



This class will present a visual and historical analysis of urban space as seen through the medium of cinema. This is primarily an urbanism, social history, and architectural history class. The subject goes beyond individual buildings -- the subject here is the city, its life, and its representation. Movies illustrate theories of urban planning; on-location shooting can reveal aspects of urban life, and fanciful set designs can expose the unrealistic goals of some architects. Themes to be explored include early American immigration, the contrast between the city and the suburb, the city as a disciplinary space of social control, film noir, utopian and dystopian cities, gentrification, and the hyper-real world of New Urbanism.

The course is interdisciplinary in nature: our investigation into the cinematic city will include methods and theory from anthropology, art history, environmental studies, ethnomusicology, geography, history, and literary studies. We will use both primary and secondary sources to gain an understanding of the city as depicted through film. Students should be willing to complete the reading, view the films, think deeply about the themes covered, and come prepared to participate in class.

## LEARNING GOALS

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Develop a foundation for visual literacy through the introduction and practice of various methods of analysis
- Demonstrate an ability to discuss urban development and social conditions of the city
- Draw clear connections between the built environment and ways cities function
- Critique various representations of urban life
- Synthesize information from multiple sources in order to generate new insights



**This course fulfills the Core Requirement AH: Arts and Humanities Goal AHp.** As such, students should be able to analyze art in itself, and in relation to specific histories, values, languages, cultures, and technologies.