Module Specification

Planning Global Cities

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Part 1: Information

Module title: Planning Global Cities

Module code: UBLL7H-30-3

Level: Level 6

For implementation from: 2027-28

UWE credit rating: 30

ECTS credit rating: 15

College: College of Arts, Technology and Environment

School: CATE School of Architecture and Environment

Partner institutions: None

Field: Architecture and the Built Environment

Module type: Module

Pre-requisites: None

Excluded combinations: None

Co-requisites: None

Continuing professional development: No

Professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements: None

Part 2: Description

Overview: For the first time in history the majority of the world's population is urbanised, with an increasing number of people being drawn to cities. There are now 33 cities across the globe with a population of more than 10 million. The United nations projects a further 40% increase in the urban population from 2025 to 2050.

The estimated urban population is over 4.7 billion (2025). While many cities are responding to this growth through positive urban planning, others are becoming

overwhelmed with growing numbers of people settling in areas that are physically unsuitable or beset with deficits involving governance, infrastructure, and economic and social equity. Notwithstanding the fact that all cities are different, it is clear that cities will have a major influence on human development over the course of the twenty first century.

Features: The "Planning Global Cities" module is designed to explore the dynamics of global urbanization and equip students with a critical understanding of city planning in the 21st century. Central to this module is the recognition that urbanization now encompasses over half the global population, with projections continuing to grow. This growth highlights cities' pivotal role in shaping societal, economic, and environmental outcomes.

Educational aims: This module aims to provide students with the tools, analytical skills, and practical strategies required to navigate and address the complexities of urbanisation in a global context. As cities grow and gain influence, this module seeks to prepare students to critically engage with the challenges and opportunities associated with urban development.

Student will gain a critical understanding of the theories, models, and frameworks that underpin global city development. By examining urban networks' economic, political, socio-cultural, and ecological dimensions, students gain an appreciation for the interconnectedness of urban systems. This knowledge equips them to analyse how cities function within broader territorial and functional hierarchies, essential for effective planning in an increasingly interconnected world.

Outline syllabus: The syllabus is divided into three broad parts.

The first part seeks to provide a context to processes of urbanisation, urban change and city development. It will focus upon the changing distribution of the world’s urban population and will critically review the push and pull factors underpinning city growth. A staged-approach to urban development will be outlined, while a typology of urban form will be presented to help distinguish cities of differing size, scale and influence. The relationship that cities have with wider urban hierarchies will be examined, with particular emphasis being given to the territorial and functional links that cities can develop with regional, national and international systems. As an

extension to this latter aspect, regard will also be given to the wide ranging infrastructure that is helping to bind cities closer together.

Although the third part of the module looks forward, the second part looks back at how major cities have grown and evolved over the last 50 years. While cities are intrinsically different, sessions will seek to draw upon some of the key critiques associated with past city growth and their more recent development. These perspectives, as described by a variety of theorists, practitioners, observers and journalists, will be developed by using a variety of case studies selected from both the developed and developing world.

Given that cities are organic and are constantly subject to change, the third and final part to the module seeks to outline some parameters for successful city growth into the future. A key goal will be to tease out, and present normative arguments, with respect to how future cities can be strategically planned to create more cohesive, liveable and resilient communities with integrated approaches to transport, housing, employment and infrastructure. An initial element will involve exploring the mechanisms by which the growth (or decline) of a city can be anticipated or forecasted, and how change on the ground can be monitored through the use of GIS and remote sensing technologies. Subsequent to this, sessions will seek to explore the different spatial alternatives for accommodating growth arising from a city and its associated hinterland and how these options can be assessed and tested. Similarly, for those cities that are in decline, case studies will be used to show how this retraction is being positively managed to allocate land to new and enduring uses.

The module will outline the significant potential that cities have to initiate change, either through helping to encourage behavioural change or by investing in appropriate infrastructure. For instance, the development of an effective green infrastructure network will be highlighted as one possible strategy that cities can take in helping to adapt and mitigate their environments as part of a response to climate change. Associated with this, sessions will also explore the role that planners can have in making cities more resilient to future shocks and stresses within a city’s social, economic, technical and environmental systems. It will also respond to the call for cities to reduce their energy use and to minimise the size of their ecological

footprint. The module will emphasise the need for effective leadership, an essential mechanism through which complex strategies of change can be promoted, coordinated and evaluated.

