

FSP 122: NEW JERSEY'S URBAN ENVIRONMENT

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

New Jersey is generally overshadowed by its larger urban neighbors of New York and Philadelphia, but the Garden State is an important location for understanding the social and environmental processes that characterize contemporary US society. The urban environment in this course is treated holistically: it includes the geophysical environment, the built environment, and the human ecology of New Jersey's landscape. This course will first address how to conceptualize urban environments in New Jersey, contrasting the historical development of traditional urban centers like Newark, Camden, and Trenton with the environmentally transformative suburban "edge city" and exurban zones. This course also considers the decline of the industrial centers of New Jersey, with a focus on the state's largest city, Newark, but also involves community-engaged learning experiences in neighboring Trenton. Older industrial centers are important for understanding how pollution, migration, segregation, deindustrialization, redevelopment, corruption, and inequality have shaped New Jersey's landscapes. The final section of this course investigates environmental issues in New Jersey, employing both biocentric and anthropocentric perspectives, and considering a variety of urban forms across the state. This section will address resource-dependent tourism, environmental hazards, and water quality, even while considering how historically urban concerns have reshaped the Jersey shore environment. Like all FSPs, this course is writing-intensive.

COURSE PURPOSE & LEARNING GOALS

The First Seminar Program is designed to introduce new college students to the academic standards and expectations at The College of New Jersey, even while learning unique interdisciplinary content. Upon completion of this course, students will be able:

1. to explain why New Jersey cities developed where they did, how they have developed across time, and how this contributes to current social, economic, and environmental problems;
2. to explain New Jersey's urban recreational environments, including parks and beaches, including issues of access, degradation, safety, and health;
3. to define and use key concepts for explaining New Jersey's urban environment, including but not limited to suburbanization, edge cities, segregation, regulation, home rule, deindustrialization, redevelopment, slum clearance, eminent domain, environmental justice, gentrification;
4. to explain the social, economic, and environmental relationship between New York City and North Jersey suburbs, and compare this with Philadelphia and South Jersey suburbs
5. to use mapping and census tools in order to generate profiles of New Jersey cities
6. to work independently and collaboratively with other students to develop deeply engaged discussions and analysis
7. to improve college-level analytic writing skills
8. to create a compelling oral presentation tied to a larger and more detailed research report

REQUIRED READING:

Unless otherwise indicated, required books are available for purchase in the TCNJ bookstore.

Belton, Thomas. 2011. *Protecting New Jersey's Environment: From Cancer Alley to the New Garden State*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Fagin, Dan. 2013. *Toms River: A Story of Science and Salvation*. New York: Bantam Books.

Garreau, Joel. 1991. "New Jersey: Tomorrowland." Pp. 17-68 in *Edge Cities: Life on the New Frontier*. New York: Doubleday. (on CANVAS)

Stansfield, Charles A. 1996. *An Ecological History of New Jersey*. Trenton: New Jersey Historical Society. (on CANVAS)

Sullivan, Robert. 1998. *The Meadowlands: Wilderness Adventures on the Edge of a City*. New York: Anchor Books.

Tuttle, Brad. 2009. *How Newark Became Newark: The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of an American City*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Additional short readings may be assigned throughout the semester.

COURSE POLICIES

Policies associated with this course, including relevant TCNJ policies, are available on CANVAS in a separate document titled "Course Policies". Students are expected to review and follow these policies. Failure to review these policies will not excuse students from being held accountable to them.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENT (GRADING)

Final grades are based on different activities: in-class exams, community engaged learning activities, class participation, and several written assignments (FSPs require a minimum of 16 pages of formal writing). The final grade is computed in the following manner: two exams (125, 150 points); three city case reports with associated oral presentations (50 points each); four field reports (25 points each), community engaged learning reflections (30 points); and class participation (45 points). Letter grades will be earned as follows: 0-66% = F; 67-69% = D; 70-79% = C; 80-89% = B; 90-100% = A. Plus and minuses with letter grades are based on relatively high or low performance within those ranges. I reserve the right to raise and lower borderline grades (within 1 percent of a grade boundary) based on overall performance. To protect your privacy and my sanity, individual grades will NOT be discussed in class, in the presence of other students (e.g., after class), or over the phone; grades will be discussed only in person or through your official TCNJ email account.

Exams: (Midterm = 125 points, Final = 150 points) Exams may contain objective and essay questions and will require students to integrate material from each part of the course. All exams should be considered comprehensive of the material that preceded it, and will include material covered in class and not in the texts, including student presentations. Exams may have take-home essays as a component of the exam, accounting for part of the exam grade. Make-up exams will only be allowed in the event of a documented emergency (e.g., major illness, death in the family). If some major obligation interferes with an exam date, contact me as soon as possible and provide official documentation of the conflict; in such circumstances, you must complete an alternate version of the exam BEFORE the scheduled exam date. Students who do not do this in advance will not be permitted to take the exam and will thus receive zero points.

