

# Discover Chicago: Sacred Spaces, Powerful Places

Interdisciplinary Studies 103, Section 114  
Summer/Autumn, 2001  
DePaul University

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Individual meetings with the faculty instructor, staff instructor or student mentor outside of class may be arranged by appointment.

## **A. DESCRIPTION AND GOALS:**

Space... the final frontier.  
James T. Kirk

Wherever you go, there you are.  
George Carlin

How is it that some *physical locations have deeper meanings*—becoming symbolically powerful, sometimes "sacred," in persons' experiences? Who participates in these realities, who does not, and why? We'll explore places deemed to hold profound meaning, sometimes for individuals and sometimes for groups. We'll visit and think about an array of places, including a museum about Chicago, an Indo-American cultural center, several ethnically diverse neighborhoods, a homeless shelter, a Catholic church, a prison, a Baha'i house of worship, a federal reserve bank, a board of trade, a farmer's market, a Jewish synagogue, public art and communal spaces in the downtown area, a nature center, and a cemetery. We'll think about the importance of place in a time of rootlessness, the role of memory and ritual, pilgrimage and worship, the stories of immigrants and the dispossessed, our craving for nature, the role of public spaces, and a host of other ways that people experience places as particularly significant. We'll consider perspectives drawn from theology, philosophy, art, geography, history and other fields. We'll document our explorations through digital photos so we can revisit them throughout the quarter, connecting site visits with readings and discussions.

Throughout our course, we will also consider a variety of "transitional issues" related to students' *intellectual and personal development*. We will engage in activities intended to allow students to become aware of and proficient in their use of DePaul's resources (such as the library and technology services); to develop study and decision-making skills vital to their academic and personal success (such as stress and time management, learning styles, communication skills, etc.); to begin creating and implementing a plan for career and educational development; to reflect upon and gain understanding about diversity in Chicago and at the university (how to negotiate differences and cross-cultural communication); and to develop a sense of belonging to the DePaul University community.

Our course will have two fundamental phases—the Immersion Week, and the Autumn Quarter. In the Immersion Week, we will visit a number of sites across metropolitan Chicago, where we will learn first hand about the many meanings of space and place. In the Autumn Quarter we will attempt to CONNECT the Immersion Week site visits with the Autumn Quarter readings, through sustained discussions and writing. We will attempt to integrate our discussion of students' transitional issues with the rest of our studies. We might call this whole process *experiential learning*. Here, the world of ideas and the "real world" outside the classroom interact and connect, so that your understanding of one is shaped by the other, and vice-versa.

This course has some *specific learning goals*, and if you complete the course successfully you will achieve the following:

1. You will define, describe and explain the key facts and concepts introduced in our site visits, readings and class sessions.
2. You will analyze complex ideas to show an understanding of their structure and meaning.
3. You will make plausible and insightful comparisons of different concepts and thinkers.
4. You will propose plausible and interesting connections between site visits and readings.
5. You will formulate evaluations of the relative merits of some of the ideas under consideration, and articulate your own ideas as well, drawing upon knowledge and insight you have gained in this class or elsewhere in order to make a clear and well supported case for your own position.
6. You will develop your capacity for clear and effective writing.
7. You will develop your capacity for clear and effective verbal communication.

## **B. STUDENT REQUIREMENTS:**

1. **Preparation of readings and assignments.** Come to each class session and site visit having completed any assigned readings, taken thorough notes, and having tried your best to find out the meanings of terms and concepts in the readings that are unfamiliar to you. If you do this carefully and consistently you will be well prepared for our discussions and you will have a strong foundation from which to write your papers. This course has been designed with the expectation and requirement that you will spend *at least five hours per week outside of class* preparing readings and assignments. Being in college is hard work, but hopefully it is work you will enjoy doing, and will take pride in doing well. You owe it to yourself, to others in the class, and to the integrity of the learning process to approach your academic work with sufficient seriousness.

