



UNIVERSITATEA BABEȘ-BOLYAI
BABEȘ-BOLYAI TUDOMÁNYEGYETEM
BABEȘ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITÁT
TRADITIO ET EXCELLENTIA



Facultatea de Științe Politice,
Administrative și ale Comunicării

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Syllabus

Urban Planning

Spring 2020

Instructor: Associate professor, PhD, Bogdana Neamtu. **Contact information:** email: neamtu@fspac.ro; office hours: Monday, 10.00-12.00 or by appointment (preferably); mobile: 0040-728-88.35.73

Course description

This class is elective and it is meant to introduce second year Leadership students to the field of urban planning. It offers a broad overview of the structure and process of contemporary planning practice throughout the world. It will briefly review the evolution of cities and current trends in urbanization, with a focus on the rise of megacities in the developing world. It will highlight both the theoretical debates and practical challenges that planners are likely to encounter within different substantive subfields of planning practice; and discuss problem-solving techniques and strategies used by practicing planners working in different institutional contexts. The course is organized into three major areas: I) Evolution of cities and urbanization trends throughout the world; II) Evolution of urban planning and its functions; III) Fields and topics in urban planning (*i.e.* urban design, historic preservation, downtown redevelopment).

Learning objectives: At the end of the class the students:

- Should have some introductory knowledge of the evolution of cities and their role in history.
- Be able to describe some of the social implications of urbanization, and compare and contrast the different views of several authors.
- Be able to describe the key features of the historic urban planning proposals of several key scholars.
- Be able to describe the evolution of master plans/comprehensive plans and the structure/functions of the planning process, with an emphasis on the role of the local governments.
- Be able to describe the contribution of some key authors to urban design.



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- Be able to describe in some detail contemporary issues related to social justice, citizen participation, and resolving conflicts in planning.
- Should have a better understanding of the peculiarities of urbanization trends in some Eastern European cities.
- You should gain some practical skills regarding team work, presentation, comparative work as well as empirical observation of urban spaces in reference to some of the class readings.

Textbooks

The main textbooks used for this class are listed below. Other materials will be assigned by the instructors for various classes/topics. These materials will be available for students at least 1 week in advance.

S. Campbell, S. Fainstein (eds.), *Readings in Planning Theory*, 2nd edition, Blackwell Publishing, 2003.

R. LeGates, F. Stout (eds.), *The City Reader*, 2nd edition, Routledge, 2003.

J. Levy, *Contemporary Urban Planning*, 6th edition, Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 2003.

B. Neamtu, *Introduction to urban planning*, Tritonic: Bucuresti, 2013.

Topics and course schedule

Week 1: Introduction to the course

The instructor will introduce the students to the topics discussed throughout the class and will discuss with them important aspects regarding the way in which the course is organized, the structure of the lectures, assignments, etc.

SECTION 1: Urbanization trends throughout the world

The first three classes which form section 1 of the course all deal with the process of urbanizations and critically assess opportunities and challenges pertaining to urban growth, both in developing and developed countries. The course starts in week 1 by examining which are some of the urbanization trend in the 21th century with a focus on the rise of megacities. It also looks into the connection between economic growth/development and urbanization. In week 2 we examine whether urban growth



(sometimes uncontrolled) is a bad thing which needs to be stopped at all costs. Week 3 looks at the role of utopias and utopian thinkers in how the urban future of our planet is going to be shaped.

Week 1: Urbanization trends worldwide. Opportunities and challenges

Week 2: Containing urban growth

Week 3: Urban utopias

SECTION 2: Evolution of urban planning and its functions

The three classes which are part of section 2 examine the evolution of urban planning both as a profession and as an academic field. The first three classes explore issues regarding urban society and urban culture, through the lenses of various key figures in the development of the planning field. The emphasis is placed on a comparative approach – students are introduced to opposing views on how city life affects human behavior, to how cities develop and expand over time and are encouraged to express their own opinions on these topics. The last class of section 2 focuses on planning theory – the most significant paradigms/theory in planning are explored and discussed. The main focus is on identifying how traditional comprehensive planning and plans have evolved over the time under the influence of post-modern theories.

Week 4: Urban society and culture. Emphasis on integration of marginalized and minority groups

Week 5: Urban space. Factors which influence the configuration of cities, with an emphasis on former socialist cities

Week 6: Theory of urban planning - Contemporary approaches/paradigms in planning theory; Modernist versus post-modernist planning; Focus on advocacy planning and communicative planning

SECTION 3: Fields and topics in urban planning

The last seven classes focus on different fields in urban planning.

Week 7: Public spaces. Role of urban design in shaping public spaces

Week 8: Transportation and urban mobility



Week 9: Historic preservations and historic districts

Week 10: Green buildings and green infrastructure

Week 11: Brownfield redevelopment and repurposing of buildings. Temporary uses

Week 12: Innovation and experimentation in cities

Week 13: Quality of life and well-being in cities – what makes cities attractive

Week 14: Wrap up of the class. Concluding remarks and brief discussion regarding the group presentations that will be scheduled during the final exams period

Course methodology and requirements

Attendance and active participation are important requirements for both the course and the seminar. Students need to attend at least 75% of all seminars in order for the instructors to grade their assignments and final paper.

Plagiarism as well as other forms of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of 1. Students will have to retake the course in the following year. Disciplinary sanctions may apply as well. If not sure when or how to cite please ask the instructor for support. However, be aware of the golden rule of referencing/citing sources: **When in doubt, always cite.**

Assignments need to be turned in on time. If students encounter major obstacles regarding the on-time completion of an assignment, please communicate with the instructor. Late submission can be arranged as well due to serious personal reasons but you need to obtain the instructor's permission in advance.

Grading policy and structure

Your overall grade for this class: 60% course and 40% seminar

Course requirements

The final grade for this paper will come from one individual paper. The students are required to look at how the design principles of Jan Ghel apply to different public spaces in Cluj-Napoca and to discuss how



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these spaces can be made more livable. The purpose of the assignment is to make you observe, in a structured way, a public space from the city of Cluj-Napoca through the lens of urban design principles.

Structure of the paper:

- Brief overview of the author's contribution to the field of urban design, focusing on policy implications for nowadays urban planning. Please be aware that you need to place in a historical context the author's work. I expect you to choose one concept or several specific design principles from Jan Ghel's work and to critically reflect on what they mean. You are required to link these principles to other scholars and movements in urban planning.
- Description of the public place from Cluj Napoca chosen for your paper. You need to motivate the selection of the site and whether it is or not comparable with the site discussed by the author. Please use pictures, drawings, maps, or any other methods you find suited for describing the place.
- Methodology. How you conducted the observations or collected the data used in your analysis.
- Main findings. Discuss your main findings by comparing and contrasting them with the ones from Ghel. Focus on providing explanations regarding why differences occur.
- Policy recommendations/implications for local authorities. Even though in some cases the author did not focus on this aspect, you should derive at least some recommendations concerning how we could design better public spaces/places.

The grade for this paper is structured as follows: 60% quality of the written paper, 40% quality of the presentation

Seminar requirements

10% active participation to seminars – in-class discussions, reading and discussion of materials, etc.

10% quizzes

10% individual presentation of a paper/scholar writing on urban design, with similar views to those expressed by Jan Ghel



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10% 1 pager papers – a minimum of 5 is required; you need to obtain an ok from the professor's assessment

ATTENTION: The entire class is designed to facilitate interaction and active learning. Provided that the students come to class unprepared, the instructor reserves the right to change the grading system by adding an in-class final exam. Students will be notified about this no later than May 1st, 2020.