Community Engaged Learning: (2 x 15 points) This class has a community engaged learning component; we will be working with the East Trenton Collaborative (ETC), which is a coalition of several community based organizations. More details on the actual activities will be provided as they become available, but students are required to participate in at least 8 hours of community-engaged learning with ETC over the course of the semester. After every 4 hours of activity students should produce a 250-500 word written

response to the experience, addressing how the CEL activity fits in with other course material (e.g., segregation, deindustrialization, poverty, brownfields). CEL reflections are due on the class meeting that immediately follows a CEL activity. CEL grades may be reduced by poor site performance by the student, as reported to the instructor by the Bonner leaders associated with the activity.

Participation: (3 points each day x 15 = 45) On every day when there is a class discussion (indicated in bold on the class schedule), students are expected to actively participate. To demonstrate participation, students must bring to class a typewritten or printed set of no fewer than three and no more than five questions or comments about the writing that could be used to spark in-class discussion. Questions may include requests for clarification or more information, discussion questions, or opinion/experience questions to ask of classmates. Over the course of discussion, students should jot responses to these questions on the sheet of paper that contains these questions. Papers must be submitted at the end of class. No late papers will be accepted for any reason; papers may also not be submitted for days in which the student is unable to participate in class discussions because of absences. However, there are 17 discussion dates indicated, so students can “pass” on two discussion dates, or can submit all 17 and have only the top 15 scores count towards your final grade. Handwritten papers will not be accepted. Participation grades will be assigned as follows: 3 = points: excellent questions/comments submitted and active participation in in-class discussion; 2.5 = excellent questions/comments submitted but minimal participation in class in-class discussion; 2 = weak or simple questions/comments submitted, but active participation in in-class discussion; 1.5 = weak or simple questions/comments submitted but minimal participation in in-class discussion; 1 = questions submitted of any quality, but no participation in in-class discussion or disruptive participation in class; 0 = no questions submitted and no participation in in-class discussion or disruptive participation in class. Students who are disruptive of class, particularly when other students are presenting will have up to 3 points deducted per disruptive day, regardless of submissions. Disruptions include arriving late (-1, -3 if during student presentation), leaving early (-1, -3 if during student presentation), leaving in the middle of discussion (-1, -3 if during student presentation), using electronic devices (-2, -3 if during student presentation), or other disruptive behavior or comments.

Field reports (25 points each x 4): Each student will be responsible for producing four field reports over the course of the semester. At least one field report must be completed by September 30, a second by October 24, a third by November 25, and a fourth by December 5. Students are encouraged to complete any or all four field reports earlier than these dates. All four reports may be based on field-trips associated with this class (to Trenton, Atlantic City, Newark, the Meadowlands), but students may also complete them independently. Dates and cost for field trips will be announced in class, as details are finalized. Students MUST visit four different locations to complete these reports.

To complete field reports, students must create a 5 slide PowerPoint document that is submitted on CANVAS (no paper copy need be submitted). The document must include five photographs (one per slide) and brief (100 to 250 word) captions of each that address the following: (1) a photograph of the person submitting the report at the location, with a caption that indicates the name of the location, the date of the visit, and the class concept being demonstrated (see below); (2) a photograph of “typical” residences at the location; (3) a photograph of a “typical” public space at the location, (4) a photograph of a “typical” business at the location; and (5) a photograph of “typical” local people seen at the location. If you do not have access to a digital camera, you may borrow one from me, subject to availability (you will not be evaluated on the quality of the photographs themselves, so you can use any digital camera, including phone cameras). The photographs should attempt to capture elements of the key concept that the field report is attempting to convey, and then describe them in the caption. Captions should demonstrate knowledge of the main concept and its associated components, and will be assessed on two criteria: (1) appropriate use and explanation of key concept in captions of four substantive photographs (4 X 5 points = 20 points) and appropriateness of illustrative photograph (4 X 1 point each) (an additional

point will be added for the photograph of the author at the location, but no credit will be given for any photograph if this photograph is not included). Students are welcome to travel in teams, but may not submit the same photographs as their classmates.