2. **Participation at field sites.** Wherever we go, you should strive to observe carefully and also interact with the persons and places you encounter, to ask questions about what you perceive and offer suggestions about what it might mean. In other words, be an "active learner."
3. **Discussions--electronic and in class.** Asking questions, raising concerns and offering your own ideas in discussions are crucial components of the learning process. The overall degree of intellectual engagement you demonstrate in the course will be assessed, focusing on the extent to which you are an active, informed, stimulating participant in class discussions. To facilitate this, in addition to discussions during scheduled classroom times, we have set up an electronic discussion group for the members of this course. You will be expected to participate and also to take advantage of resources available on our class web site.
4. **Written Assignments/presentations.** You will be required to complete a number of written assignments and/or class presentations of varying lengths. Each assignment will allow you to demonstrate competence in one or more of the overall learning goals listed in section A of this syllabus. Specific requirements for each assignment will be given throughout the course.

### C. GRADING:

Grades will be based on a point system. The total points possible for all work in the course is 1000.

- Your overall **course preparation, participation and discussion** will be worth 200 possible points. This includes careful preparation of readings, regular and prompt attendance at all site visits and class sessions, and active, informed, stimulating participation in discussions—both in class and electronically. *Students arriving late for class, missing class, not completing the assigned readings, or not participating actively in discussions will receive fewer points in this area.*
- Your various **written assignments/presentations** will be worth a **combined total** of 800 possible points. Assignments will be of varying lengths and types, each addressing various aspects of the course's content and overall learning goals. Here is the complete schedule of these assignments:

<u>Assigned</u>	<u>Due</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Possible Points</u>
Sept. 13	Sept. 20	Hamma Paper	200
Sept. 27	Oct. 4	Learning Styles/Type in College	75
Oct. 4	Oct. 18	Navigating the University	50
Oct. 4	Oct. 11	Lippard Paper 1	200
Oct. 18	Oct. 25	Bray Paper	75
Nov. 8	Nov. 15	Lippard Paper 2	200

The final course grade will be determined according to the following chart:

<u>Total points accumulated</u>	<u>Final course grade</u>
930-1000	A
900-929	A-
870-899	B+

830-869	B
800-829	B-
770-799	C+
730-769	C
700-729	C-
670-699	D+
600-669	D
Under 600	F

#### **D. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

Please read the Academic Integrity Policy in the current *Student Handbook*. It describes violations of academic integrity, including plagiarism and cheating, noting that students who commit such violations are subject to sanctions such as (but not limited to) lowering a grade or failing the course. The policy states that students "must abstain from any violations of academic integrity and set examples for each other by assuming full responsibility for their academic and personal development..."

#### **E. REQUIRED TEXTS:**

1. Rosemary L. Bray, *Unafraid of the Dark: A Memoir*. Anchor Books, 1998.
2. Robert M. Hamma, *Landscapes of the Soul: A Spirituality of Place*. Ave Maria Press, 1999.
3. Lucy R. Lippard, *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society*. The New Press, 1997.

These texts are available for purchase at DePaul's Lincoln Park Campus Bookstore. Also, they may be checked out for two hours at a time from the Richardson Library Reserve Desk.

#### **F. SCHEDULE:**

### **IMMERSION WEEK**

#### **Chicago as a Resource for Introducing the Major Themes**

#### **Sunday August 26**

Introductions to each other and to the course.

**PLEASE DO NOT BE LATE FOR THESE MORNING CLASSES, OR YOU WILL BE LEFT BEHIND AND MISS THE SITE VISITS! WE WILL BEGIN PROMPTLY AT THE STARTING TIMES LISTED BELOW!**

All sites are in Chicago unless otherwise noted.

#### **Monday August 27**

Class begins at 8:30

Site visits:

- Chicago Historical Society, 1601 N. Clark.

- Indo-American Center, 6328 N. California.

