

Urban Planning and Sustainable Environments

URST 3500 (4 credits)

International Honors Program (IHP)

IHP Cities in the 21st Century: People, Planning, Politics

This syllabus is representative of a typical 3-country program. Note that program locations may change due to Covid-19 precautions. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

COURSE OVERVIEW

The relationship between urban planning, sustainability and urban space is complex and contradictory, due to both structural factors and socio-cultural dynamics. The three cities explored in this course offer their own unique insights into how planning processes manifest themselves and what they mean for attempts to create more socially just and inclusive urban spaces.

Since planning emerged as a need during early industrialization in Europe, it has evolved into a dynamic and contested practice across the world. The establishment of planning as a profession in the early to mid-20th century is inherently modernist in form and intention. Early ideals of urban planning were focused on protecting the public interest through technical and rational interventions. Modernist urban design saw urban form as a critical influence on how people behave and live in the city. Good city design and planning were largely seen as physical interventions intended to create amenity and order, as directed by the master plan.

Approaches to urban planning have evolved considerably since the heyday of the modernist paradigm. An entrepreneurial, economic growth-oriented approach to planning stands – often uneasily – alongside attempts to incorporate diverse voices and spatial interventions that enable inclusion and more sustainable forms of mobility. Contemporary approaches also seek to understand the underlying sociocultural and economic processes that shape urban form, and the limitations of the blueprint planning tradition in responding to these dynamics. Recognition of the need to incorporate the voices of actors with differing agendas, and a deeper engagement with context and political power, reflect movement in the planning profession towards promoting more sustainable and socially just urban environments.

This shift towards social justice and sustainability in planning is occurring very unevenly within and across cities around the world. On the one hand, the recently adopted New Urban Agenda (NUA) sees urban planning as a key operational enabler that leads cities towards becoming more inclusive, sustainable and resilient. The latter has emerged as an important focal point in planning debates given the impact of climate change on food security, rural-urban migration and the frequency and severity

of natural disasters. Increasing amounts of public and private funding are being directed towards planning to address these pressing realities. On the other hand, the efficacy of planning in practice to enable decent urban livelihoods and more sustainable cities especially, but not exclusively, in the global South is questionable. Many cities still rely on traditional approaches that do not address the real needs of low income and marginalized residents. The power of dominant forces in shaping urban space for economic and political gain is instead what predominates in countless cities around the world.

The aim of this course is to critically engage the efficacy of planning in creating more socially just and sustainable cities. Each city offers its own unique insights into the prospects for such, but the overarching theme that applies to all is the gap between the plan and what actually transpires in space.

The **following themes** are used to interrogate planning processes and urban realities:

- **The evolution of urban form in relation to structural dynamics**

Each city presents an opportunity to gain insight into how city planning systems have shaped space, how structural dynamics impact urban form and how plans have failed, succeeded or further entrenched the socio-economic processes that make place. This is an ongoing theme in planning theory and is also an opportunity to expose you to the tools and methods of planning and their limitations. Each city provides an opportunity to explore how global economic processes, cultural contexts and local political processes relate to the built form.

Urban development processes often have either unintended or deliberate consequences for vulnerable residents, such as gentrification, a concept to be explored in depth in various cities. Processes of displacement often connected to gentrification raise questions of spatial justice, and the economic processes that drive city development, and allow us to explore the roles of infrastructure and housing provision in driving socio-spatial change.

- **The role of infrastructure in city making and the production of urban space**

Networked infrastructure – such as water and sanitation or social facilities like libraries, schools and parks – are key elements composing urban spaces. Coordinating the location and maintenance of utilities, incorporating transit into spatial planning and shaping neighborhood public space are just a few of the tasks of urban planners. Infrastructure planning is also one of the key ways in which planners can have material and symbolic impacts on and respond to the structural dynamics that shape the production of cities.