Concepts that can be investigated in reports are (example locations are included; students are free to visit other locations as long as they are located in New Jersey, and they are able to make a good case for that location given the concept being studied):

- Deindustrialization (e.g., Newark, Harrison, Roebling, Trenton, Camden, Paterson)
 - Edge Cities (e.g., see Garreau 1991)
 - Exurbs (e.g., Hopewell Twp, Millstone Twp., most of Warren and Sussex Counties)
 - Gentrification (e.g., Hoboken, Mill Hill (Trenton), Ocean Grove (Neptune), Red Bank, Montclair)
 - Inner Ring Suburb (e.g., Ewing, Bloomfield, Gloucester City, Highland Park)
 - Immigration/Neighborhood Succession (e.g., Elizabeth, Oak Tree Road (Woodbridge/Edison), Hightstown, Highland Park, Ironbound (Newark), Paterson, Top Road (Trenton), Chambersburg (Trenton), Fort Lee)
 - Redevelopment (e.g., Jersey City waterfront, Long Branch, Asbury Park, Trenton, Newark, Camden, New Brunswick, Atlantic City)
 - Shoreline Development (e.g., just about any oceanfront or bayfront community)
 - Suburban Sprawl (e.g., West Windsor, East Hanover, Mount Laurel, Brick)
 - Transit-Oriented Development (e.g., Montclair, New Brunswick, South Orange, Haddonfield)
 - Urban wilderness (e.g., Meadowlands, Pinelands, Highlands, Great Swamp, Barnegat Bay)
- [NOTE: If completing a field report on urban wilderness, the four content slides should indicate: 1) non-human landscape that represents this wilderness; 2) evidence of human damage to landscape; 3) evidence of attempts to mitigate or minimize human damage to the landscape; and 4) evidence of persistence of diverse wildlife.]

Case Reports (50, 50, 50): Each student will develop a case study of a municipality in New Jersey; no two students may develop a case study of the same municipality, assigned by order of request from the following list: Asbury Park, Atlantic City, Bayonne, Brick, Camden, Cape May, Cherry Hill, Clifton, Edison, Elizabeth, Hamilton (Mercer), Hoboken, Jersey City, Lakewood, Long Branch, Mantoloking, Montclair, Mount Laurel, Newark, New Brunswick, Paterson, Passaic, Princeton, Trenton, Toms River, Woodbridge, Union Beach, Vineland (These are the largest municipalities in the state by population, with additional municipalities that are representative of important issues covered in this class.) Case studies have three related components: (1) Physical and Built Environment Report (50 points); (2) Social Profile Report (50 points); and (3) Environmental Controversy Report (50 points). Each student must have selected a case municipality by Thursday, September 12. As soon as a case study has been selected, the student should begin following the local news source most appropriate for that municipality to identify a current environmental controversy, which must be approved by Monday, October 7. Many municipalities are covered by nj.com, but you will also want to check out the electronic newspaper archives for New Jersey available at TCNJ and possibly other direct news outlets.

Physical and Built Environment Report: (40 + 10 points) This report is due on Monday, October 7. This report should have a written component as well as a 5 minute Power Point presentation that will be given in class either on October 7 or 10. The written report should include brief summaries of the following information: topography, land and water forms, soil type, historical land use, transportation infrastructure (freeways, highways, trains, ports, airports, etc.), residential buildings (housing types, age of housing, ownership, value of owner-occupied units, vacancy rates, etc.), and location. Do NOT include any information about the characteristics of the people living in this community (as this will be covered in the subsequent report). To complete this report, access NJ Geo-Web and the most recent US Housing Census

(instructions for using both will be given in class). Length of the report will be determined by the complexity of information associated with the items indicated above, but should be around 2-4 single spaced pages. In addition, student must prepare a 5 minute Power Point presentation which introduces the rest of the class to the content of this report, and demonstrates the student's ability to use NJ Geo-Web by capturing and presenting mapped images. Written reports will earn up to 40 points and will be graded in terms of the thoroughness of content included. Poor organization and/or multiple errors will result in a reduction of 10 percent. Oral reports will earn up to 10 points, again, focused on content, but also on ability to communicate this effectively to your classmates. Presentations will be penalized 1 point for every partial minute less than 4 minutes or more than 6 minutes. Include printed copies of your Power Point presentation with your written report (please print six to a page).

Social Profile Report: (40 + 10 points) This report is due Thursday, October 31 and is similar to the previous report, except that you should develop a social profile of your municipality, using Census, Social Explorer, and/or Municipal Website information. Oral presentations will take place on October 31 and November 4. This report must include the size of the population, race/ethnic/national composition, education levels, wealth/income/poverty levels, occupation types/commuting distances, family characteristics, but may draw on additional social information to answer the following questions: who lives there? How do they live and work? How has this changed over time? Length of the report will be determined by the complexity of information associated with the items indicated above, but should be around 2-4 single spaced pages. All sources that you draw from for this report should be properly cited. As with the previous report, the written component will earn up to 40 points and will be graded in terms of the thoroughness of content included. Poor organization and/or multiple errors will result in a reduction of 10 percent. Oral reports will earn up to 10 points, again, focused on content, but also on ability to communicate this effectively to your classmates. Presentations will be penalized 1 point for every partial minute less than 4 minutes or more than 6 minutes. Include printed copies of your Power Point presentation with your written report (please print six to a page).

