

Geography of Modern Cities

Code: 100081
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2502758 Humanities	OT	3	2
2502758 Humanities	OT	4	2

Contact

Name: Abel Albet Mas

Email: abel.albet@uab.cat

Teaching groups languages

You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject. Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2023.

Prerequisites

A commitment to regularly follow class sessions and actively participate in them is required. In the case that circumstances may lead to virtualise -partially or completely- the course, a commitment to regularly follow class sessions and actively participate in them will be required following the proposed virtual network systems.

Students should be able to read texts in Catalan, Spanish, English, French and Italian.

Objectives and Contextualisation

Academic, scientific, political and ethical proposal:

The course is an introduction to the study of the contemporary city as a neuralgic center of the political, economic, social and cultural dynamics of today's increasingly urbanized society. From the perspective of the social and human sciences, the global urbanization process and the problems it poses are exposed. The most significant moments in the recent history of urban transformations are highlighted with the explanation of concrete cases, with particular attention to the case of Barcelona. The different conceptions of the city in social thought and the main tendencies of urbanism in Europe and North America are analyzed. The relationship between city and culture is approached from different areas: the new multicultural social reality, the role of culture in urban requalification and the relationship between city, literature and cinema.

It seeks to learn to:

- read the changes that are taking place in the city, understood as a reality inherited in a constant process of construction;

- understand the city as the result of the actions of different social agents, each of them pursuing different political, social and economic interests, framed in changing cultural contexts according to the dynamics of each historical moment;
- interpret the different dimensions of urban reality in the globalization scenario, which enhances the role of cities as managers of the world economy while accentuating their internal social and cultural problems;
- build a critical view of the urban fact, understood as: an ethical commitment and a political positioning facing the injustices, imbalances and inequalities that occur in the contemporary city; a social implication in the transformation of the city, as citizens and as scientists; a capacity to generate a critical and own discourse in front of the urban reality, and before the external and dominant discourses.
- refer this conceptual and practical baggage in the most immediate urban reality, that is, metropolitan Barcelona.

Competences

- Humanities
 - Interpreting social and cultural diversity.
 - Students must be capable of collecting and interpreting relevant data (usually within their area of study) in order to make statements that reflect social, scientific or ethical relevant issues.
 - Students must have and understand knowledge of an area of study built on the basis of general secondary education, and while it relies on some advanced textbooks it also includes some aspects coming from the forefront of its field of study.

Learning Outcomes

1. Describing spatial relationships of the physical, economic, social and cultural diversity of territories on different territorial scales.
2. Describing the main characteristics in general of the contemporary city, and specially in metropolitan regions.
3. Describing the main economic, social and cultural contemporary problems in the world.
4. Summarising characteristics of a written text according to its communicative purposes.

Content

(Very) orientative program

Structure and configuration of urban space

· The city: a reflection on the contemporary urban phenomenon. The city in social thought. The city, social product. Urban social agents. The urban acceleration of the contemporary world.

The city of the 19th century: social reform and the origins of modern urbanism.

· Europe: industrialization and urbanization; the emergence of large cities. The urban social issue and the origins of modern urbanism. Urban Utopias. Garden city. City and modernity. City and literature

The city of the 20th century: between the suburb and the ghetto

· From the city-factory to the tertiary metropolis. Urban transformations in Europe. The rationalist movement and the reformist urban planning. The North American experience: the creation of the suburban city. City and cinema

The postmodern city: culture, representation, difference

· The informational revolution and late capitalism: the renewed protagonism of cities and their productive and locational logic. Globalization and formation of a world system of cities. Big cities, main cities, global cities. The increasing complexity of the postindustrial urban space: from the compact city to the dispersed urbanization. The current urban culture and urban renewal policies. Architecture and urban form. City and real estate speculation. Competition and competitiveness between cities. The city in the "underdeveloped" countries. City and music

The scenarios of the contemporary city

· Urban social polarization. The dual city. The spaces of the dual city: areas of overcentrality; degraded peripheries; ethnic ghettos; elitist gentrification; closed communities. The spectacle city: leisure, culture, consumption. Cities for sale, urban marketing (museums, tourism, shopping centers). The hyperreal city; the disneyficated city; the themed city. The memory of the city. The sustainable city: the environmental crisis. Public space and citizenship. Hybridity and multiculturalism. The rebel city. City and graffiti