### **Tuesday August 28**

Class begins at 8:30

Site visits:

- Sousa Homeless Shelter, 7000 S Aberdeen St.
- St. Sabina Catholic Church, 1210 W. 78<sup>th</sup> Pl.

### **Wednesday August 29**

Class begins at **7:30 (NOTE EARLIER START!)**

Site visits:

- Cook County Department of Corrections, Division 10 (maximum security), 2950 S. California Ave.  
*Each of us in the class will be searched before entering the facility. We must each bring a drivers license or picture identification. No gum, jewelry (basics like watches and rings are OK), cellular phones or beepers are allowed inside.*
- Baha'i House of Worship, 100 Linden Ave., Wilmette.
- Gillson Park, Michigan and Washington Avenues, Wilmette.

### **Thursday August 30**

Class begins at 8:30

Site visits:

- Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, 230 S. LaSalle St.
- Farmers Market, Richard J. Daley Center Plaza, Washington & Clark Streets
- Chicago Board of Trade, 141 W. Jackson St.
- Chicago Loop Synagogue, 16 S. Clark St.
- Walking tour of public spaces in the south loop, including Buckingham Fountain and Grant Park.

### **Friday August 31**

Class begins at 1:15

Site visit:

- North Park Village Nature Center, 5801 N. Pulaski Rd.

### **Tuesday September 4 – New Student Service Day**

Class begins at 8:30

Site visit:

## **AUTUMN QUARTER**

**Transitional Issues and Revisiting the Major Themes:  
Site Visits, Readings and Assignments in Conversation**

**Class meets from 1:30-4:00 every Thursday throughout the quarter.**

**September 6:**

- **Hamma, pp. 9-53:** Introduction, Place Matters, Developing a Sense of Place, On Holy Ground.
- **Introduction to Technology Resources at DePaul.**

**September 13**

- **Hamma pp. 90-145:** The Landscapes of Childhood, Making a Home, Listening to the Land, At Home in the Universe.
- **Academic Success Skills.**
- **Hamma Paper Assigned.**

**September 20**

- **Hamma Paper Due.**
- **Introduction to Type in College.**

**September 27**

- **Lippard pp. 4-38:** All Over the Place, Sweet Home, Being in Place.
- **Learning Styles.**
- **Learning Styles/Type in College Paper Assigned.**

**October 4**

- **Learning Styles/Type in College Paper Due.**
- **Lippard pp. 39-82:** On the Move, In a Word, In an Image, Out of Place, On and Off the Map.
- **Lippard Paper 1 Assigned.**
- **Goal Setting/Career Advising Worksheet.**

**October 11**

- **Site Visit: Graceland Cemetery, 4001 N. Clark St. Meet in classroom at regular time.**
- **Lippard Paper 1 Due.**

Each student is required to attend one of the following sessions with Rosemary Bray, author of *Unafraid of the Dark*:

- **Tuesday, October 16, 10:00 am, 2:00 pm or 7:00 pm.**
- **Wednesday, October 17, 10:00 am.**

Locations to be announced.

**October 18**

- **Bray Discussion.**
- **Bray Paper Assigned.**
- **Navigating the University Assigned.**

**October 25**

- **Bray Paper Due.**
- **Lippard pp. 83-122:** In Mothballs, Marking the Spot, Under the Surface.
- **Planning Ahead at DePaul and Beyond.**

**November 1**

- **Lippard pp. 193-224: Alternating Currents, Ups and Downs, Home in the Weeds.**
- **Navigating the University Assignment Due (Team Reports).**

**November 8**

- **Lippard pp. 225-260: The Grass on the Other Side of the Fence, The Best-laid Plans...and Public Places, Keep off the Grass.**
- **Lippard Paper 2 Assigned.**
- **Wrapping Up and Moving Forward.**

**November 15, 2:45-5:00**

- **Lippard Paper 2 Due.**
- **Concluding Discussion.**