

Course Syllabus

HIS 446/546 - American Cultural History: Doing Spatial History

Online, Fall Semester 2020: 14 weeks



Students from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College sit in at the whites-only lunch counter at the F. W. Woolworth store in downtown Greensboro on 2 Feb. 1960. Left to right: Joseph McNeil, Franklin McCain, Billy Smith and Clarence Henderson. Greensboro News and Record.

Instructor Information

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If you have any questions about this course, please use the [course Q&A forum](#). You can also reach me via email or during my office hours (as needed) via Google Hangouts. For technical assistance, please reach out to the helpdesk at 336-256-8324. You can also use the ITS website for assistance - <https://its.uncg.edu/Help/>

For Whom Planned

History Majors and Graduate Students. This course is also open to non-majors. Graduate students should pay attention to the additional course requirements described in this syllabus.

Course Overview and Objectives:

On the afternoon of February 1, 1960 four African American students from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College sat down at the Woolworth's whites-only lunch counter in downtown Greensboro and sparked a national movement to desegregate public spaces of consumption. This course will apply methods of spatial analysis to explore how power relationships have been constructed and contested in physical consumer landscapes of the twentieth century, with particular attention to race and gender. From the machine age chain stores of the early twentieth century to our contemporary age of surveillance capitalism, we will study how landscapes designed for mass

consumption were created as a social process that reshaped consumer behaviors and identities. The struggle for democracy has played out not only in the voting booth but also at the lunch counter and in the shopping line.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Apply interdisciplinary methods to interpret different types of primary sources documenting historical spaces.
- Use primary source evidence to explain how space is socially and historically produced.
- Analyze primary sources such as photographs, floorplans, and maps as evidence of social relationships and power systems in historical spaces.
- Evaluate how power relationships have been constructed and contested in physical consumer landscapes of the twentieth century, with particular attention to race and gender.

TEACHING METHODS AND ASSIGNMENTS FOR ACHIEVING LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course uses a variety of teaching methods including videos, written materials, websites, discussions, and assignments that ask participants to demonstrate mastery of learning outcomes. Through weekly assignments, discussions, and interaction with the instructor and participants, the course provides support, feedback, and resources to support the development of historical thinking and understanding of spatial history.

COURSE STRUCTURE

The course follows a module structure focusing each week on a specific course development topic. Modules consist of an introduction, some background information about the specific topic, and practice activities for spatial analysis.

At the end of each module you will complete an assignment that applies the reading and methods we studied in the module. The Discussion Board will offer different kinds of opportunities to practice analysis of primary sources and other course readings.

COURSE FACILITATOR EXPECTATIONS

- The course facilitator will provide feedback on all graded assessments within a week.
- The course facilitator monitors all discussion posts and provides feedback when appropriate.
- The course facilitator will answer all emails from students within 24 business hours.
- Any course updates and new information will be sent via course announcement in Canvas as early in the week as possible.

PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS

- Plan to spend at least 2-5 hours a week completing this course. This time includes reviewing the module, submitting your assessments, and participating in the discussions.
- If you are unable to meet a deadline or experience a personal issue, please notify the course facilitator immediately.
- Be respectful of others in your discussion posts and replies. Your feedback should be constructive and sensitive. Think about the replies that you would want to receive.
- If you have a specific question about your course, email the course instructor. If you have a general question about the specific topic that week, use the Q & A discussion forum so that everyone can share their answers. Your question and the answer may benefit others in the course.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

The final grade will be determined for UNDERGRADUATE participants based on the following weighted assessments:

Discussion Board 20%

Module 2 Assignment. Primary Source Analysis 20%

Module 3 Assignment. Gender and Spatial Analysis 30%

Module 4 Assignment. Race and Spatial Analysis 30%

The final grade will be determined for GRADUATE participants based on the following weighted assessments:

Discussion Board 20%

Module 2 Assignment. Primary Source Analysis 20%

Module 3 Assignment. Gender and Spatial Analysis 20%

Module 4 Assignment. Race and Spatial Analysis 20%

Literature Review 20%

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students should plan to log into the Doing Spatial History Canvas site weekly for at least 2-5 hours a week.

REQUIRED TEXTS/READINGS/REFERENCES

All readings will be provided in the course. Make sure your computer has the Chrome browser. This browser is the best choice when accessing Canvas.

Required Equipment

Camera, webcam, or phone for taking and uploading pictures and videos. Robust internet connection.

ACCESSIBILITY/ACCOMMODATIONS

UNCG seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must be registered with the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS). If you wish to request accommodations, please start the process by contacting OARS at 215 Elliott University Center, 336-334-5440, ods.uncg.edu ([Links to an external site.](#))

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Each student is required to sign the Academic Integrity Policy on all major work submitted for the course. Refer to the following URL: <http://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/academic-integrity-policy/> ([Links to an external site.](#))

LATE WORK POLICY

You will do best in this course if you work on schedule. If something gets in the way of this, please reach out immediately.

FINAL EXAMINATION

There is no final exam in this course.

TOPICAL OUTLINE/CALENDAR

Week 1: Complete by August 21 Course Orientation Module

Module 1. Exploring Different Methods for Spatial Analysis

Week 2: Complete by August 28 Primary Sources

Week 3: Complete by September 4 Ethnography and Shopping (Miller and Douglas)

Week 4: Complete by September 11 Cultural Geography/Vernacular Architecture (Growth, Lefebvre, Foucault)

Week 5: Complete by September 18 **Zoom Meeting**—Application

Module 1 Assignment due by midnight on Monday September 21.

Module 2. Historical Context: Gender and Spatial History

Week 6: Complete by September 25 Turn of the Century Downtown (Growth, Domosh, and Remus)

Week 7: Complete by October 2 Department Stores (Benson)

Week 8: Complete by October 9 Department Stores (Parker)

Week 9: Complete by October 16 **Zoom Meeting**—Gender Analysis

Week 10: Complete by October 23 Gender Analysis

Module 2 Assignment due by midnight on Monday October 26.

Module 3. Historical Context: Race and Spatial History

Week 11: Complete by October 30 **Zoom Meeting** Intro to the Case Study Options

Green Book Case Study or Woolworth's Scrapbook case study

Week 12: Complete by November 6 History of Segregated Consumption (Hale, Bay)

Week 13: Complete by November 13 History of the Green Book (Hall, Franz)

Week 14: Complete by November 21 **Zoom Meeting**--Case Study Analysis

Module 3 Assignment due by midnight on Tuesday November 24 Primary Source Analysis

Module 3 Assignment due by midnight on November 24.

Graduate Students: Lit Review Module

You will write a historiographical review essay of 5 books that address some aspect of spatial history. (about 15 pages minimum) Due dates are as follows:

- Read model review essays and submit review essay discussion assignment by **Sept. 15**.
- Selection of books for review by **October 1**. (Given the uncertainty of the semester it is important to identify these resources early in case the campus shuts down. You may not be able to find everything you need in an ebook format.) You may focus on an issue or theme of your choice but the books you select must be in conversation with each other. Consider whether they address the same type of space/or building, the range of time represented in your selections, the types of methodologies the scholars are using. We will have opportunities to discuss how to make these selections before the due date. Must be approved by drt.
- Read books and submit draft review essay by **October 30**.
- Revise essay and submit final by **November 30**.