Practices on construction and destruction, use and resistance in the neoliberal city

· Community and coexistence: social relations in the city. The spaces of difference, division and exclusion. The policies in/of the urban space. Capital and culture: gentrifying the city. Urban stories: identity and subjectivity in the city; urban social integration. Building urban territories: urban cultures and spatial strategies. Housing and speculation. Urban social movements: citizenship and participation. Use and resistance in/of the public spaces of the neoliberal city. Infrastructures, transport, mobility. Urban planning, strategic plans, urban projects

Barcelona

The final and effectively valid program of the subject will be distributed during the first class session of the course.

Methodology

Structure of the course

Presential classes are "theoretical" (exposition by the teacher) and "practical" (readings, debates in forum based on texts).

In the UAB's Moodle there is essential documentation and information for the course, both regarding the organizational aspects of the subject and in relation to the thematic contents of it. It is important to access Moodle often.

Possible teaching-learning strategies developed by the teacher:

- teaching in master classes;
- organization of the forum and debate sessions;
- teaching of practical sessions;
- proposal and guide in mandatory readings;
- tutorials of the essays;
- case development;
- eventually, participation of external speakers;

- eventually, field trips and visits to exhibitions.

Activities that, foreseeably, the students will realize:

- unavoidable presence/follow-up to class sessions;
- necessary participation in the forum and debate sessions;
- necessary participation in the practical sessions;
- systematic reading of mandatory texts; presentation of summaries and reviews;
- presence to eventual field trips and visits to exhibitions;
- development of a short essay (written, individual, supervised by the teacher);
- preparation and public presentation (oral, in group, tutored by the teacher) of a discussion forum on a topic related to geographical thought;
- a written or oral test.

In the case that circumstances may lead to virtualise -partially or completely- the course, an attempt will be made to adapt this course structure to the possibilities that telematic channels allow.

By imposition, the teaching guide of this course includes the formula of citing some "competences", "hours", "training activities" and "learning outcomes", even though they do not correspond to the teacher's criteria.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Theoretical sessions	50	2	
Type: Supervised			
Practical sessions	10	0.4	
Type: Autonomous			
Autonomous activities	40	1.6	

Assessment

Continuous evaluation

Evaluation of the theoretical classes:

- Short creative essay. Written, individual. [The evaluation will assess the appropriate expression, coherence in the development, bibliography management, originality, etc.].
- Individual test. [The evaluation will assess the assimilation of knowledge, the capacity for analysis, synthesis and interpretation].

Evaluation of practical classes:

- Thematic discussion-forum based on the proposed readings. Collective work (oral and written) directed by two or three speakers following the calendar established in the first class session. Once presented, the speakers will have a week to deliver it in written or graphic form (non-extendable). [The evaluation will assess the preparation -including tutorials with the teacher-, the oral presentation and presentation -in group- of the debate-forum, the correct and adequate oral expression, bibliography management, the team work, the graphic presentation of the results].
- Written summary of each of the mandatory readings. Individual work. A minimum of abstracts must be submitted. [The evaluation will assess the capacity for synthesis and capture-abstraction of the main ideas; the presence, attitude, participation and contributions in the class discussions made from the readings will be valued in a special way].
- Participation at class.

Single evaluation

Evaluation of the theoretical classes:

- *Short creative essay*. Written, individual. [The evaluation will assess the appropriate expression, coherence in the development, bibliography management, originality, etc.].
- *Individual test*. [The evaluation will assess the assimilation of knowledge, the capacity for analysis, synthesis and interpretation].

Evaluation of practical classes:

- *Thematic report based on the proposed readings*. [The evaluation will assess the preparation -including tutorials with the teacher-, the oral presentation and presentation -in group- of the debate-forum, the correct and adequate oral expression, bibliography management, the team work, the graphic presentation of the results].
- *Written summary of each of the mandatory readings*. Individual work. A minimum of abstracts must be submitted. [The evaluation will assess the capacity for synthesis and capture-abstraction of the main ideas; the presence, attitude, participation and contributions in the class discussions made from the readings will be valued in a special way].