- **Climate change and cities**

Understanding climate change impacts and urban resilience and sustainability requires a spatial, social and ecological engagement with cities. There are many entry points for examining this dynamic. In various cities on the IHP itinerary we will unpack the existing and potential social

and physical impacts of climate change and how these are accommodated in spatial plans. We will also explore the environmental and spatial justice implications of urban interventions to address climate change, focusing on emerging yet growing trends related to green infrastructure.

COURSE APPROACH AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

There are two learning principles that inform the approach to this course. The first is *experiential learning*. This occurs through in-country deep engagement via site visits, guest lectures, homestays and case studies, experiences that expose you to the ‘everyday’ experiences of urban dwellers in different contexts. With this nuanced understanding of context and firsthand exposure, you gain more than academic insight into the concepts and issues presented in the UPSE course. We seek to enable reflective learning by examining our own mindsets and values in relation to urban processes and dynamics.

The second principle relates to *comparison*. This represents a critical methodological moment for learning about cities and how sets of issues manifest in different contexts. It also confronts the limitations of best practice learning, and the situational realities of people, place and politics. By building on contextual commonalities (urban violence, social fragmentation, income inequalities, cultural diversity) and exploring geographic specifics (local spatial planning regimes, governance frames, local cultural dimensions) of the different cities, you are able to be discerning and pragmatic in how you define key issues, and think through solutions.

The learning outcomes intended with the UPSE module are therefore as follows:

- To understand the role of city planning in relation to contemporary urban dynamics, and the factors that impact the relationship between the making of plans and their implementation;
- To gain critical insight into the social, economic and ecological dimensions of urban sustainability; and
- To develop a critical awareness of how socio-cultural context and political economies inform local planning processes and implementation.

The methods of instruction and sharing will include field visits, case studies and classroom interaction.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance and Participation: All students are expected to be present at every class session, with the only exceptions being illness. Unexcused absences and habitual lateness *will* result in penalties reflected in your grade. Please inform the instructor if tardiness is anticipated. **All students are expected to come to class on time.** You are also expected to read in anticipation of lectures – required and recommended readings for each class are listed in this syllabus.

Late work: In keeping with SIT policy, papers handed in late will drop one point per day, unless permission is granted otherwise. Course assignments are due at the beginning of the day. Due dates

of assignments will be given by each instructor in each city.

Plagiarism: All students are responsible for having read the SIT Student Handbook. Refer to the Student Handbook for policies regarding academic integrity, academic warning and probation, diversity, disability, harassment protocols, and the academic appeals process.

SIT Policies and Resources

Please refer to the [SIT Study Abroad Handbook](#) and the [Policies](#) section of the SIT website for all academic and student affairs policies. Students are accountable for complying with all published policies. Of particular relevance to this course are the policies regarding: academic integrity, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), research and ethics in field study and internships, late assignments, academic status, academic appeals, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and misconduct, and the student code of conduct.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook and SIT website for information on important resources and services provided through our central administration in Vermont, such as [Library resources and research support](#), [Disability Services](#), [Counseling Services](#), [Title IX information](#), and [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) resources.

ASSIGNMENTS

Students will be evaluated on three assignments over the course of the semester. The UPSE local faculty will evaluate the assignment collected in a particular city, with lead Faculty moderating. Assignments will make up one third of the final grade for the course.

An expanded description of each assignment will be handed out at the beginning of each country program, including the criteria for evaluation. They are summarized below.

City	Assignments	Focus	Weight
City 1 São Paulo	Photo essay	Public space and inclusion	33.3%
City 2 Barcelona	Letter to editor, letter to city official, or debate	Choice of gentrification or superblocks (sustainable cities)	33.3%
City 3 Cape Town	Case study	To be determined	33.3%

Grading Scale					
94-100%	A	Excellent	74-76%	C	Average
90-93%	A-		70-73%	C-	
87-89%	B+		67-69%	D+	
84-86%	B	Above Average	64-66%	D	Below Average
80-83%	B-		below 64	F	Fail
77-79%	C+				
Note: Where decimal points are used in grading, below 0.5 will be rounded down, while 0.5 and above will be rounded up. For example, 93.4 will be an A-, while 93.5 will be an A.					

