



Fall 2018 Course

207 (01, 581180) – Development of the American City

Day/Time: Monday & Wednesday – 1:40 – 2:55 PM

Building/Room: Powdermaker Hall 115

Instructor: Martin Hanlon

Course Description: This course examines the changing structure, economy and demography of American cities from the colonial era to the present. Beginning with the “walking city” of the colonial era, we will explore how changes in transportation technology, industrialization, population growth and patterns of immigration have shaped the course of urban development in the United States. We will also examine alternative visions for cities of the future.

The first part of the course traces the historical development of the American city from the colonial era to 1945. We trace the impact of changes in transportation technology on the form of the city and urban and metropolitan growth; the growing separation of city and suburb of U.S. urban development. We pay close attention to the history of New York City. And we will view segments of Ric Burns’ documentary, *New York*.

The second part of the course examines the growth of Post-War suburbs and the transformation of the United States into the world’s first suburban nation, where the majority of the population lives in the suburbs surrounding the core central cities.

The third and final part of the course is devoted to the renewed popularity of city living and efforts to mitigate the problems of suburban sprawl in the United States. We focus the design philosophy of the “New Urbanism,” which seeks to reduce the harmful effects of sprawl, encourage walking and bicycling as modes of transportation, enhance the sense of community in neighborhoods, and to promote demographic diversity.