



AG2120 Social and Cultural Issues in Planning 7.5 credits

Social and Cultural Issues in Planning

This is a translation of the Swedish, legally binding, course syllabus.

Establishment

Course syllabus for AG2120 valid from Autumn 2010

Grading scale

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

Education cycle

Second cycle

Main field of study

The Built Environment

Specific prerequisites

A completed Bachelor of Science in Engineering or 180 credits academic studies in the field of Technical Science, Economics or Planning including courses corresponding to a minimum of 30 ECTS credits in the field of urban, transport or regional planning and economics, geoinformatics or environmental sciences. In addition ** documented proficiency in English B or equivalent (TOEFL, IELTS e g).

For students enrolled in Masterprogram TSPPM:
AG2109 Planning theory, AG2107 Planning the sustainable city

Language of instruction

The language of instruction is specified in the course offering information in the course catalogue.

Intended learning outcomes

In the course we will;

present theoretical and empirical studies focused on social and cultural dimensions of everyday life, analyse and discuss how social and cultural issues are visible or not in urban life, reflect over our own experiences of socio-cultural issues, e.g. as students, professionals, citizens, cultural “insiders” or “outsiders”, practise cultural analysis methods for collecting data and practice methods communicate/present them in a comprehensive way.

Throughout the course we will relate this to planning activities in terms of how social and cultural issues are part of the bases for planning as well as influential in the processes and outcomes.

After completing the course the student should be able to:

- analyse socio-cultural aspects in everyday life and built environment
- identify and assess the link between contemporary conditions and historical memories in forming the present and the future.
- describe and validate how social and cultural issues can be understood.
- analyse how socio-cultural issues relates to planning
- do a basic cultural analysis
- communicate complex social-cultural issues by using a broad range of communication techniques

Course contents

The course takes its starting point in interrelations between everyday life, urban structures and global processes, for example structural changes in global economy and increasing multicultural citizenships and the impacts on living conditions for people in various parts of the world. To be aware of the social and cultural implications of planning and design decisions as well as to consider the impact of social and cultural conditions on planning and design processes is a challenging and important task for planners and architects.

Social issues concern generally how people in a society relate to each other and interact and how we build institutions that become stable or not. They also concern traits of the society, such as how issues of power, gender, justice, security etc raise debates, controversies and conflicts but also the formation of communities. Living conditions, social services and health are important social issues in planning as well as viewpoints on the urban agglomeration as an arena for social interaction, e.g. as a space for socializing, social and creative meetings.

Cultural issues refer to the wider definition of culture which generally refers to patterns of human activity and the symbolic structures that give such activities significance and importance. It is a system of symbols and meanings without fixed boundaries, constantly in flux. It is also an activity – something you do/perform. Expressions and performances

of culture are defined according to this within a wide range; for instance sports, shopping, cooking, walking and knitting are cultural things as well as fine arts (art, music, dance etc). In this course cultural issues concern what everyday life activities mean to us as well as what material objects and built environment mean but also how we through planning try to create conditions for dynamic cultural processes.

Disposition

The course will consist of a combination of lectures, seminars, work-shops, group project work and individual essay-writing, i.e. a combination of practice and theory. A strong emphasis in creating a discussion-friendly atmosphere means that the students have to be active and make their best efforts to contribute.

Course literature

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

Examination

- PRO2 - Project, 3.0 credits, grading scale: A, B, C, D, E, FX, F
- SEM2 - Seminars, 3.0 credits, grading scale: P, F
- TENA - Essay, 1.5 credits, grading scale: A, B, C, D, E, FX, F

Based on recommendation from KTH's coordinator for disabilities, the examiner will decide how to adapt an examination for students with documented disability.

The examiner may apply another examination format when re-examining individual students.

If the course is discontinued, students may request to be examined during the following two academic years.

Other requirements for final grade

To pass the course, the students shall

- take an active part in lectures, seminars, and exercises - Lectures, seminars, work-shops (SEM2; 3,0 cr).
- do a group project work (included active participation in supervision) with project presentation – Project Work (PRO2; 3,0 cr).
- write an essay on the issues highlighted in the course – Essay (TENA; 1.5 cr).

Ethical approach

- All members of a group are responsible for the group's work.

- In any assessment, every student shall honestly disclose any help received and sources used.
- In an oral assessment, every student shall be able to present and answer questions about the entire assignment and solution.