SESSIONS AND READINGS

Topics covered in each session will draw on site visits, lectures, and other activities, in addition to the assigned readings. The order of the sessions is provisional and may be rearranged to respond to activities or opportunities presented in each country program. Each session will explore a particular debate. A full description of assignments and instructions will be shared upon arrival in each country.

Typical course structure in each city

The teaching module of UPSE uses the city as a living lab to demonstrate competing visions of urban spaces, lived experiences and formal planning aspirations. This module introduces key concepts about theory and practice of urban planning, looking at specific dynamics or processes in a city while keeping the overarching goals of sustainability and equity (justice) in sight. Each country case is interrogated on its own merits with the issues surrounding gentrification, climate change and the historical tensions between the city and its plans explored *in situ*.

Introduction

i. **SESSION 1: INTRO TO PLANNING AND PLANNING IN NYC – CURRENT TRANSIT DYNAMICS**

This two-hour session will provide an introduction to urban planning as a profession and academic discipline. We will review the major functions of planning, trends and developments in the places we are going, and use New York City as a brief case study to add a US comparative perspective.

Required readings

- Fainstein, Susan and James DeFilippis. 2016. “The Structure and Debates of Planning Theory.” *Readings in Planning Theory*, Fourth Edition. Susan S. Fainstein and James DeFilippis Eds. Wiley-Blackwell. 2016. pp. 1-14.
- Forester, John. 1989. “The Challenges of Planning Practice.” *Planning in the Face of Power*. University of California Press. Chapter 1, pp. 3-13.
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/02/opinion/nyc-buses-mta.html>

Recommended readings:

- Savitch-Lew, Abigail. August 9, 2017. NYC’s Planning Commission: Rubber Stamps or Checks and Balances? City Limits. Available online at: <https://citylimits.org/2017/08/09/nycs-planning-commission-rubber-stamps-or-checks-and-balances/>

SÃO PAULO

GENERAL SESSION: CLIMATE CHANGE AND URBAN CHANGE/PLANNING IN BRAZIL AND SÃO PAULO

ii. SESSION 2: HISTORY AND FORMATION OF THE CITY OF SÃO PAULO

The session will tell the history of São Paulo from a local perspective, focusing on how the city landscape was shaped and transformed over time. The idea is to imagine and understand what this territory was like before Portuguese colonization, an area populated by indigenous peoples that suffered invasion and Catholic religious missions. Europeans entered the territory from the sea following the tracks used by native peoples. After the first urban settlement was established, various waves of economic and population growth followed causing important migratory displacements that have left an indelible mark on the urban fabric until today.

Required readings:

- Anelli, Renato. 2014. “Urban structure of territorial extension”, Area 114 – Arch.it. Available at: <https://www.area-arch.it/en/sao-paulo-urban-structure-of-territorial-extension/>
- UN – HABITAT; SEADE. 2010. “Chapter 2: Urbanizing São Paulo - From village to divided megacity” (in) São Paulo: A tale of two cities. pp. 13–20. Available at: <http://unhabitat.org/books/sao-paulo-a-tale-of-two-cities-2/>
- Documentary on the formation of the São Paulo city - Between Rivers: <https://vimeo.com/25113784>

Recommended readings:

- Urban Age Programme. 2009. “Cities and Social Equity: Inequality, territory and urban form”, City Programme, London School of Economics and Political Science. ‘Safe spaces, safe city’ 5-2. Available at: http://v0.urban-age.net/downloads/2009/09/SouthAmericaReport/CSE_Detailed_Report.pdf

iii. SESSION 3: FORMATION OF THE UNEQUAL CITY

This session will focus on the dichotomy of the city center and peripheries. We will explore the social, economic and political dynamics that led to the expansion of the urban fabric, and the consequences of this process on urban infrastructure like transportation and housing. This lecture explores the lack of public planning, the formation of slums and the implementation of problematic programs that developed into ghettos. This session will further elaborate on different solutions for housing and mobility problems, both formal and informal. The former include public policies, and the latter social movements that occupy abandoned central areas and buildings.

