America, it seems, is in a perpetual state of urban crisis. In the nineteenth century, Americans might have understood "urban crisis" to include rampant epidemics of yellow fever and cholera, social conflicts surrounding the arrival of Irish and German immigrants, violent confrontations between workers and capitalists, and the "tramp menace" posed by unemployed workers. In the early twentieth century, the "crisis" might have referred to "slum" housing conditions for immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe, husbands' desertion of wives and children, epidemics of tuberculosis, the public presence of alcohol and prostitutes, and traffic jams of horses, trolleys, and, later, automobiles.

What, if anything, distinguishes the urban crisis of the last 50 years? What is it? What caused it? And what, if anything, can be done about it? This course will help you formulate some answers to these questions. We will survey the development of American cities from World War II to the present. Drawing on primary and secondary sources, print and visual media, and a variety of disciplinary approaches including history, sociology, anthropology, and journalism, we will seek to understand the forces that have shaped the cities we live in today.

**Format:** The course will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Tuesday class meetings will be devoted primarily to lecture, while Thursday class meetings will chiefly be dedicated to discussion of the readings assigned for that week. (NOTE: There are two exceptions: February 25 and April 15. On these days we will combine lecture and discussion of the readings on Tuesday. Thursday February 27 will be the midterm, and Thursday April 17 we will not meet because of the holiday of Passover.) On some Thursdays, the class will split into two groups, each of which will meet for 40 minutes (one from 3-3:40; one from 3:45-4:25). This division into smaller groups will provide greater opportunity for participation in a more intimate discussion format. Other Thursdays, the entire class will meet from 3-4:30 in order to see a film, hear a speaker, analyze a source, or make direct observations in the context of that week's readings. You will be notified in advance of the arrangement for each week.

There are also three required meetings outside of regular class hours, as follows:

**Walking Tour:** I will give a walking tour of Philadelphia for class members on Sunday, March 23, from 1-3 p.m. (weather permitting; March 30 will be the rain date). This will give you a chance to see the ways that many of the themes and topics that we discuss in this course have played out in the landscape and built environment of our own city.

**Supplementary Movies:** In order to watch two feature-length documentaries, we will meet twice at 7:30 in the evening: on Wednesday, January 29, we will see Roger and Me; on Tuesday, March 18, we will see Girls Like Us. The place will be announced in advance.
Attendance at the movies and walking tour is mandatory; if you have an irresolvable conflict, notify me in advance to arrange a way to make them up.

**Communications:** This class has a listserver (hist153-401-03a@lists.upenn.edu). It will be used to for announcements, supplementary information for readings and lectures, and cyber-discussions of class topics. Please check your e-mail frequently for class-related materials.

**WATU:** This course is affiliated with Writing Across the University (WATU). If you choose the WATU option for the class, it will fulfill half of the writing requirement. The WATU fellow is Andrew Heath; a second fellow may be assigned to the class, depending on the level of interest. WATU students will receive extra attention and help with their writing. While it is no guarantee of a higher grade, students who make serious efforts at revision under the guidance of a WATU fellow generally submit better papers.

**Requirements:**

**Exams:** Students will take an in-class mid-term exam on February 27, and a final exam to be scheduled by the registrar. Exams will include terms to identify drawn from the readings, and essay questions that will require you to synthesize readings, lectures, and other course materials. Value: 15 percent of grade for midterm, 25 percent for final.

**First Paper:** Students will write a 3-5 page paper analyzing a recent news or editorial item of their choosing from a Philadelphia newspaper. You should begin reading a Philadelphia paper immediately and looking out for items that you might choose for this assignment. More detailed instructions on this assignment will be distributed during the second week of class. The assignment is due in class on February 18; for WATU students, a revised version is due in class on March 4. Value: 15 percent of grade.

**Second Paper:** Students will write an 8-10 page paper based on limited research in primary sources. Further instructions will be distributed in early March. The paper is due in class on April 8; for WATU students, a revised version is due in class on April 22. Value: 30 percent of grade.

