

Course Syllabus-SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL CITIES: THE CASE OF BARCELONA

Language of Instruction: English or Spanish

Professors: Bàrbara Pons i Toni Luna

Professor's Contact and Office Hours:

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Mondays 17:30 to 18:30h

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Course Contact Hours: 45 hours

Recommended Credit: 6 ECTS credits

Weeks: 4

Course Prerequisites: None

Language Requirements: Recommended level in the European Framework B2 (or equivalent: Cambridge Certificate if the teaching language is English, DELE or 3 semesters in the case of Spanish)

Course Description:

Humanity is urbanizing at an accelerated pace, particularly in regions experiencing high population growth, such as Asia and, most notably, Africa. Cities are hubs of economic opportunity and social progress, but they also concentrate consumption, pollution, and environmental impact on their surroundings. Consequently, the structure and evolution of cities, as well as how they are managed and governed, will play a decisive role in shaping the future of humanity and the well-being of the planet. In essence, the future of humanity lies in cities.

Global flows and trends increasingly influence urban areas, which must tackle global challenges such as climate change, social inequality, migration, and technological disruptions. These challenges have direct local impacts on the environmental, social, and economic sustainability of urban environments. This course takes a comprehensive approach to global cities, examining them through the lenses of conceptual frameworks, global governance, planetary well-being, and the New Urban Agenda. The course concludes with a case study of Barcelona as a global city.

Barcelona's transformation from a relatively provincial city in the 1980s to its current status as a global, sustainable metropolitan city will be explored through lectures and visits to key sites in the city. This exploration will provide insights into the processes and strategies that drove this transformation.

As we approach the probable global demographic peak in the mid-21st century, the balance of humanity on the planet will depend largely on how we design and

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manage urban spaces. Gaining a deeper understanding of the current dynamics and future trends shaping cities is essential for educating citizens of the 21st century.

Learning Objectives:

At the end of the course, the student:

- will apply their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional manner and put the competencies that have been demonstrated through the development and defense of arguments and the resolution of problems within their area of study.
- will have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their area of study) to produce outputs that include a reflection on relevant issues of a social, scientific or ethical nature.
- Will be able to communicate an idea, content and knowledge with clarity and precision using the most appropriate expression and discourse for each audience and context.
- Will be versed in the implications of the new ideological, political, economic and technological forms that operate in contemporary global society from a globalized and cosmopolitan perspective.
- Will have acquired knowledge about the urban and social development of Barcelona in the last four decades.
- Will develop attitudes and skills that facilitate internationalization and their training as authentic citizens sensitive to the values of peace and equality, and capable of understanding, managing and administering knowledge in a global community.

Course Workload:

The course is divided into lectures, discussions, and field visits. Students should be prepared to read between 50 to 150 pages per week.

Methods of Instruction:

The course includes both lectures and field studies. Two-hour class sessions are normally divided into one-hour lecture and one-hour seminar. During field studies, students are expected to take notes and treat field studies as a normal lecture class.

Method of Assessment:

Class Participation: 30 percent
 Paper/Journal: 30 percent
 Team presentation: 30 percent
 Final paper: 10 percent

Absence Policy:

Attending class is mandatory and will be monitored daily by professors. The impact of absences on the final grade is as follows:

Absences	Penalization
Up to three (3) absences	No penalization.
Four (4) absences	1 point subtracted from final grade (on a 10 point scale)
Five (5) absences	2 points subtracted from final grade (on a 10 point scale)
Six (6) absences or more	The student receives an INCOMPLETE for the course

The BISS attendance policy does not make a distinction between justified and unjustified absences. All absences—whether due to common short-term illnesses or personal reasons—are counted toward the total amount and cannot be excused. Therefore, students are responsible for managing all their absences.

Only in cases of longer absences—such as hospitalization, prolonged illness, traumatic events, or other exceptional situations—will absences be considered for exceptions with appropriate documentation. The Academic Director will review these cases on an individual basis.

Students must inform the Instructor and the International Programs Office promptly via email if serious circumstances arise.

Classroom Norms:

- No food or drink is permitted.
- There will be a ten-minute break during the class.
- Students must come to class fully prepared.

Course Contents:

Week 1 (Sessions 1 to 5): Global Cities in the Century of Cities (June 30th to July 4th)

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Introduction to the course, class presentations, making of groups, readings and exercises explanations. Calendar adjustments (if needed).

Topic 1_ Introduction to Global Cities: origins, description, main concepts and debates.

Topic 2_ Global Urbanization Process: Introduction to basic data and basic terminology about global population and urbanization trends.

Topic 3_ Sustainable Development Goal #11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Topic 4_ New Localism: The emerging power of local governments in a context of populisms and nationalisms and the role of cities in global politics, main actors and dynamics that will interact in the global scene, and shape cities in the near present and future.

Topic 5_ New Urban Economic Paradigms: Is Capitalism in crisis? New approaches to old urban economic questions.

Site visit #1: Barcelona Regional Planning Agency (tbc)

Week 2 (Sessions 6 to 10): **Global Cities and Planetary Wellbeing** (July 7th to 11th)

Topic 6_ Planetary Wellbeing: Understanding why we are immersed in an ecological emergency and why we need to reframe our urban challenges to the sustainability of the biosphere.

Topic 7_ Urban Ecological Transition: What is our legacy to future urban generations? What we need to do now to have a sustainable (viable?) urban future.

Topic 8_ The Right to the City: Do citizens have the right to housing and a healthy environment in the global city? Capitalist socio-economy and the commons in today's cities.

Site visit #2: Ciutat Vella (Old Town Barcelona) tour (tbc)

Week 3 (Sessions 11 to 15): **Global Cities in a Global Order** (July 14th to 18th)

Topic 9. UN-Habitat and the New Urban Agenda: Homo Sapiens collaborating at a global scale. Will we be able to implement it?

Topic 10. The Civic City: Identity and society in a nomadic world shape the global city. Which tools do we need to manage the difference and the conflict?

Site visit #3: 22@ District tour (tbc)

Week 4 (Sessions 16 to 20): The case of Barcelona: from a provincial city to a global sustainable metropolis (July 21st to 25th)

Topic 11_ Urban management and city making: How things really work and are made possible by local governments and other local institutions.

Topic 12_ Managing succès: gentrification, overtourism,

Site visit #4: Diagonal corridor, Campus Nord, Campus Sud, Pistes UB (New Hospital Clinic Campus site) (tbc)

Required Readings: The professor will assemble a coursepack/or indicate mandatory textbooks.

Recommended bibliography:

Students are encouraged to consult the following sources on their own.

BRENNER, Neil and KEIL, Roger, eds. (2006): *The Global Cities reader*. London, Routledge

DAVIS, M. (2006): *Planet of Slums*. London, New York, Verso. Available at (June 9th, 2019): http://rebels-library.org/files/planet_of_slums.pdf

KATZ, Bruce and NOWAK, Jeremy (2017): *The New Localism. How Cities can Thrive in the Age of Populism*. Washington, DC, The Brookings Institution.

LOVELOCK, James (2015): *A Rough Ride to the Future*. London, Penguin Books.

SASSEN, S. 1991. *The global city: New York, London, Tokyo*. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

BARCELONA METROPOLIS Magazine, Ajuntament de Barcelona.

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