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: The module will be delivered across two semesters with contact time of three hours each week. Full attendance will be required throughout the year and for all timetabled sessions. Students will be expected to arrive prepared, having accessed relevant reading and advanced their coursework to an appropriate stage.

Lectures will develop systematic understanding of the module's topics, while seminars and studio sessions will provide an opportunity for both discussion and reflection. These sessions will also include mechanisms for offering formative feedback with respect to the assessment outlined below. Links with other modules will be identified throughout.

The module will be taught by using a variety of staff from across the department. A variety of teaching methods will be deployed but the use of carefully selected case studies will form an important spine to the module. Examples will be drawn from across the developed and developing world. The module team will endeavour to use a variety of stakeholders to prepare this material, with particular effort being made to develop links with relevant organisations (including universities and research centres) in these identified areas.

Independent learning includes essential reading, preparing for and completing assessment, and preparation for assessment.

Students will be expected to add depth and breadth to their lecture and seminar notes through sources identified. However, because this module focuses on an area of study that is changing rapidly, students will be encouraged to find their own resources using the skills developed through years one and two. The module guide,

and individual lectures will help to guide students to an appropriate range of material in support of the topic covered.

Module Learning outcomes: On successful completion of this module students will achieve the following learning outcomes.

MO1 Develop a critical appreciation of the concepts, theories and models underpinning the development of global cities and global city regions, including an understanding of the economic, political, socio-cultural and ecological networks that bind cities territorially and functionally together.

MO2 Evaluate the key challenges and trends in city development over the past 50 years and analyse the scenarios that exist for managing strategic spatial growth (or decline) across a city and beyond, and how these alternatives can be tested.

MO3 Assess and propose strategies for enhancing sustainability and success in future cities, focusing on the roles of planning, infrastructure, and governance in reducing carbon dependency and improving resilience and adaptability.

MO4 Demonstrate the ability to research and engage with relevant literature, effectively communicating ideas, arguments, and information through diverse outputs, including written reports, public speaking and visual presentations.

Hours to be allocated: 300

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 228 hours

Face-to-face learning = 72 hours

Reading list: The reading list for this module can be accessed at readinglists.uwe.ac.uk via the following link https://rl.talis.com/3/uwe/lists/BE11B053-2317-972F-008F-C4F781484B34.html

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: Formative support will be provided throughout the assessment. In terms of the essay, students will be allowed to submit a one-page

plan of bulleted text to ensure their intended structure appears appropriate. Dedicated sessions will provide advice on the format and content of the seminar. Guidance will also be provided for the poster with submissions from previous years being used to help establish expectations.

The Assessment

Presentation - will be an presentation that covers a topic related to the themes and theories discussed in the module. To enhance the learning experience first attempt will be run as a group assessment. Individual members of the group may be given lower marks if their contribution is seen to not be on par with other group members.

Written Assignment - Essay (1500 words and poster) a similar brief to that described above, which may include some topic changes.

Resit Presentation - an individual presentations where each student must demonstrate the learning outcomes assigned. The resit briefs will be revised versions to those issued at the first sit, thereby enabling the students to build on any previous work to reach the necessary standard.
Resit Written Assignment - a similar brief to that described above, which may include some topic changes.
Resit Poster - a similar brief to that described above, which may include some topic changes.

Assessment tasks:

Presentation (First Sit)
Description: Group presentation (7 minutes per student).
Weighting: 50 %
Final assessment: No
Group work: Yes
Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO4

Written Assignment (First Sit)
Description: Essay (1500 words plus visual material).
Weighting: 50 %
Final assessment: Yes
Group work: No
Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO3, MO4

Presentation (Resit)
Description: Individual presentations based upon revised briefs to those issued for the first sit.
Weighting: 50 %
Final assessment: No
Group work: No
Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO4

Written Assignment (Resit)
Description: Essay (1500 words plus visual material). Resit will be a similar brief to the original sitting, which may include some topic changes.
Weighting: 50 %
Final assessment: Yes
Group work: No
Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO3, MO4

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Architecture and Planning [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2025-26