support hours to meet with students
- Help in planning the syllabus and scaffolding assignments

- Take part in class discussions and events (with advanced scheduling)
- Work with you and your students to produce your Common Project

Who are TLCs?

TLC DIRECTORY

TLC Contacts

Campus	Lead Contact 1	Lead Contact 2
Baruch	Brandon Ely brandon.ely@macaulay.cuny.edu	Jean Park (on leave) jean.park@mhc.cuny.edu
Brooklyn	Rakhee Kewada rkewada@gradcenter.cuny.edu	Joe Pentangelo joseph.pentangelo@mhc.cuny.edu
CCNY	Charlotte Thurston cthurston@gradcenter.cuny.edu	Allison Cabana acabana@gradcenter.cuny.edu
CSI	Joe Pentangelo joseph.pentangelo@mhc.cuny.edu	Rakhee Kewada rkewada@gradcenter.cuny.edu
Hunter	Sonia Sanchez soasanch@gmail.com	Andre Fludd andre.fludd@mhc.cuny.edu
John Jay	Jean Park (on leave) jean.park@mhc.cuny.edu	Brandon Ely brandon.ely@macaulay.cuny.edu
Lehman	Allison Cabana acabana@gradcenter.cuny.edu	Charlotte Thurston cthurston@gradcenter.cuny.edu
Queens	Andre Fludd andre.fludd@mhc.cuny.edu	Sonia Sanchez soasanch@gmail.com

All TLCs are CUNY doctoral students, with strong and extensive teaching experience. They are also familiar with all the Macaulay seminars, and the sequence of seminars, and can help you and your students make connections to see how your course fits into the overall seminar program and the Macaulay program. They are familiar with what is happening in other sections of your seminar on other campuses and your own campus, so they can help to share and make connections among and between different classes for collaborative projects. They also receive and conduct ongoing mutual professional development, and are

well-versed in teaching techniques that promote equity, access, and justice, including anti-racist pedagogy, universal design for learning, and more.

Keep in mind: TLCs have plenty of time to work with your class, but will not be available every day, so schedules should be set in advance. The TLC as a group, however, will have online office hours regularly, and you and students are welcome to book appointments for one-on-one help.

The lines between personal time and worktime are very blurry for everyone right now, and as you go about your planning, please keep in mind that TLCs are part-time, graduate student workers with multiple responsibilities besides your class. They cannot be expected to attend every single class session (attending class periodically is fine, but not all classes). Please talk to Lisa Brundage if you need any help navigating how to work with the TLC.

Who are the Postdocs?

[Dr. Andre Fludd](#) works with Hunter, Queens, & Macaulay Central

[Dr. Jean Park](#) works with Baruch, CCNY, & Lehman

[Dr. Joseph Pentangelo](#) works with Brooklyn, CSI, John Jay, & Macaulay Central

Events



Delaware. Youth Moccasins, ca. 1900. Hide, cloth, beads, $4\frac{1}{4} \times 1\frac{1}{8} \times 7\frac{3}{8}$ in. ($10.8 \times 0.3 \times 18.7$ cm). Brooklyn Museum, Gift of the Edward J. Guarino Collection in memory of Edgar J. Guarino, 2016.11.3a-b. Creative Commons-BY (Photo: Brooklyn Museum, 2016.11.3a-b_view01_PS11.jpg)

Common Event: The Imagining of NY Conference–May 2-6, 2026

New for this year, all Seminar 2 and 4 students participate in the [Imagining New York Conference](#) (note this site has 2025's programs and webinar; the programs can give you an idea of how the event typically runs). Imagining New York Student Conference 2026 will be May 2-6, primarily in person. Students attend and present their public-facing projects in one of multiple sessions in small groups. The event is required for Seminar 2 and 4 students! Please add it to your syllabus.

[CONFERENCE WEBSITE](#)

The conference is organized and moderated by Macaulay, but it is your responsibility to prepare students to present there. Because we want to give all ~500 sophomores a chance to participate, **students present in small groups rather than as individuals. Please add the conference and registration dates to your syllabus.** When registration opens in April, we will let you know and request that you promote it with your students.

Registration will open in April.. Because this is an interactive event that features presentations, all sessions have capped registration capacity.. Let your students know that registration is first-come, first-served, so if they have specific logistical needs, they should register as early as possible.

Faculty are encouraged to attend, but please be aware that a goal for this event is to give students exposure to their Macaulay classmates from other sections and campuses. Students are therefore mixed into panels with representation from as many campuses as possible, and we cannot dedicate entire sessions to students from a particular class. Expect to see presentations from students you don't know when you attend—it's part of the experience! The TLC can help you and your students get organized and ready for the event. Read on!

Class Events & Budget

Macaulay classes get a budget for experiential learning, including events, tours, admission fees etc. Due to the extreme length of time and amount of paperwork for processing, we discourage you from using your budget for speaker honoraria. Each section of Seminar 2 has a total budget of **\$250 in Spring 2026**. All orders must be placed through [the form](#), and the information we request (such as your syllabus and roster) are required for our budget reconciliations. **Never make personal payments for tickets. We cannot reimburse you. We are also unable to pay for food/refreshments, or gifts.**

If you plan to offer an honorarium to a speaker, the person must be registered with CUNYBuy no later than March 6, 2025. This also applies to any entity that needs to be paid with a purchase order (PO) rather than a credit card. These cutoff dates are set by CUNY and have no flexibility whatsoever. There is no workaround that Macaulay can enact if you miss these deadlines.

The final deadline for submission for credit card payments is May 1.

[REQUEST PURCHASES](#)