



# AG2108 Urban Theory, Advanced Course 7,5 hp

Urban Theory, Advanced Course

## Fastställande

Kursplan för AG2108 gäller från och med HT07

## Betygsskala

A, B, C, D, E, FX, F

## Utbildningsnivå

Avancerad nivå

## Huvudområden

## Särskild behörighet

3 years of university studies within the field of Planning, Architecture, Engineering or Social Science.

## Undervisningsspråk

Undervisningsspråk anges i kurstillfällesinformationen i kurs- och programkatalogen.

## Lärandemål

In order to pass the course, the student shall:

- Analyse and reflect upon the interplay of economic, social, political and cultural forces shaping the city and its planning in different geographical contexts
- Compare and analyse different theories of contemporary urban development
- Apply a set of theories in a specific urban area and analyse the implications in terms of preconditions for planning and what direction planning ought to take
- For a specific urban area, develop an own future oriented perspective of urban development and its implications for planning, through referring to previous theories and motivating in what ways this perspective is more accurate

## Kursinnehåll

The course, that will have a worldwide outlook, deals with urban theory in the sense of different ways of understanding cities the forces shaping cities, the physical patterns in the urban landscape and the consequences on life and planning. There are different theories of contemporary urban development, e.g. cities being understood as generators of economic growth, as spaces of mobility, as places for cultural and public life, as spaces of environmental degradation and/or green living, as places for reproduction and everyday life, as spaces where ethnic, socio-economic and/or gender divisions manifest themselves, as spaces driven by desire or fear, etc. These varying perspectives on urban development and views on what the problems are, give rise to different implications and tasks for planning.

## Kursupplägg

Cultural traditions and economic and political forces shape cities, which in turn have social implications. Planning is embedded in this and could be looked upon as enabling what is needed for a smooth functioning of the system. Among the pioneers in planning for the industrial city were Ebenezer Howard, Patric Geddes, Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright and Lewis Mumford. These planners and the societies they were working in are used as a formative background for the whole modernist tradition in planning, which the students are assumed to have knowledge about from previous studies.

From the 1970s on the industrial society with its welfare institutions and modernistic approach to planning and architecture was criticised for a series of mainly economic reasons. One was that the Fordistic way of production was transformed into a more flexible way of accumulation of capital including a more global competition among enterprises, another that knowledge base production took over from mechanistic industrial production. There was also a more civic society oriented criticism of the modernistic way of living.

All this is mirrored in the literature from the last decades on town planning and design, where new ways of looking at cities adapted to a post-industrial era are presented. Among the well-known analysts are Henry Lefebvre, Jane Jacobs, Rem Koolhaas, David Harvey, Leonie Sandercock, Saskia Sassen and Manuel Castells.

The main part of the course is appropriated to that the latter kind of literature. Lectures will be given about the societal context of planning at different periods and about the city concept. Most of the time though is devoted to reading, ending up in four literature seminars. At each seminar two or more texts of the kinds mentioned shall be critically examined and discussed. The students are to be prepared by writing and handing in texts where the literature is commented and comparisons made between the different texts. In a final task, the theoretical

perspectives studied in the course are to be related to a specific urban area and developed in relation to future actions in planning and design.

## Kurslitteratur

Books and chapters to be read will be presented before the course starts

## Examination

- ÖVN1 - Literature seminars, 6,0 hp, betygsskala: A, B, C, D, E, FX, F
- ÖVN2 - Project Illustration, 1,5 hp, betygsskala: A, B, C, D, E, FX, F

Examinator beslutar, baserat på rekommendation från KTH:s handläggare av stöd till studenter med funktionsnedsättning, om eventuell anpassad examination för studenter med dokumenterad, varaktig funktionsnedsättning.

Examinator får medge annan examinationsform vid omexamination av enskilda studenter.

När kurs inte längre ges har student möjlighet att examineras under ytterligare två läsår.

## Övriga krav för slutbetyg

Four approved papers handed in before the literature seminars and participation in the seminars (PRO2; 6 cr)

One exercise in practical application of theory (PRO2; 1,5 cr)

## Etiskt förhållningssätt

- Vid grupparbete har alla i gruppen ansvar för gruppens arbete.
- Vid examination ska varje student ärligt redovisa hjälp som erhållits och källor som använts.
- Vid muntlig examination ska varje student kunna redogöra för hela uppgiften och hela lösningen.