Environmental Controversy Report: (40 + 10 points) As soon as you have selected/been assigned your case community, you should begin to regularly follow the news written about that community to identify a current environmental controversy in the area ("environment" in this context is quite broadly defined, as it includes the physical and built environment, as well as the social environment that is linked to the physical and built environment). Written reports are due Monday, December 2; oral reports will be given on Monday, December 2 or Thursday, December 5. Students are strongly encouraged to "bounce" ideas about the controversies that are most interesting to them off the professor during office hours or via email, as a means for beginning to develop the topic for this report. This report should briefly introduce the municipality but should mainly focus on the controversy that you have identified. The report should clearly identify the nature of that controversy and should seek to situate it in a historical context (why did this controversy develop here and in this way?) but must also consider how similar problems have been handled in other contexts through use of readings assigned in class, other the academic literature (specifically, peer reviewed journal articles, university press books) and/or policy (local, state, or federal). These reports will vary based on the complexity of the controversy studied, but in no case should be shorter than 3 or longer than 6 double-spaced pages in length. Exemplary papers (A range) will provide sufficient background to contextualize the case without providing unnecessary information, will draw meaningful comparisons with assigned readings and other cases derived from the academic literature, and will cite relevant policy. These papers will make practical solutions to resolving the controversy, based on policy and/or resolutions elsewhere. Good papers (B range) may include superfluous background information and may not address relevant policy, but otherwise develop strong comparisons with other cases. These papers will suggest solutions which may not be practical, but which are at least based on policy and/or resolutions elsewhere. Passing papers (C range) will describe the municipality and controversy, without fully connecting the two, and will draw at least some comparisons with similar cases

in the academic literature and assigned readings. These papers will suggest solutions, but these may not be clearly derived from policy and/or similar cases. Failing papers (D and F) will fail to appropriately describe the municipality (including simply cutting and pasting from previous reports without eliminating irrelevant material), will not thoroughly describe the controversy, will not make reasonable comparisons with similar cases in the academic literature or policy, and/or will not make reasonable suggestions about resolutions to the controversy. Poor organization, unclear writing, and the like may result in the reduction of up to an entire letter grade. Failure to proofread will result in a 5 point deduction. Oral reports will earn up to 10 points, again, focused on content, but also on ability to communicate this effectively to your classmates. Presentations will be penalized 1 point for every partial minute less than 4 minutes or more than 6 minutes. Include printed copies of your Power Point presentation with your written report (please print six to a page).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Reading and assignments are expected to be completed on the date indicated below.

MONDAYS	THURSDAYS
August 26: Introductions	August 29: Tuttle Prologue, Stansfield 1
Tuesday, September 3: Stansfield 2, Tuttle 1-2	September 5: Stansfield 3, Tuttle 3
September 9; Tuttle 4-5	September 12: Stansfield 4 Case Community Must Be Selected
September 16: Tuttle 5-6	September 19: Tuttle 7
September 23: Tuttle 8-9, Street Fight (video)	September 26: Tuttle 10
September 30: Garreau Field Report 1 Due	October 3: Sullivan 13-56 (through “An Achievement of the Future”
October 7: Sullivan 57-106 (through “Valley of the Garbage Hills”) Case Controversy Must Be Selected Physical and Built Environment Report Due Oral Reports: Physical and Built Environment	October 10 Sullivan 107- 163 (through “Digging” Oral Reports: Physical and Built Environment
October 14: Sullivan 164-206 (to end)	October 17: Exam 1
October 21: Fagin Prologue and Part 1 (“The Ice Cream Factory”	October 24: Fagin Part 2 (“Breach”) Field Report 2 Due; A Civil Action (Video)
October 28: Fall Break (No Class)	October 31 Fagin Part 3 (“Counting”) Oral Reports: Social Profiles
November 4: Fagin Part 4 (“Causes”) Oral Reports: Social Profiles	November 7: Belton Introduction, 1
November 11: Belton 2-4	November 14: Belton 5-6
November 18: Belton 7-8	November 21: Belton 9-10
November 25: Belton 11-12 Field Report 3 Due	November 28 Thanksgiving Break (No Class)
December 2: Oral Reports: Controversies Controversy Report Due	December 5: Oral Reports: Controversies Field Report 4 Due
Final Exam According to TCNJ College-wide Schedule	