Required readings:

- Caldeira, Teresa. 2008. “Worlds Set Apart” Newspaper Essay as part of ‘Urban Age’, Cities Program, The London School of Economics and Political Science. Download Available: <https://lsecities.net/media/objects/articles/worlds-set-apart/en-gb/>
- Meyer, Regina. 2016. “The center on metropolis’ way”, Urban Modernization and Contemporary Cultures: Dialogues Brazil-Japan - Center for integrated Area Study, Kyoto University. Available at: http://repository.kulib.kyoto-u.ac.jp/dspace/bitstream/2433/228691/1/ciasdp61_58.pdf

Recommended readings:

- Martins, Maria Lucia Refinetti. 2011. “São Paulo, center and periphery: The environmental rhetoric and the limitations of urban policy”, Instituto de Estudos Avançados vol. 25 n. 71, Universidade de São Paulo. Available at: http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?pid=S0103-40142011000100005&script=sci_arttext&tlng=en

iv. SESSION 4: URBAN ACTIVISM AS A WAY OF INCLUSION IN PUBLIC SPACE

Since massive streets protests in 2013, São Paulo is going through a great transformation regarding the perception of public spaces. Historically, public spaces were neglected both by public policies and by communities. Now, concepts of right to the city, city commons and communitarian life are starting to be part of the urban vocabulary. The density of the city evokes diversity and allows for creative community-based solutions towards urban problems. Urban activism seeks to improve the quality of urban environment as a part of a movement or a group of citizens. This lecture will focus on public space, urban prototyping and urban education as bottom-up mechanisms of inclusion in a context where formal urban planning processes do not include a diversity of voices and experiences.

Required readings:

- Pompeo, Eduardo and Nassif, Jihana. 2015. “São Paulo Pilot Projects – Behind the Scenes”, as part of the Gehl Blog. Download available: <http://gehlpeople.com/blog/sao-paulos-pilot-project-guide/>
- De Parades, Alix. 2018. “Tropicalizing the urban commons: the challenge of public space negotiation in São Paulo” LabGov.city. Download available: <http://labgov.city/thecommonspost/tropicalizing-the-urban-commons-the-challenges-of-public-space-negotiation-in-sao-paulo/>

Recommended readings:

- Sobral, Laura. 2018. “Doing it together – cooperation tools for city co-governance” A Cidade Press, Berlin. pp. 09–24. Download available: https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/33dfe0_f5ccd53ee9704a26872edebe11b6d43b.pdf

BARCELONA, SPAIN

v. SESSION 5: GENTRIFICATION: PROCESSES, PERSPECTIVES, PROSPECTS

In this session we will unpack the different processes behind and ways of understanding gentrification, from the emergence of the concept (Ruth Glass) to more recent explorations of concepts like global and planetary gentrification. We will also look at the relationship between gentrification, displacement and land rent, and discuss the kinds of resistance emerging to combat processes of gentrification in Barcelona and beyond.

Required readings:

- Slater, T. 2011. Gentrification of the City. Chapter 50. *The New Blackwell Companion to the City*, ed. G. Bridge and S. Watson. Blackwell: 571-585.
- Janoschka, M., Sequera, J. and Salinas, L. (2014) Gentrification in Spain and Latin America? A Critical Dialogue, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 38(4): p. 1234-1265.

