

Course Syllabus

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BUILDING NEW YORK Fall 2018 A4028

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SYLLABUS

Building New York is designed to familiarize students with the history of the major building types that comprise the physical fabric of New York City. We will use the development of building types as a basis for looking at various New York neighborhoods and the ways in which they have developed and changed.

We will discuss the physical and stylistic evolution of these building types and, through walking tours in various New York neighborhoods, we will examine how these buildings work within the evolving form of the city and its neighborhoods. Among other types of buildings, we will study the development of residential architecture, particularly row houses, townhouses, and multiple dwellings; the changing nature of commercial architecture from modest low rise structures to great skyscrapers; and the evolution of public and institutional architecture from the small buildings of the early city to some of the great architectural complexes of America. We will also discuss issues of design, planning, and preservation in the neighborhoods that we visit. And, more than anything, the course will focus your attention on how to look at the physical fabric of the city, how to ask questions about what you are seeing, and how you can use the built world to understand a city's history.

Required Book:

Norval White, Elliot Willensky, and Fran Leadon, *AIA Guide to New York City* 5th edition (NY: Oxford, 2010)

Books That I Strongly Suggest You Purchase (all are also on reserve or ereserve).

Charles Lockwood. *Bricks and Brownstone* (New York: Rizzoli, 2003). Out of Print.

Elizabeth Cromley. *Alone Together: A History of New York's Early Apartments* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1990).

Richard Plunz. *A History of Housing in New York City* (NY: Columbia, revised edition, 2016).

Andrew S. Dolkart. *Biography of a Tenement House in New York City: An Architectural History of 97 Orchard Street* (Chicago: Center for American Places, 2012).

Carol Willis. *Form Follows Finance: Skyscrapers and Skylines in New York and Chicago*(NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1995).

Books are on order at **Book Culture Bookstore** on 536 West 112th Street just east of Broadway (next to the post office).

Syllabus Fall 2018. Class begins at 9:00 (unless noted). Please be on time!!!!

September 5. Introduction: Development of New York. Row House Architecture and the Creation of Residential Neighborhoods (in class)

September 12. Brooklyn Heights Tour. (Meet on the Promenade at Clark Street. Take the No. 2 or 3 train to Clark Street; take elevator to street and walk straight out of the station; turn right and walk to Promenade)

September 19. Tenements and Apartment Houses in New York (in class)

September 26. Lower East Side Tour. (Meet in front of 97 Orchard Street, between Delancey and Broome Streets; take F train to Delancey Street, walk west on Delancey – away from the Williamsburg Bridge – and turn left of Orchard Street). **Meet at 8:30!!!**

October 3. Upper West Side (Meet in front of the First Baptist Church on the northwest corner of Broadway and West 79th Street right by the 79th Street stop on the No. 1 train). Hand in your paper topic.

October 10. Harlem. (Meet at Amsterdam Avenue and 116th Street where we will have a bus that will take us to various places in Harlem). Bus will leave at 9:00.

October 17. Public and Institutional Architecture and Public Infrastructure (in class with a walk through Columbia campus)

October 17. Optional class, 2:30; meet in Avery seminar room. Introduction to use of atlases and land books, valuable resources that you will want to use for your papers.

October 24. Central Park (Meet in front of the statue of General Sherman at Grand Army Plaza, Fifth Avenue between 59th and 60th Streets)

October 31. Commercial Architecture I (in class)

November 7. Tribeca Tour. (Meet on the southeast corner of Broadway and Chambers Street adjacent to City Hall Park. Take the No. 1, 2, or 3 to Chambers Street and walk east two blocks or take the A, C, or E to Chambers Street and walk one block east). Papers due.

November 14. Commercial Architecture II (in class).

November 21. No class.

November 28. Midtown Tour (Meet on front steps of New York Public Library at Fifth Avenue opposite 41st Street)

Dec. 5. Final exam.

1. Due: November 7, 2017 PAPERS MUST BE HANDED IN ON TIME

The Building of a Block

Choose one square block in New York City and trace its growth, development, and change from the time that it open land through today and then place this block and its history ***in some sort of context within the architectural history or development of the neighborhood or the city.*** This context is the crucial aspect of the paper. Issues that you might consider include:

1. When did development begin?
2. What types of building were erected on the block?
3. Who were the architects and builders?
4. What were the original uses of the buildings?
5. How did development on this block relate to development in the surrounding neighborhood?
6. Why did this block develop as it did?; when it did?
7. How has the block changed since it was initially developed? Have the buildings changed?; the uses changed?; the scale changed?, etc.
8. Has the change been for the better or for the worse?
9. Who was responsible for the changes?
10. How have the changes related to changes in the surrounding community?

-There are other issues that you might wish to discuss. Those listed above are only suggestions and you need not necessarily discuss them all.

-Do not simply present a chronological history of building construction on the block.

-You must use the facts of development to present a broader picture of issues relating to the growth of the city and its buildings.

-Clearly state in the opening paragraph what context you will be investigating.

Read these requirements carefully

-Your paper must include the architect, builder, and date of construction of major structures or representative structures that help explain the development of the block.

-Since the context issue is key to completing a successful paper, include the topic of your context exploration in a sentence at the top of the first page, before the text begins. This can be part of the title of the paper, or a separate, one sentence statement.

-Your paper must include a copy of a current land book map of your block (the land book or ASanborn@ is available at the Reserve Desk in Avery Library).

Your paper should be illustrated and the sources for your images should be noted. Feel free to use your own photographs.

Your paper must include complete footnotes or endnotes (notes placed within the body of the text are not acceptable)

Your paper must include a bibliography.

If you are not sure how to create notes and a bibliography check a style guide such as *A Manual of Style* (aka the "Chicago Manual"), which is available online.

<https://www-chicagomanualofstyle-org.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/16/contents.html>

You should feel free to discuss your topic with me.

Hand in your paper topic block by October 3.

2. Readings. There will be assigned readings dealing with each topic. These will include books, articles, and files of newspaper clippings. All readings are on reserve or available online through the library. This material has not been put on reserve for my enjoyment. Students are expected to read the assigned material.
- 3.
4. Final Exam; December 5, 2017.
- 5.
6. Attendance: Since this course is designed to increase your familiarity with the city through lectures and tours attendance is a requirement. Your grade will suffer from unexcused absences. Three absences can result in an unofficial withdrawal and no credit for the class.

My office hours are either by appointment or just drop in. Because of your studio schedules and my teaching schedule, I will not have specific hours, but am always happy to set up an appointment. My office is 307 Buell Hall.