On evaluation and reevaluation

In the event that tests or exams cannot be taken onsite, they will be adapted to an online format made available through the UAB's virtual tools (original weighting will be maintained). Homework, activities and class participation will be carried out through forums, wikis and/or discussion on Teams, etc. Lecturers will ensure that students are able to access these virtual tools, or will offer them feasible alternatives.

On carrying out each evaluation activity, lecturers will inform students of the procedures to be followed for reviewing all grades awarded, and the date on which such a review will take place.

In order to be evaluated, all the evaluable parts must be submitted-presented, have attended a minimum of 75% of the class sessions and have actively participated in the class sessions and discussion-forum. The non-presentation of any of the evaluable parts will lead to a "Not evaluated" as the final grade. In order to pass, a minimum score of 3,5 must be reached in every evaluative part. In order to be re-evaluated it is necessary to have presented all the evaluable parts. Only creative essay and individual proof may be reevaluated. In the re-evaluation, the overall maximum score will be 5. The re-evaluation will not serve, in any case, to "improve grade".

As stated in the "Protocol de Revaluació de la Facultat de Filosofia i Lletres", in order to be re-evaluated it is necessary to have presented all the evaluable parts and to have approved the corresponding parts to the practical classes (discussion-forum and abstracts of readings). Only creative essay and individual proof may be reevaluated. In the re-evaluation, the overall maximum score will be 5. The re-evaluation will not serve, in any case, to "improve grade".

The definitive and effectively valid evaluation criteria will be known during the first class session of the curs.

The copy or plagiarism of material, both in essays and examinations, constitute a crime that will be sanctioned with a zero in the activity. In case of recidivism the entire subject will be suspended. It should be remembered that an essay that reproduces all or a large part of the work of another partner is considered a "copy". "Plagiarism" is the fact of presenting all or part of a text by another author as his own, without citing the sources, whether on paper or in digital form. See UAB documentation on "plagiarism" at: http://wuster.uab.es/web_argumenta_obert/unit_20/sot_2_01.html

In the event of a student committing any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade awarded to an assessment activity, the student will be given a zero for this activity, regardless of any disciplinary process that may take place. In the event of several irregularities in assessment activities of the same subject, the student will be given a zero as the final grade for this subject.

Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Discussion forum based in proposed readings	25%	5	0.2	2, 1
Individual test	25%	5	0.2	2
Short basic essay	25%	20	0.8	3
Written summary of the proposed readings and participation in class	25%	20	0.8	2, 4

Bibliography

Some general bibliographic cues:

ALBET, Abel, Núria BENACH (eds.) (2018). *Gentrification as a global strategy. Neil Smith and beyond*. Londres: Routledge.

ANDRÉS, Sergio (2021). *La España en la que nunca pasa nada. Periferias, territorios intermedios y ciudades medias y pequeñas*. Madrid: Akal.

BAUDELAIRE, Charles [2021]. *L'spleen de París*. Barcelona: Flâneur (edició bilingüe).

BENACH, Núria (ed.) (2017). *William Bunge. Las expediciones geográficas urbanas*. Barcelona: Icaria.

BENACH, Núria, Abel ALBET (eds.) (2019). *David Harvey. La lógica geográfica del capitalismo*. Barcelona: Icaria.

BOOKCHIN, Murray (1978). *Los límites de la ciudad*. Madrid: Blume [t.o.: *The limits of the city*, Londres: Harper & Row, 1974].

BORJA, Jordi (2003). *La ciudad conquistada*. Madrid: Alianza.

BORJA, Jordi, Fernando CARRIÓN, Marcelo CORTI (eds.) (2017). *Ciudades resistentes, ciudades posibles*. Barcelona: Editorial UOC.

CAMPILLO, Antonio (2019). *Un lugar en el mundo. La justicia espacial y el derecho a la ciudad*. Madrid: Catarata.

CHINCHILLA, Izaskun (2020). *La ciudad de los cuidados*. Madrid: Catarata.

Colectivo 5W (2019). *5W Crónicas de larga distancia. Vol. 4: Habitantes. Como vivimos en ciudades, ríos, guerras, cárceles e incluso bajo tierra*. www.revista5W.com

DÍEZ, Enrique J., Juan R. RODRÍGUEZ (2018). *La polis secuestrada. Propuestas para una ciudad educadora*. Gijón: Ediciones Trea.

