

COURSE OUTLINE

Course Code / Title : HA3032 Urban Politics and Policy-making

Pre-requisites : Nil

No. of AUs. : 3

Contact Hours : 39

Course Aims

Urbanization continues apace into the 21st Century worldwide, *centering cities and metropolitan regions as critical units of politics and policy-making* in issues including immigration, housing and climate change. As large, dense and diverse human habitats, urban politics and policy-making are influenced by the dynamic triadic relationship among society, economy and land. In cities, land use allocation and production of space interact with the needs of diverse populations, capital and municipal institutions to generate contested spatial claims among multiple stakeholders. The size of its diversity and concentration of diversity also make cities places of subcultures, varied institutions and fragmented interests. As gateways for new ideas and adoption of new cultures, cities are also sites of dynamic social and spatial change that function as multi-scalar hubs of interconnections among the neighborhood, city, metropolitan and national levels.

By 2030, Asia will emerge as the region with the most cities and with more big cities than anywhere else in the world, according to United Nations (2018). It should be expected that the “local turn” in politics and policy-making experienced in American and European cities over the last two decades will continue, and Asian cities will follow suit, albeit differently due to their different political regimes.

The course aims are twofold:

Firstly, the course offers knowledge about the particularities of the urban environment for politics about space/place and policy-making, and an ongoing tension between people-based and place-based policies. This course draws upon multi-disciplinary knowledge in urban planning, sociology, geography, public policy and public administration to inform our understanding of urban politics and policy-making – essentially interdisciplinary areas of knowledge creation.

Secondly, the course seeks to equip you with a set of skills to research and analyze questions related to policies that govern the functions, problems and life of a city. During the course, you should expect to engage in using comparative lens to examine problems common in the urban realm in cities outside Singapore, in order to inform creative policy recommendations that are applicable to the problems facing Singapore as a city-state.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Identify the relationships among society, economy, government and land in the urban context
2. Discuss the role of urban politics in policy-making in cities.
3. Conduct comparative policy research and best practices of urban governance.
4. Assess and craft policy solutions to the problems faced in Singapore as a city-state.
5. Communicate and collaborate with others who have different interests, perspectives and disciplinary focuses.

Course Content

Week 1: Introduction and Overview

Week 2: City as multi-scalar and territorial sites

Week 3: Comparing Cities

Week 4: Rationality of Urban Growth and Regeneration

Week 5: Urban Politics 1: Space and Place

Week 6: Urban Politics 2: Interest Groups and Stakeholder Analysis

Week 7: Urban Politics 3: Governance and Institutional Analysis

Week 8: People-based or Place-based Policies?

Week 9: Immigration and Integration Policies

Week 10: Housing and Social Mixing Policies

Week 11: Community and Public Space Policies

Week 12: Equity and Smart Nation Policies

Week 13: Summary and Presentation

Course Assessment

CA1 - Class participation : 15%

CA2 - Topical Policy Research Essay 1 : 25%

CA3 - Topical Policy Research Essay 1 : 20%

CA4 - Policy memo and Presentation : 40%

Total -----

100%