

MCHC 1002 F9H
Macaulay Seminar II
The People of New York City
Spring 2025
Boylan 2150
Prof. Philip F. Napoli
pnapoli@brooklyn.cuny.edu

Course Information and Policies

1. What is this course?

Here is the official 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 Goals/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 study people 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.

Here is what I have to say about the course:

I am an academic historian, so I'm going to help you think about the history of the people of New York, and I intend to do it in a way that's very different from how you learned “social studies” or history in high school.

As I do so, we will touch on a range of research methods, including the use of visual data and the collection and use of interview-based information, along with more traditional practices such as archival research. In this course, the methods used for studying and presenting history are every bit as important as the historical content itself.

2. What is expected of you?

- You are expected to know this syllabus and understand what it says. If you have questions, ask me.
- You must attend regularly and be on time for class. It matters.
- Bring the assigned readings to each class.

- I recognize that the College encourages you to get your textbooks in electronic format, so electronic devices like Ipads and computers are permitted in class. But, if I see what looks like texting or other inappropriate use of these devices, I will ask you to put the device away.
- Headphones and earphones are not permitted in class unless approved by the Center for Student Disabilities Services, or they are being used for a purpose approved by me.
- I presume that you are here to learn. You will demonstrate this by acting professionally throughout the semester in all settings.

3. How the Class Works

I teach a highly interactive class and, therefore, expect students to read the assigned material before we meet.

You must come prepared to talk and share your questions and thoughts about the assignments. I will call on you and expect you to contribute.

We will be going out to various locations around the city ***a lot***, almost every other week. You will be expected to travel around the city and stay for the entire class time. Please plan your schedules wisely.

This course will use Blackboard. I will post course materials there for you, and you will submit your assignments to me there.

4. Grading Mechanisms and Rules

You will be graded on the following:

Category	Points
Blackboard journal assignments	200
Collaboratively-created biography of inherited objects	50
One Project Oral History Interview and required documentation	50
Neighborhood Digital Project	200
Total:	500

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all class meetings as scheduled. Failure to attend class will have a negative impact on your grade.

After the 2nd unexcused absence, I will lower your mark for this course by 1/3 of a letter grade for each additional day absent. (An excused absence is documented by something – like a doctor's appointment, a court appearance, or something similar.) If you miss class, you must be prepared to document the reason.

Essay Grade/Rewrites/Revision

If you earn a B or lower on an essay, you may revise and resubmit the essay one time based on the comments I provide. Please understand that grades on revised papers can go up **or** down. The revision is due one week after I return the paper to you. No revisions may be submitted after the exam date. Because I permit rewrites, I do not correct drafts.

Blackboard journal submissions may not be re-written to raise your grade.

Late Assignments/Late Work

Late Blackboard journal entries will be accepted for 50% credit. Yes, 1-minute late is late.

If you have a problem uploading files to Blackboard, send the journal to me before the deadline at philip.napoli@gmail.com

Late essays are accepted with an academic penalty of 6 points per day. An assignment that might have earned a 50, arriving a day late, gets 44 points; a 45 paper two days late is a 39, and so on.

Any work not submitted by the day scheduled for our final exam is recorded as a zero "0" in my grade book.

To say the same thing in different words: The course ends on the day of the final. (No, I am not actually making you take a final exam. We simply need to have a final deadline for all work.)

Incompletes

I am extremely reluctant to grant incompletes. In my experience, these are rarely converted into regular grades and frequently turn to F's.

According to the Undergraduate Bulletin p. 57:

"A grade of Incomplete (INC) may be given at the discretion of the instructor when a student

1) has satisfactorily completed most, but not all, course requirements and

2) provides the instructor evidence documenting the extenuating circumstances that prevent the completion of course requirements by the end of the semester. The instructor may change the grade of INC to another grade when the work has been completed.

An INC grade may also be given at the discretion of the instructor when a student

1) has been fulfilling course requirements but is absent from the final examination and

2) provides to the instructor evidence documenting the extenuating circumstances that prevent the taking of the scheduled final examination.

The instructor may change the grade of INC to another grade after the final exam has been taken."

Covid-19 and other Emergencies

Having written the above, if something gets in the way of completing the required work for this course, perhaps related to Covid-19, please let me know as soon as possible. We will work together to figure something out if we can.

Extra Credit

I will be offering the opportunity to earn some extra credit. Details will be provided as opportunities arise.

NB: Extra credit opportunities will only be offered to the entire class and in advance. No extra credit is possible after the class meetings end. Please do not ask for exceptions to either rule.