Recommended readings:

- Lees, L. (2012) The geography of gentrification: thinking through comparative urbanism, *Progress in Human Geography*, 36:2:155-171.
- Valli, Chiara 2015. A sense of displacement: Long-time residents' feelings of displacement in gentrifying Bushwick, New York. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 39(6): 1191-1208.
- Smith, N. (1979). Toward a Theory of Gentrification A Back to the City Movement by Capital, not People. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 45(4), 538-548.

vi. SESSION 6: CLIMATE CHANGE/SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING: WHAT ROLE FOR SOCIAL AND SPATIAL JUSTICE?

Cities are increasingly starting to plan and take action to address climate change and sustainability challenges. But what do climate resilient and greening interventions mean for social and spatial justice/equity considerations in urban areas, and why is it important to consider these impacts? This session provides an overview of the rise of the urban sustainability agenda and introduces questions of urban environmental justice, with a focus on some key issues and projects at stake in Barcelona, particularly superblocks (superilles) and new urban greenspaces.

Required readings:

- Campbell, S. (1996). "Green cities, growing cities, just cities?: Urban planning and the contradictions of sustainable development." *Journal of the American Planning Association* 62.3: 296-312.
- Anguelovski, I., Connolly, JTT., García-Lamarca, M, Cole, H. and Pearsall, H. (2018). New scholarly pathways on green gentrification: What does the urban "green turn" mean and where is it going? *Progress in Human Geography* <https://doi-org.are.uab.cat/10.1177/0309132518803799>

Recommended readings:

- Agyeman, Julian, Robert D. Bullard, and Bob Evans. "Exploring the nexus: Bringing together sustainability, environmental justice and equity." *Space and polity* 6.1 (2002): 77-90.
- Anguelovski, I., Shi, L., Chu, E., Gallagher, D., Goh, K., Lamb, Z., ... Teicher, H. (2016). Equity Impacts of Urban Land Use Planning for Climate Adaptation: Critical Perspectives from the Global North and South. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 36(3), 333–348.
- Fainstein, S. (2015). Resilience and Justice: Debates and Developments. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 39(1), 157–167.

vii. SESSION 7: THE EVOLUTION OF URBAN PLANNING: EXPLORING PLANNING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND THE URBAN COMMONS

This session aims to put urban planning in perspective by first explaining how the profession of urban planning has evolved both in theory and practice, the latter drawing upon examples from Barcelona and other cities across the world. We will then focus on different approaches to social justice in urban planning practice, and what this has meant for urban spaces and residents. Finally, we will explore the recent emergence of the urban commons in relation to urban planning, discussing the continuities and divergence from planning approaches focusing on social justice.

Required readings:

- Marcuse, P. (2009). From Justice Planning to Commons Planning. In P. Marcuse, J. Connolly, J. Novy, I. Olivo, C. Potter and J. Steil (eds): *Searching for the Just City: Debates in urban theory and practice*. New York: Routledge.
- Fainstein, S. 2005. Planning Theory and the City, *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 25:121-130.

Recommended readings:

- Monclús, FJ. (2004) The Barcelona model: and an original formula? From ‘reconstruction’ to strategic urban projects (1979–2004). *Planning Perspectives*, 18(4): 399-421.
- Degen, M. and García, M. (2013). The Transformation of the ‘Barcelona Model’: An Analysis of Culture, Urban Regeneration and Governance. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*
- Marshall, Tim (2000). Urban Planning and Governance: Is there a Barcelona Model? *International Planning Studies*, 5(3): 299-319.

CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA**GENERAL SESSION: THE PLANNING SYSTEM: SPATIAL PLANNING IN CAPE TOWN**

This is a guest session by Professor Vanessa Watson on the history of spatial planning in Cape Town. Professor Watson will introduce students to the unique nature of apartheid city planning, and how

the political ideology of apartheid is still inscribed into South African cities before moving on to discuss the current nature of urban planning in Cape Town. Whilst this is not a formal UPSE session, it is nevertheless directly relevant to the remainder of the UPSE course.

