AG2165 Security in the Context of Urban Sustainability 3.0 credits

Urban säkerhet och uthållighet

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

Establishment

Course syllabus for AG2165 valid from Spring 2010

Grading scale

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

Education cycle

Second cycle

Main field of study

The Built Environment

Specific prerequisites

A Bachelor's degree or equivalent in architecture or landscape architecture, civil engineering in the built environment or equivalent, urban and regional planning or social sciences relevant to the scope of the course.

Language of instruction

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

Intended learning outcomes

The course aims at promoting a theoretical and empirical discussion of security issues in the context of urban sustainability. A sustainable city is a place free from the fear of crime, where a feeling of security underpins a wider sense of place attachment and place attractiveness. Some of the questions to be answered in the course are: Can we think about safety without building up urban fortresses? Why are people so fearfull? How do urban structure relates to crime and fear of crime? Does enviroment affect ones' decision to commit a crime? What are the challenges to plan cities that are both safe and sustainable in developing countries or in states in transition?

In order to bridge the divide between urban research and practice, the course will be composed of internationally known speakers that appeal for researchers, students at KTH but also practitioners interested in security issues and urban planning. Students will have the opportunity to (i) interact with senior researchers in high level theoretical discussions facilitated by moderators, and (ii) improve their knowledge on urban security, something lacking at Masters course at KTH.

Course contents

Cities are places of social interaction. Not all social interactions are however pleasant, such as being a crime victim. We live in a world where security concerns have become an integral part of our daily thoughts, putting in check one of the basic elements of the cities' virtues — its liveability. Security is often linked to the condition of being safe from risk or free from fear of danger. Fences, padlocks, dogs, guards, security electronic devices, bullet proof cars, hermetic shopping malls or gated communities are just part of the commodified security urban landscape. A parallel but an overlapping development is the implementation of a range of initiatives that make citizens responsible for the security of their own environment. Security is no longer a matter of the police but of a diverse set of actors, ranging from private companies to community based groups, rarely with common interests, often under the umbrella urban governance.

The course will cover these issues by looking upon security and contemporary social order, commodification of security, crime and fear of crime in relation to the city landscape and structure, gated communities, planning and community crime prevention. The lectures will be based on cities in Western Europe, large aglomerations of Southern hemisphere as well as examples of countries in transition. A fieldwork will highlight a concrete example of how crime prevention guidelines were implemented to plan a residential area in Stockholm (Hammarby sjostad).

Basic reading is an obligatory and integral part of the course. The literature will be discussed two weeks before the 2-days course. A short essay (max 3 pages) on a chosen topic should be handed in to the course organiser latest a week after the end of the 2-days course.

Course literature

Ceccato, V. (2009) Crime in a city in transition: the case of Tallinn, Estonia. Urban Studies, 46:1593-1610.

Hillier, B., Sahbaz, O. (2008) Crime and urban design: an evidence based approach. In: Designing sustainable cities. London, 184-184p.

Los, M. (2002) Post-communist fear of crime and the commercialisation of security. Theoretical criminology, 6:165-188.

Loukaitou-Sideris, A., Liggett, R., Iseki, H. (2002) The Geography of transit Crime. Journal of Planning Education and Research 22:135-151.

Pain, R. (2001) Gender, race, age and fear in the city. Urban Studies, 38:899–913.

Tilley, N. (2009) Handbook of crime prevention and community safety. Cullompton, UK:Willan Publishing.

Zaluar, Alba (2001) Violence in Rio de Janeiro: Styles of leisure, drug use, and trafficking,

International Social Science Journal 53(3): 369–78.

Wikström, P.O, Loeber, R. (2000) Do disadvantaged neighborhoods cause well-adjusted children to become adolescent delinquents? Criminology, 38:1109-1142.

Examination

- ÖVN1 - Assignment, 2.0 credits, grading scale: A, B, C, D, E, FX, F
- NÄR1 - Attendance, 1.0 credits, grading scale: P, 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

Attendance, seminar (NÄR1; 1,0 cr),
Exercise (ÖVN1; 2,0 cr)

To be approved in the course the student has to have 100% presence (two hours discussion previous the seminar 22nd-23rd April 2010) and hand in an essay (max 3 pages) on a chosen topic to the course organiser a week after the end of the 2-days course. Essays will be graded using A-F scale based on
1. relevance of the topic to the course
2. critical discussion
3. proper use of current literature in the subject area
4. organisation/references/language

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.