5. Intellectual Diversity

The best classes are ones where diverse viewpoints are represented and articulated. I encourage students to form their own opinions about the issues raised in this course after investigating the evidence available and considering a variety of theoretical perspectives. Students are free to voice their viewpoints, and in fact, will be rewarded for doing so, as long as they are respectful to others in the class. Students' grades are based on their mastery of history, not their opinions about particular issues. In other words, students need not agree with the professor, the authors of assigned readings, or other students; they simply need to understand their arguments.

I borrowed the above almost directly (I changed a few words) from Professor Ryan Moore, Ph.D., SYP 6645: Sociology of Popular Culture Syllabus, Florida Atlantic University, Spring 2006 (graduate.fau.edu/gpc/110806/sociology%20of%20popular%20culture%20graduate%20syllabus.doc Accessed Dec. 28. 2008) because it expresses my sentiments exactly.

6. Disabilities

To receive disability-related academic accommodations, students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services (CSDS).

The Center for Student Disability Services (CSDS) is committed to ensuring students with disabilities enjoy an equal opportunity to participate at Brooklyn College. In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations, students must first be registered with CSDS. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to schedule an interview by calling (718) 951-5538 or emailing Josephine.Patterson@brooklyn.cuny.edu If you have already registered with CSDS, email Josephine.Patterson@brooklyn.cuny.edu or testingcsds@brooklyn.cuny.edu to ensure accommodation emails are sent to your professor.

It is the college's policy that accommodation requests must be approved by the CSDS. Students are not permitted to bypass the office and go directly to a faculty member to request accommodation. Faculty members are not permitted to grant an accommodation without receiving the Verification of Disability and Course Accommodations forms from the Center or to revise an accommodation that has already been deemed appropriate by the Center.

7. Honesty

The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for policy implementation can be found at www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member MUST report the violation. Students should be aware that faculty may use plagiarism detection software.

This class will strictly adhere to the Academic Integrity policies as above.

All work you turn in for this class must be your own. Any deviation from this standard – even a single sentence in another wise stellar paper or an interview faked in any way, shape, or form -- will result in zero points for the assignment and a report to the Brooklyn College Academic Integrity Office.

According to the MLA style guide, plagiarism "is to give the impression you have written or thought something that you have in fact borrowed from someone else." [Joseph Gibaldi and Walter Achtert, MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 3rd edition (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1988), p. 21.] If you borrow an idea, a sentence, or more from a source, you must let the reader know what that source is. It's only fair to the original author.

If you do not understand what plagiarism is, ask me, consult a work such as the MLA guide, or check out websites like this one: https://wts.indiana.edu/writing-guides/plagiarism.html

All students should read the section entitled "Academic Regulations and Procedures" in the Brooklyn College Undergraduate Bulletin or Graduate Bulletin for a complete listing of the academic regulations of the College. These may be found on the Academic Calendars, Course Schedules, and Bulletins page of the Registrar's website.

8. Nonattendance because of religious beliefs

The New York State Education Law provides that no student shall be expelled or refused admission to an institution of higher education because he or she is unable to attend classes or participate in examinations or study or work requirements on any particular day or days because of religious beliefs.

Students who are unable to attend classes on a particular day or days because of religious beliefs will be excused from any examination or study or work requirements. Faculty must make good-faith efforts to provide students absent from class because of religious beliefs equivalent opportunities to make up the work missed; no additional fees may be charged for this consideration.

Read more in the Undergraduate Bulletin 2019-2020, p. 66.

No one will be penalized for non-attendance because of religious beliefs. Students are, however, responsible for the course material covered while they are out. I will try to be helpful in this matter, but you should get class notes from a colleague. If you know that you will be absent because of religious beliefs, please notify me in advance.

9. Student Bereavement Policy

Students who experience the death of a loved one must contact the Division of Student Affairs, 2113 Boylan Hall, 718.951.5352, studentaffairs@brooklyn.cuny.edu if they wish to implement either the Standard Bereavement Procedure or the Leave of Absence Bereavement Procedure (see below). The Division of Student Affairs has the right to request a document that verifies the death (e.g., a funeral program or death notice).

Read more here:
http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/about/initiatives/policies/bereavement.php

10. Sexual and Gender-based Harassment, Discrimination, and Title IX

Brooklyn College is committed to fostering a safe, equitable, and productive learning environment. Students experiencing any form of prohibited discrimination or harassment on or off campus can find information about the reporting process, their rights, specific details about the confidentiality of information, and reporting obligations of Brooklyn College employees on the Office of Diversity and Equity Programs website. Reports of sexual misconduct or discrimination can be made to Public Safety (719.951.5511), the New York City Police Department (911 or a local NYPD precinct), Ivana Bologna, Title IX Coordinator (718.951.5000, ext. 3689), or Michelle Vargas, Assistant Director of Judicial Affairs, Division of Student Affairs (718.951.5352).

