

Geography 340 – A01
Geographies of the North American City
University of Victoria
Fall 2015

Instructor:	Reuben Rose-Redwood, Ph.D.
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Office hours:	Mondays and Thursdays, 1:20 p.m.—2:20 p.m.
Course time:	Wednesdays and Thursdays, 2:30 p.m.—3:50 p.m.

CLASS FORMAT

The format for this course will consist of a combination of lectures, in-class activities, and films. Most class sessions will be lecture-based, but we will also occasionally use class time to discuss the assigned readings, which students are expected to have read prior to class each day. In addition to

Critical Review Essay (20%)

The ability to write well and develop critical thinking skills is a crucial component of any university education. For this class, we will be reading David Scobey's book, *Empire City: The Making and Meaning of the New York City Landscape*, during the first half of the semester, and the major writing assignment for the course will consist of a Critical Review Essay on Scobey's book. If you review the syllabus schedule, I have listed recommended dates to complete specific chapters of this book, so that you can stay on track in order to have enough time later in the semester to write your essay. The essay should be 8-10 pages, double-spaced, 12-pt Times New Roman font, 2.54 cm margins, with no large spaces between paragraphs. The primary objective of this essay is NOT to simply summarize the book but rather to develop your own argument by selecting a key theme that is interwoven throughout the book, and exploring this theme through an in-depth engagement with the text itself while also considering how it relates to contemporary forms of urbanism in North America today. The essay can either be written individually or in groups of two.

We will be having a class discussion of Scobey's *Empire City* (Chapter 1-6) on **October 15**, so make sure to have finished reading these chapters prior to class on that day. On **November 19**, please bring a hardcopy draft of your Critical Review Essay to class for a peer-to-peer writing workshop, and the final submission is due in class on **December 3**. No late papers will be accepted without prior consultation with the instructor regarding a medical emergency or related university-excused extension.

Urban Film Project (30%)

As part of this course, students will work in groups of 3-5 students to make a 10-minute film about a particular aspect of urban geography in the Greater Victoria Region. The film should be digitally edited using desktop (he) 0.24m /F2.0 (pa) 0.beG 3

Attendance (10%)

Attendance is crucial to the successful completion of this class. A sign-in sheet, therefore, will be distributed at the beginning of each class session. Each student is responsible for signing the sign-in sheet. If a student has a university-excused absence, this should be discussed with the instructor, preferably before the date of absence. Additionally, each student is required to attend at least one of *The City Talks* public lectures as part of their participation in this course (see below). If a student cannot attend one of these talks due to a scheduling conflict, please consult the instructor at the beginning of the semester to make other arrangements.

: Urban Studies Speaker Series

This fall the Committee for Urban Studies at UVic will be hosting its annual public speaker series entitled, *The City Talks*. The series schedule will be posted on CourseSpaces, and while you are only required to attend one of the lectures as part of your class attendance for the course this fall, I encourage you to come to all the lectures if time permits. For more information about *The City Talks*

COURSE SCHEDULE

Below is the course schedule for the entire semester. I will do my best to stick to this schedule, although I do reserve the right to make changes if necessary.

Week 1

Wednesday, September 9: Course overview

No assigned readings.

Thursday, September 10: The North American urban experience in global context

Readings

Scobey, D. (2002), “Can a City Be Planned?” (Introduction), *Empire City: The Making and Meaning of the New York City Landscape*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, pp. 1-14.

Week 2

Wednesday, September 16: Urban historical transformations I

Readings

Scobey, D. (2002), “Metropolis and Nation” (Chapter 1), *Empire City: The Making and Meaning of the New York City Landscape*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, pp. 15-54.

Thursday, September 17: Urban historical transformations II

No assigned readings.

Week 3

Wednesday, September 23: Film—New York, A Documentary: The City and the World

Readings

Scobey, D. (2002), “The Midcentury Boom” (Chapter 2), *Empire City: The Making and Meaning of the New York City Landscape*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, pp. 55-88.

Thursday, September 24: Film—New York, A Documentary: The City and the World, continued

No assigned readings.

Week 4

Wednesday, September 30: From modernism to the new urbanism

Readings

Scobey, D. (2002), “The Rule of Real Estate” (Chapter 3), *Empire City: The Making and Meaning of the New York City Landscape*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, pp. 89-133.

Thursday, October 1: Changing consumerscapes in the commodity world

No assigned readings.

Week 5

Wednesday, October 7:

