
INTRODUCTION TO URBAN STUDIES FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS

Urban Studies, Malmö University

7,5 credits

Course leader: Mustafa Dikeç

Fall 2018

OBJECTIVES

This course is aimed at introducing doctoral students to contemporary debates, theories and concepts in urban studies and in spatial thinking. Since the course is at the doctoral level, we will not limit ourselves to introductory definitions, but will critically explore urban dynamics and ways of thinking about them. Our focus will be, therefore, not on urbanism as profession, but on urban studies as a field of critical inquiry and research in order to provide you with the essential intellectual tools for your PhD studies and, perhaps, even for your doctoral dissertation.

On successful completion of this course, you should be able to: (i) develop a critical understanding of key concepts and phenomena in urban studies and spatial thinking; (ii) develop a critical understanding of the relationship between economic, political, social processes and the structure and working of cities; and (iii) relate your own dissertation topic to relevant debates in urban studies and spatial theories.

CONTENT and FORMAT

The course is taught by an international team that includes:

- Mustafa Dikeç (Ecole d'Urbanisme de Paris and Malmö University)
- Tariq Jazeel (University College London)
- Carina Listerborn (Malmö University)
- Ananya Roy (University of California, Los Angeles)

There will be five 3-hour sessions comprising lectures and discussion based on pre-circulated readings. The first part of each session will be devoted to a lecture to set the stage and introduce the issues to be covered. The second part of the sessions will take the form of a seminar, where pre-circulated readings will be discussed. You must, therefore, complete the readings before coming to the sessions.

The dates and the themes of the sessions are as follows:

- October 11th, 9:30-11:30: *Introduction to the course* (Mustafa Dikeç)
- October 11th, 13:00 -16:00: *Racial capitalism and the urban question* (Ananya Roy)
- October 12th, 9:00-12:00: *Space, politics and urban studies* (Mustafa Dikeç)
- October 25th, 13:00-16:00: *Feminisms and the city* (Carina Listerborn)
- October 26th, 13:00-16:00: *Postcolonial theory and the city* (Tariq Jazeel)

ASSESSMENT

Grading will be on a Pass or Fail scale. In order to pass this course, students must:

- attend all sessions;
- actively participate in seminar discussions based on readings; and
- submit a 10-page essay (due date: 3 December 2018) on a topic of their choice (to be approved by the course leader). The essay must be a scholarly one; that is, it should engage with the relevant scholarly literature, theories and concepts. You could focus on your own research topic and interests (which may be different from the ones covered in this course), but your essay should relate your topic to some of the themes discussed in this course.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The course is limited to 20 students. In order to apply, please send an email to the course leader (mustafa.dikec@mau.se) by **15 September 2018**.

READING LIST

There is not a single textbook for this course. As noted above, each session has a list of readings associated with it, which will be circulated at least one week before the sessions so that you will have enough time to read them. The following books, however, might help you start thinking about some of the issues we will discuss in this course:

- Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (eds) (2013) *The New Blackwell Companion to the City* (London: Wiley-Blackwell): a hefty volume with several chapters on a variety of urban issues. This book will not necessarily allow you to deepen your understanding, but it will provide you with several exciting leads to think about cities, so a good starting point;
- Mike Davis (2007) *Planet of Slums* (London: Verso): if you get carried away with 'urban age' enthusiasm, then this is a must read to see the other side of things, although Davis is not without his critics; see, for example, the introductory chapter of the Roy and Ong book listed below;
- David Harvey (2012) *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution* (London: Verso): Harvey is one of the most influential contemporary thinkers on politics, geography and cities – highly recommended;
- Richard LeGates and Frederic Stout (eds) (2015) *The City Reader*, 6th edition (London: Routledge): another hefty volume on various urban issues, including some of the classic texts as well as more recent ones;
- Doreen Massey, John Allen and Steve Pile (eds) (1999) *City Worlds* (New York: Routledge): despite its 'old age', this book is conceptually powerful, with chapters by some of the most prominent UK geographers; a very stimulating read;
- Ronan Paddison and Eugene McCann (eds) (2014) *Cities and Social Change: Encounters with Contemporary Urbanism* (London: SAGE): another edited volume, much less hefty than the Blackwell one; good introduction to selected urban issues ranging from poverty to gentrification;
- Ananya Roy and Aihwa Ong (eds) (2012) *Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global* (London: Wiley-Blackwell): this book will take you out of the confines of western European and north American cities – a must read for understanding urban dynamics globally;
- Kevin Ward (ed.) (2013) *Researching the City: A Guide for Students* (London: SAGE): a recent book that would certainly help you in designing and running your research projects, with chapters ranging from archival research to GIS.

You may also want to take a look at some of the following books on urban issues and spatial thinking:

Allen, John (2003) *Lost Geographies of Power* (London: Blackwell)

Ash, Amin (2012) *Land of Strangers* (Cambridge: Polity Press)

Dikeç, Mustafa (2017) *Urban Rage* (New Haven: Yale University Press)

Massey, Doreen (2005) *For Space* (London: SAGE)

Simone, AbdouMaliq and Pieterse, Edgar (2017) *New Urban Worlds: Inhabiting Dissonant Times* (Cambridge: Polity Press)

Zukin, Sharon (2010) *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places* (New York: Oxford University Press)

In addition to the listed books and session readings, try to follow the articles in the following journals; they would be helpful both for this course and for others, as well as for your dissertation:

- *Antipode: A Radical Journal of Geography* (a well-respected journal with a clear political orientation and strong scholarship; they run very good articles on urban issues)
- *City: Analysis of Urban Trends, Culture, Theory, Policy, Action* (a wide-ranging journal, as the subtitle indicates, on urban issues that is useful to follow the debates)
- *Environment and Planning A* (EPA) (a good human geography and urban studies journal)
- *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* (EPD) (more theoretical than EPA, EPD is a leading journal for exploring spatiality in general)
- *European Urban and Regional Studies* (limited geographical reach, but good for following issues in European cities)
- *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* (IJURR) (the most influential and wide-ranging urban studies journal that usually sets the debate; worth following regularly)
- *Urban Studies* (good journal to follow the debates; published more frequently than others)

The following two e-zines, or 'digital commons', are highly recommended:

- www.jadaliyya.com (for the 'Cities' section, in particular)
- <https://www.opendemocracy.net>

I also encourage you take a look at academic journals from other disciplines. You may start with the following:

- *Public Culture* (this is a good interdisciplinary journal that occasionally runs articles on urban issues)
- *Radical Philosophy* (don't be intimidated by 'philosophy' in the title; worth checking occasionally)
- *Social Text* (another interdisciplinary journal that has run good thematic issues on cities)
- *Theory & Event* (this is more political theory oriented, but they run good articles on topical issues)
- *Theory, Culture and Society* (a good interdisciplinary journal that covers a wide range of issues, including urban ones)

Happy reading!