11. Things You Get Graded On:

1. Blackboard Journal Entries (200 points, or 20 points each)

   Ten times this semester, you must submit a work journal to me.

   Your journal entry will respond to a writing prompt or assignment that I will provide on Blackboard, and I'll post one almost every week.

   Each journal entry is worth 20 points, for 200 points in this category.

   Unless otherwise indicated, each written journal entry must be 250 words, *minimum*. That's 1 page, and yes, I count. Journal entries that are too short WILL earn fewer points.

   Additionally, and obviously, I award points based on the quality of the journal entry. I aim to assess whether you are keeping up with the course assignments. Think of this as the equivalent of an open-book quiz. You want to show me that you are reading and working.

2. Collaboratively-Produced Biography of an Inherited Object (50 points)

   For this assignment, you will work in pairs to create an illustrated "biography" of two physical objects—one inherited from each student's family or community. These objects should hold personal, cultural, or historical significance to your respective heritages.

   This project invites you to act as "biographers" for inanimate objects while practicing essential teamwork skills. Examining and comparing two family heirlooms will give you a deeper understanding of diverse cultural heritages and explore how material items can carry personal and communal histories.

   Approach this assignment with mutual respect, open communication, and curiosity. You might uncover surprising connections between your family stories.

   For additional information, see this web page.

   Students are responsible for confirming that I can view any file uploaded to Blackboard. It is not there if I can't see it, and the grade will be recorded as a 0.

   No links to documents stored on cloud-based services such as Google Drive will be accepted.

3. Each student will record at least two project oral history interviews and collect the required documentation (50 points).

   You will record at least two oral history recordings of between 30 minutes and 1 hour and collect a ***required*** informed consent form ***and*** a deed of gift form signed by your interviewee. I also must have a deed of gift form from you, the interviewer.

   The informed consent and deed of gift are ***required elements of this assignment*** because the interview content will be shared publicly.

   Consent
   https://form.jotform.com/222446385091154

   Interviewer Deed of Gift
   https://form.jotform.com/221327141915146

   Interviewee Deed of Gift
   https://form.jotform.com/230035149387153

4. Neighborhood Digital Project

Working in teams, you will produce a digital project that uses your recorded oral histories and other research that you will conduct.

You could produce a podcast, a film, or something else – after talking with me about it.

Here are some ideas for research projects about New York City neighborhoods*:

Neighborhood Evolution

- Dig into how a specific NYC hood has changed over the decades. Look at who moved in, who moved out, and how the vibe shifted.
- Pick a big moment in NYC history (like the '70s fiscal crisis or 9/11) and see how it shook up different neighborhoods.

Cultural Melting Pots

- Check out how places like Jackson Heights or Sunset Park keep their cultural flavor while welcoming newcomers.
- Compare old-school ethnic enclaves with newer ones. How is Manhattan's Chinatown different from Little Uzbekistan in Rego Park?

Gentrification

- Look at a neighborhood like Bushwick or Harlem. Who's being pushed out? Who's moving in? What's the fallout?
- Are there ways to spruce up a neighborhood without kicking out the locals? Find a success story.

Rich Hood, Poor Hood

- Map out where the good schools, parks, and hospitals are. Notice any patterns?
- Pick two neighborhoods on opposite ends of the income scale. How different are residents' lives?

Urban Planning Hits and Misses

- Dive into a big redevelopment project. Did it help the neighborhood or just line developers' pockets?
- Find a neighborhood group that's fighting City Hall. What's the issue? Are they making headway?

Artsy Neighborhoods

- How did SoHo go from gritty to glitzy? Can the same thing happen in the South Bronx?
- Pick an up-and-coming arts district. How's it changing the local scene?

Green Spaces and Gray Areas

- Find the neighborhoods with the worst air quality or most toxic sites. Who lives there? Coincidence?
- Look at efforts to green up concrete jungles like Hunts Point or Sunset Park. Are they working?

Getting Around Town

- How did the Second Avenue Subway change the Upper East Side? Good for everyone or just the rich folks?
- Pick a neighborhood with poor or few public transit. How does it affect people's daily lives?

Affordable Housing: Myth or Reality?

- Look at a neighborhood with lots of new "affordable" housing. Is it actually affordable for locals?
- Find parts of the city that are still relatively cheap. Why haven't they gentrified yet?