Required readings:

- Turok, Ivan & Watson, Vanessa Watson (2001): “Divergent Development in South African Cities: Strategic Challenges Facing Cape Town”. *Urban Forum*, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp.119-138.

viii. SESSION 8: GENTRIFICATION AND SPATIAL JUSTICE IN CAPE TOWN

This session explores some of the property markets trends in Cape Town in more detail, in particular the impact of gentrification in parts of the inner city. The aim is to interrogate the tension that emerges from neighbourhood transformation and the more specific need to enable the development of affordable housing in the inner city.

Required readings:

- Development Action Group. 2018. Re-imagining Woodstock and Salt River: A Community-centred approach to neighbourhood regeneration. Cape Town: Development Action Group.
- G. Visser, & N. Kotze. (2008). The state and new-build gentrification in central Cape Town, South Africa. *Urban Studies*, 45(12), 2565-2593.
- L. Wenz. (2012). Changing tune in Woodstock: Creative industries and local urban development in Cape Town, South Africa. *Gateways: International Journal of Community Research and Engagement*, 5, 16-34.

ix. SESSION 9: PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN CAPE TOWN – PROSPECTS FOR RESTRUCTURING THROUGH INFRASTRUCTURE-LED SPATIAL PLANNING?

This session will focus on the relationship between public transport and urban settlement patterns in Cape Town. A significant proportion of the population of the city is reliant on public transport on a daily basis, and it is thus a key part of the city’s public infrastructure. The City of Cape Town has recently adopted a new development rationale and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) approach to urban planning through the 2018 Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework Review. As part of this, the municipality is attempting to reform the public transport system through the implementation of a new bus system and an Integrated Public Transport Network (IPTN). The public transport system includes so-called “formal” and “informal” services, the latter of which responds quickly to new urban development, and acts as an essential service, particularly to the urban poor, yet few formal provisions are made for this system through the City’s various transport and planning policies. Key discussions in this session will explore the extent to which public transportation, and the informal economy can contribute to urban restructuring and what the prospects are for that in Cape Town.

Required readings:

- City of Cape Town. (2012). Chapter 3: Drivers of urban growth. *Cape Town Spatial Development Framework*. Statutory report. Cape Town: City of Cape Town. 18-28.
- City of Cape Town. (2018). Chapter 4: Directing Spatial Transformation. *Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework Review*. Cape Town: City of Cape Town.
- City of Cape Town. (2016). Chapter 2: Problem Statement. *Transit Oriented Strategic Framework*. Cape Town: City of Cape Town. 8-11.
- Schalekamp, H. (2017). Lessons from building paratransit operators' capacity to be partners in Cape Town's public transport reform process. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*. 104: 58 – 66

x. **SESSION 10: UNDERSTANDING THE SPATIAL IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND HOW TO PLAN FOR IT**

This is a two-part session including a guest lecture/session on the need to consider climate change in spatial planning; using the City of Cape Town's current policy framework to explore the issue from an interdisciplinary perspective. The emphasis is on the spatial impacts of climate change as well as the livelihood implications. These livelihood implications include an increase in urban food insecurity. Using the City of Cape Town's current approach to planning, various elements of urban food insecurity will be explored. This includes the effects of climate change on access to and consumption of food, particularly amongst the urban poor.

Required readings:

- P. Mukheibir and G. Ziervogel. 2007. "Developing a Municipal Adaptation Plan (MAP) for climate change: the city of Cape Town." *Environment and Urbanization*, Vol. 19, No.1. pp 143-158
- E. Wilson. 2006. "Adapting to climate change at the local level: the spatial planning response." *Local Environment*, Vol. 11, No. 6. pp 609-625.
- Battersby, J., Haysom, G., Kroll, F., and Tawodzera, G. 2015. "Chapter 3: The Food System" in *A study on current and future realities of urban food security in South Africa*. Report for the South African Cities Network. pp. 29 – 53.