DIONI, Jorge (2021). *La España de las piscinas. Cómo el urbanismo neoliberal ha conquistado España y transformado su mapa político*. Barcelona: Arpa.

DONAT, Carles, Sergio PORCEL, Ricard GOMÀ (eds.) (2018). «Gentrificació i dret a la ciutat», *Papers IERMB*, 60 [monogràfic].

El Atlas de las Metrópolis. València: Fundación Mondiplo, 2014.

ENGELS, Friedrich [2018]. *Contribución al problema de la vivienda* (precedido de *Las grandes ciudades*). Madrid: Ediciones Libros Corrientes.

ESTEBAN, Juli (2018). *Urbanismo. Una inmersión rápida*. Barcelona: Tibidabo Ediciones.

FLYVBJERG, Bent (2021). *Ciudad, razón y poder. La democracia en práctica (o por qué fracasan los buenos planes)*. Madrid: Ediciones Asimétricas [t.o.: *Rationality and power. Democracy in Practice*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998].

GARCÍA HERRERA, Luz Marina, Fernando SABATÉ BEL (eds.) (2015). *Neil Smith. Gentrificación urbana y desarrollo desigual*. Barcelona: Icaria.

GARCÍA VÁZQUEZ, Carlos (2004). *Ciudad hojaldre. Visiones urbanas del siglo XXI*. Barcelona: Gustavo Gili.

GARCÍA VÁZQUEZ, Carlos (2016). *Teorías e historia de la ciudad contemporánea*. Barcelona: Gustavo Gili.

HARVEY, David (2013). *Ciudades rebeldes. Del derecho de la ciudad a la revolución urbana*. Madrid: Akal [t.o.: *Rebel Cities*. Londres: Verso, 2012].

HUBBARD, Phil (2006). *City*. Londres: Routledge.

ILLAS, Edgar (2019). *Pensar Barcelona. Ideologies d'una ciutat global*. Muntanyola: Apostroph [t.o.: *Thinking Barcelona. Ideologies of a global city*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012].

JACOBS, Jane (2011). *Muerte y vida de las grandes ciudades*. Madrid: Capitán Swing [t.o.: *The death and life of great American cities*. Nova York: Random House, 1961].

KERN, Leslie (2021). *Ciudad feminista. La lucha por el espacio en un mundo diseñado por hombres*. Barcelona: Bellaterra [t.o.: *Feminist City. Claiming Space in a Man-Made World*. Londres: Verso, 2020].

LEFEBVRE, Henri (2017). *El derecho a la ciudad*. Madrid: Capitán Swing [t.o.: *Le droit à la ville*. París: Anthropos, 1968].

LEFEBVRE, Henri (1976). *La revolución urbana*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial [t.o.: *La révolution urbaine*. París: Gallimard, 1970].

MAYER, Margit, Catharina THÖRN, Håkan THÖRN (eds.) (2016). *Urban uprisings. Challenging neoliberal urbanism in Europe*. Londres: Palgrave.

MÉNDEZ DE ANDÉS, Ana, David HAMOU, Marco APARICIO (eds.) (2020). *Códigos comunes urbanos. Herramientas para el devenir-común de las ciudades*. Barcelona: Icaria.

MERRIFIELD, Andy (2002). *Metromarxism. A Marxist tale of the city*. Nova York: Routledge.