*These research ideas were created with help from Perplexity AI.

12. The Teaching and Learning Collaboratory (TLC)

You can request technological assistance from our TLC:
https://eportfolios.macaulay.cuny.edu/tlc/tlc-support-hours/

13. Me

Pronouns: he/him

> I'll make an effort to remember **your** pronouns. If I make a mistake, please just correct me. I'm old. I mess this up a lot.

Office: 3238 Boylan

Student Hours: Fridays 8 am to 9 AM and by appointment. For an appointment, contact Jennifer Matisi <Jennifer.Matisi@brooklyn.cuny.edu>

Email: Philip.napoli@gmail.com and philip.napoli83@login.cuny.edu

Some notes about email:

I will do my best to reply to your email within two business days. My reply might be brief and include a suggestion that we talk on the phone or via Zoom. But I won't ignore you. However, I don't look at my email after business hours, on weekends, or holidays.

14. You

Please create a system for checking your BC email address.

My email will go to that address only.

15. Our books

Title: *Just Kids*
Author: Smith, Patti,
Publisher: HarperCollins Publishers
Year Published: 2010

Title: *Jazz*
Author: Toni Morrison
Publisher: Random House Inc
Year Published: 2004

Title: *Amusing the Million: Coney Island at the Turn of the Century*
Author: John F. Kasson
Publisher: Farrar Straus & Giroux
Year Published: 1992

Title: *Open City: A Novel*
Author: Cole, Teju
Publisher: Random House Publishing Group
Year Published: 2012

Title: *Charlotte Temple*
Author: Susanna Haswell Rowson
Publisher: Any
Year Published: 1792
Text URL: https://www.gutenberg.org/files/171/171-h/171-h.htm
Free Audiobook: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWN0GrRnIPY

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Other Important Information

Spring Academic Calendar
https://www.brooklyn.edu/events/tag/spring-2025-main-academic-calendar/

Important Dates in the Spring 2025 Semester

Saturday, January 25:	First day of Spring 2025 classes
Wednesday, January 29:	No Classes Scheduled (College Open)
Friday, January 31:	Last Day to Add or Swap a Course
Wednesday, February 12:	College Closed
Monday, February 17:	College Closed
Tuesday, February 18:	Conversion Day – Classes follow a Monday schedule
Thursday, March 6:	Conversion Day – Classes follow a Wednesday schedule
Monday, March 31:	No Classes Scheduled (College Open)
Tuesday, April 1:	Last day to withdraw from a course with a “W” grade
Saturday, April 12 thru April 20:	No Classes Scheduled – Spring Recess (College Open)
Thursday, May 15:	Last Day of Undergraduate Classes
Friday, May 16:	Final Exams Begin
Thursday, May 22:	Final Exams End / End of Spring Semester

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Campus Resources

Personal Counseling Center (0203 James Hall) provides all Brooklyn College students individual and group counseling, emergency support, and other services. Call 718.951.5363 or email BCPersonalCounseling@gmail.com.

Immigrant Student Success Office (117 Roosevelt Hall) provides immigrants and other first-generation students with immigration-informed academic and non-academic support and resources, including legal services, personal and career counseling. Call 718.951.5023 or email ISSO@brooklyn.cuny.edu.

LGBTQ+ Resource Center (219 Student Center) is both a welcoming space and supportive network for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual, and

other LGBTQIA+ identities, and allied students, staff, and faculty at Brooklyn College. Call 718.951.5739 or email LGBTQCenter@brooklyn.cuny.edu.

Women's Center (227 Ingersoll Hall Extension) expands on the conventional direct services approach of traditional women's centers, which focuses on solving immediate crises through referrals and/or counseling, adopting a wide range of multidimensional needs-driven program activities that address the emotional, intellectual, physical and financial well-being of the whole person. Call 718.951.5777

CUNY Citizenship Now! Free Immigration Services

Since 1997, we've helped immigrants and their families in New York City to:

- Become U.S. citizens
- Petition for their family members
- Obtain Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)
- Get Temporary Protected Status (TPS)
- Pay a reduced fee or no fee when they apply for some immigration benefits
- Get their children U.S. citizenship when they become citizens
- Renew or replace lost, damaged, or expired immigration documents
- All our services are free and open to all New Yorkers, whether CUNY students or not, regardless of income.

For more information, see this page.

Call 646-664-9400 or 212-652-2071 (No texts)
Text 929-334-3784 (No calls)
Email citizenshipnowinfo@cuny.edu
Request a call by completing this form
As always, all our services are free.