**Class Participation:** Students are expected to come to Thursday class sessions having done the reading and prepared to discuss it. The instructor will take attendance and note absences and lateness at the Thursday class sessions; these will count against your participation grade. Attendance at films and the walking tour will also be part of participation. The instructor reserves the right to administer pop quizzes at Thursday discussion meetings as a motivational tool! Grades on any pop quizzes will count toward class participation. Value: 15 percent of grade.

**Academic Integrity:** The instructor will strictly and vigorously enforce the University’s Code of Academic Integrity in all aspects of the class. See [http://www.upenn.edu/osl/acadint.html](http://www.upenn.edu/osl/acadint.html) if you are unsure of any of the code’s provisions. Any suspected violations will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.
Books: The following books are available at the Penn Book Center on 34th Street near Walnut (NOT the Penn Book Store):

Davis, Mike. Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the U.S. City, revised and expanded ed.
Formisano, Ronald P. Boston Against Busing: Race, Class, and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s
Jacobs, Jane. The Death and Life of Great American Cities
Kozol, Jonathan. Savage Inequalities: Children in America’s Schools
Mink, Gwendolyn. Welfare’s End, revised ed.
Pellow, David Naguib. Garbage Wars: The Struggle for Environmental Justice in Chicago
Sassen, Saskia. Cities in a World Economy, 2nd ed.

There is also a bulkpack, available at Campus Copy, 3907 Walnut Street. All books as well as the bulkpack are available at Rosengarten Reserve in Van Pelt Library.

Topics: Unless otherwise noted, the topic for a week is, broadly speaking, the topic for both the lecture and the discussion. Readings marked with an asterisk (*) indicate bulkpack items.

January 14: Introduction to Course: What "Urban Crisis"?

January 16: Lecture: Cities on the Eve of the Post-War Era

January 21-23: Chocolate Cities, Vanilla Suburbs: Two Great Migrations, 1940s-50s

January 28-30: De-Industrialization and Sunbelt Growth, 1940s-1960s

January 29: 7:30 Film, Roger and Me. Place TBA
February 4-6: Urban Renewal and Its Discontents
   Jacobs, Jane. The Death and Life of Great American Cities.

February 11-13: Protest, Politics and Violence: 1960s
   *Fogelson, Robert M. "Violence as Protest" and "Liberalism at an Impasse" in Violence as Protest: A Study of Riots and Ghettos (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1971), 1-26; 155-181; 217-221; 244-249

February 18: First paper due, in class

February 18-20: White Backlash and Fiscal Crisis, 1960s-70s
   Formisano, Ronald. Boston Against Busing: Race, Class, and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s.

February 25: Homelessness in the Postindustrial City: The Reagan Years
   NOTE: Readings will be discussed on TUESDAY this week, and will be included on Thursday’s exam.

February 27: Midterm in class

March 4: WATU students: Revised first essays due in class
March 4-6: The New Urban Immigration
   Davis, Mike. Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the U.S. City

March 8-16 SPRING BREAK
March 18: Film, *Girls Like Us*, 7:30 p.m., place TBA
March 18-20: Youth and Education, 1980s-1990s
   Kozol, Jonathan. *Savage Inequalities: Children in America’s Schools*

March 23: Walking Tour, 1-3 pm (weather permitting)


March 30: Walking Tour, 1-3 pm (rain date)

April 1-3: Public Health I: Drugs, Violence, Crime, and AIDS, 1980s-1990s

April 8: Second papers due in class
April 8-10: Public Health II: Cities and their Environments
   Pellow, David Naguib. *Garbage Wars: The Struggle for Environmental Justice in Chicago*

April 15: The Global City
   Sassen, Saskia. *Cities in a World Economy*
   NOTE: Class will not meet on April 17, in observance of Passover. Readings will be discussed in class on Tuesday.

April 22: WATU: Revised second essays due in class
   Additional readings TBA

Final Exam: To be scheduled by registrar.