- MERRIFIELD, Andy (2018). *What we talk about when we talk about cities (and love)*. Nova York: OR Books.
- MERRIFIELD, Andy (2019). *La nueva cuestión urbana*. Iruña: Katakarak [t.o.: *The new urban question*. Londres: Pluto Press, 2014].
- MONTANER, Josep Maria, Zaida MUXÍ (2011). *Arquitectura y política. Ensayos para mundos alternativos*. Barcelona: Gustavo Gili.
- Observatorio Metropolitano de Madrid (ed.) (2015). *El mercado contra la ciudad. Globalización, gentrificación y políticas urbanas*. Madrid: Traficantes de Sueños.
- Paisaje Transversal (2021). *Escuchar y transformar la ciudad. Urbanismo colaborativo y participación ciudadana*. Madrid: Catarata.
- PARKER, Simon (2004). *Urban theory and the urban experience. Encountering the city*. Londres: Routledge.
- PARSON, Sean (2019). *Cooking up a revolution. Food not bombs, homes not jails, and resistance to gentrification*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Prole.info (2021). *El monstruo de la vivienda. Trabajo y vivienda en la sociedad capitalista*. Barcelona: Descontrol Editorial [t.o.: *The Housing Monster*, 2012]
- SEABROOK, Jeremy (2008). *Ciutats*. Barcelona: Intermón Oxfam [t.o.: *Cities*. Londres: Pluto Press, 2007]
- SECCHI, Bernardo (2015). *La ciudad de los ricos y la ciudad de los pobres*. Madrid: Los Libros de la Catarata [t.o.: *La città dei ricchi e la città dei poveri*. Bari: Laterza, 2013].
- SENDRA, Pablo, Richard SENNETT (2021). *Diseñar el desorden. Experimentos y disrupciones en la ciudad*. Madrid: Alianza [t.o.: *Designing Disorder: Experiments and Disruptions in the City*. Londres: Verso, 2020].
- SENNETT, Richard (2019). *Construir i habitar. Ètica per a la ciutat*. Barcelona: Arcàdia [t.o.: *Building and Dwelling. Ethics for the City*. Londres: Allen Lane, 2018].
- SEQUERA, Jorge (2020). *Gentrificación. Capitalismo cool, turismo y control del espacio urbano*. Madrid: Catarata.
- SEVILLA, [Álvaro \(ed.\)](#) (2017). *Neil Brenner. Teoría urbana crítica y políticas de escala*. Barcelona: Icaria
- SMITH, Neil (1996). *La nueva frontera urbana. Ciudad revanchista y gentrificación*. Madrid: Traficantes de Sueños [t.o.: *The new urban frontier. Gentrification and the revanchist city*. Londres: Routledge, 1996].
- SOJA, Edward (2008). *Postmetrópolis. Estudios críticos sobre las ciudades y las regiones*. Madrid: Traficantes de Sueños [t.o.: *Postmetropolis. Critical studies of cities and regions*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000].
- SORANDO, Daniel, Álvaro ARDURA (2016). *First we take Manhattan. La destrucción creativa de las ciudades*. Madrid: Los Libros de la Catarata.
- STAVRIDES, Stavros (2016). *Hacia la ciudad de umbrales*. Madrid: Akal [t.o.: *Towards the city of thresholds*. Trento: professionaldreamers, 2010].
- STEEL, Carolyn (2020). *Ciudades hambrientas. Cómo el alimento moldea nuestras vidas*. Madrid: Capitán Swing [t.o.: *Hungry City: How Food Shapes Our Lives*. Londres: Random House, 2014].
- SUDJIC, Deyan (2017). *El lenguaje de las ciudades*. Barcelona: Ariel [t.o.: *The language of cities*. Londres: Allen Lane, 2016].
- THERBORN, Göran (2020). *Las ciudades del poder. Lo urbano, lo nacional, lo popular y lo global*. Madrid: Traficantes de Sueños [t.o.: *Cities of Power: The Urban, the National, the Popular, the Global*. Londres: Verso, 2017].

TONKIS, Fran (2005). *Space, the city and social theory. Social relations and urban forms*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

VÁZQUEZ MONTALBÁN, Manuel (1998). *La literatura en la construcción de la ciudad democrática*. Barcelona: Crítica.

VOLLMER, Lisa (2019). *Estrategias contra la gentrificación. Por una ciudad desde abajo*. Iruñea: Katakarak [t.o.: *Strategien gegen Gentrifizierung*. Stuttgart: Schmetterling Verlag, 2018].

[Worldwatch Institute](#) (2016). *La situación del mundo 2016. Ciudades sostenibles. Del sueño a la acción*. Barcelona: [Icaria](#).

CALVINO, Italo (1972). *Le città invisibili*. Torí: Einaudi [trad. cat. *Les ciutats invisibles*. Barcelona: Empúries, 1985]

The definitive and effectively valid bibliography will be announced during the first class session of the course.

For each theme of the program, the professor will provide a specific bibliography.

Software

Word processor (MS Word), power-point and Internet access.