HIST 2020W.80
Washington DC: History, Culture, Politics

Instructor: Dr. Christopher Klemek
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COURSE DESCRIPTION
HIST 2020 is a unique course that promotes civic engagement through varied activities, including service learning, archival research, writing (as well as revising) interpretations of local urban history, and finally the presentation of a city’s past to the community that now inhabits it. Over the semester, students will undertake a collective historical documentation project focusing on a Washington neighborhood (Foggy Bottom) over time. They will utilize area historical collections and partner with community organizations to examine and write up the history of specific DC sites, and ultimately present their findings at public venues and/or online. The service component will thus be historical in nature and involve an engagement with community organizations both during the research as well as the delivery of the students' final written documentation.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to…
• Identify key forces and developments that have shaped the form of a major U.S. city
• Understand causes of change over time in cities, particularly demographic and power shifts
• Analyze various kinds of sources archival primary sources for insights into urban life
• Write a coherent essay, using historical evidence to support a clear and convincing argument within a well-organized structure
• Engage with non-profit organizations in the civic community for academic service learning

REQUIREMENTS
Students should obtain their own copies of the following book and bring them to class daily unless instructed otherwise:
• Scholarly literature: Howard Gillette, Between Justice and Beauty: Race, Planning, and the Failure of Urban Policy in Washington, D.C.

GRADING
Semester grades will be determined by one midterm examination (20%), one critical revision exercise (20%), one primary document research exercise (10%), one original research report (20%), and a research team project for online publication (15%), in addition to a student’s class contributions throughout the course (including attendance,
informed participation, preparation, and related minor exercises, cumulatively worth 15%.

Since these community history research projects are intended to become polished, well-revised writings, based upon engagement with various organizations and individuals in the Washington community, as well as student research using archival primary sources, the course will culminate with a public presentation of their findings. This may involve collecting all the student projects into an online encyclopedia, a research fair, meetings with stakeholder organizations, or all of the above. Thus the expected service contributions of students in this course include: 1) local historical research using archival sources, 2) developing the necessary awareness of the civic context for interpretative understanding of that research and 3) writing and revising a lasting scholarly document to convey these to the served community via publicly accessible venues.

COURSE POLICIES
Excused absences and/or extensions must be documented by SHS, UCC, Dean’s or Athletics office, etc. Without official documentation, the course instructor has no fair way to verify excuses or grant extensions requests.

Please beware that any and all instances of cheating, plagiarism, or other academic dishonesty, as explained in the Code of Academic Integrity, will be referred to the Academic Integrity Office and are subject to failure, suspension, or expulsion. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with the Code, which is available by visiting: http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html#definition

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 or in person in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. Students are encouraged to meet with their professors early in the semester to discuss the academic implications of the disability. The University Counseling Center (202-994-5300) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students’ personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include crisis and emergency mental health consultations, confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals: http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices

In the case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND ACTIVITIES

WEEK 1: (Jan. 12) class topic: Introduction & Orientation
Your responsibility: Begin reading Gillette, Between Justice & Beauty

WEEK 2: (Jan. 19): NO CLASS MLK SERVICE DAY
Your responsibility: Finish reading Gillette, Between Justice & Beauty
WEEK 3: (Jan. 26) class topic: Frameworks for DC History
Your responsibility: Read Sherwood, *Foggy Bottom* (avail. via Blackboard)

WEEK 4: (Feb. 2) class topic: Introducing DigitalDC
Your responsibility: MIDTERM ON READINGS (=20% of grade)

WEEK 5: (Feb. 9) class topic: Primary vs. Secondary Sources
Your responsibility: Become familiar with Washingtoniana sources in Gelman Library

WEEK 6: (Feb. 16): NO CLASS PRESIDENTS DAY
Your responsibility: Continue researching DC scholarship in Gelman Library

WEEK 7: (Feb. 23) class topic: Historiographical Research
Your responsibility: CRITICAL REVISION DUE MAR. 1 (=20%)

WEEK 8: (Mar. 2) class topic: Archival Resources in/on Washington
Your responsibility: Strategize your group’s approach to DC-area archival collections

WEEK 9 (Mar. 9): NO CLASS SPRING BREAK

WEEK 10: (Mar. 16) class topic: Methodologies for Primary Sources
Your responsibility: Conduct research in DC-area archives

WEEK 11: (Mar. 23) class activity: Independent Archival Research (off-campus)
Your responsibility: PRIMARY DOCUMENT REPORT DUE MAR. 29 (=10%),

WEEK 12: (Mar. 30) class topic: Evaluating Historical Evidence
Your responsibility: Determine if your research contribution is original and significant

WEEK 13: (Apr. 6) class topic: Peer Review of Research Findings
Your responsibility: RESEARCH PAPER DUE APR. 12 (=20%)

WEEK 14: (Apr. 13) class topic: Synthesizing Interpretations
Your responsibility: Begin weaving group members’ findings into a single narrative

WEEK 15: (Apr. 20) class topic: Preparing for Publication
Your responsibility: Contextualize your group’s interpretation in the scholarly literature

WEEK 16: (Apr. 27-29): Public presentations of (revised and collected) community research projects to various stakeholders in Washington community, which may include the GW Libraries’ online exhibition *DigitalDC: A Community History Project*, participation in the Academic Service-Learning Symposium hosted by GW Center for Civic Engagement and Public Service, talks at GW Museum, or other activities/venues.
Your responsibility: RESEARCH TEAM SITE INTERPRETATION DUE (=15%)