

# The City in American History

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Last Updated: Fri, 01/02/2026

**Course prefix:** HTS

**Course number:** 3011

**Section:** A

**CRN**

31656

**Instructor first name:** Daniel

**Instructor last name:** Amsterdam

**Semester:** Spring

**Academic year:** 2026

**Course description:**

Through a combination of lectures, readings, and discussion, this course examines the nature of urban life throughout U.S. history, especially since the late nineteenth century. It explores how cities have arisen, declined, and changed over time due to economic, demographic, cultural, and political developments as well as shifts in ideas about how to manage urban and later metropolitan affairs. It also examines how cities have served as engines of cultural and artistic production and why cities have been a perennial source of political controversy. Above all, it contends that the struggle to make cities livable and sustainable remains one of the most pressing issues of our time and that understanding the past is indispensable for moving toward a better urban future.

**Academic honesty/integrity statement:**

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

**Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):**

**This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area.**

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question: How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:  
Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist, or change.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion