

Course guide

290504 - METSOC - Social Metabolism and City

Last modified: 27/07/2023

Unit in charge:	Valles School of Architecture	
Teaching unit:	740 - DUTP - Department of Urbanism, Territory and Landscape. 756 - THATC - Department of History and Theory of Architecture and Communication Techniques.	
Degree:	MASTER'S DEGREE IN SUSTAINABLE INTERVENTION IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT (Syllabus 2014). (Compulsory subject).	
Academic year: 2023	ECTS Credits: 5.0	Languages: English

LECTURER

Coordinating lecturer:	Marta Serra (THATC) (ENG)
Others:	Guest lecturers: Jose Luís Oyón (Professor DUOT), Jere Kuzmanic (PhD candidate DUOT) .

PRIOR SKILLS

None

REQUIREMENTS

No special habilities are required.

DEGREE COMPETENCES TO WHICH THE SUBJECT CONTRIBUTES

Specific:

9. Capacity to asses and organize information related to sustainability and architecture.
10. Awareness of the impact that social demand for sustainability has in the architect's fields of action (namely design, building, city and territory) and the need for the architect's role re-definition.
11. Knowledge in the description of the material flows that determine urban metabolism as well as in understanding their relationship with urban spaces.

Generical:

4. Competence in outlining the relationship between sustainability and the urban environment on a theoretical and experimental level.
5. Ability to diagnose urban settings according to sustainability characterization.

Transversal:

6. TEAMWORK: To be able to work as a member of an interdisciplinary team, either as an associate or as a team-leader, so that projects are developed in a pragmatic and responsible manner by setting up goals fitted with the available resources.

7. SOLID USE OF INFORMATION RESOURCES: Proper management and acquisition, structuring, analysis and visualization of data and information in the specified knowledge field; capacity for critical assessment of results and conclusions.

8. (ENG) TERCERA LENGUA: Conocer una tercera lengua, preferentemente el inglés, con un nivel adecuado oral y escrito y en consonancia con las necesidades que tendrán los titulados y tituladas.

Basic:

1. Students will gain and understand knowledge which may be further developed or applied in a research environment.
2. Students will earn skills in clear and non-ambiguous communication of their conclusions, as well as the knowledge and reasoning sustaining them, to expert and non-expert audiences.
3. Students will build a capacity for self-driven and autonomous learning that may empower them in further studies or education.

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

As a specific methodology, the course intertwines two main type of contents:

- Theory and history, a conceptual approach where lectures about key authors and related readings will be conducted.
- Qualitative research through analysis of the field, where participatory action research will lead to assignments to be developed.

In addition, through autonomous learning and research students must carry out activities aimed at assimilating, analysing, synthesising or extending the contents derived from the lectures together with the required tasks to complete the practical exercises.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES OF THE SUBJECT

The aim of the course is to introduce students to the metabolic vision of the city and its sustainability significance as a reference for action. With this purpose, the course develops a community diagnosis by identifying the situated knowledge and by applying participatory action research. Thus, the diagnosis becomes the frame to provide key authors, practices and theoretical concepts of urban metabolism decrease through a long historical review that begins in the nineteenth century and builds a justifying account of socio-ecological urbanism that may be relevant today.

Particular goals consists of:

- To gain an overview of fundamental environmentalist and humanist planners.
- To find in urban history multiple assets to understand and rethink our present.
- To examine the role of the society and the actions of their people regarding the implications in the built environment.
- To reflect about the significance of self-sufficiency, interdependency, spatial justice and the territorial balance of management of resources.
- To identify methods to analyse the socio-spatial conditions of a case study.

STUDY LOAD

Type	Hours	Percentage
Hours large group	22,5	18.00
Self study	80,0	64.00
Hours medium group	22,5	18.00

Total learning time: 125 h

CONTENTS

1. Theory and history: a conceptual approach.

Description:

On the one hand, the course develops through a strong body of theory and history related to ecological and humanist urbanism. Different threads of thinking are presented, by key references, authorships and spatial practices either historical and current. Constantly intertwined and from a wide variety of angles (architecture, urbanism, philosophy, sociology or anthropology) the series of lectures will offer a kind of tool box that may lead different questions and responses to the way of thinking the city and its implications in social and environmental change.

Specific objectives:

- To learn to connect theory and history to contemporary problems and practices.

Related activities:

According to the calendar, the contents are divided in two blocks. Both blocks are crossed either by theoretical and historical contents, and qualitative research to identify the situated knowledge.

Block 1: BASIS TOWARDS A LOCAL DIAGNOSIS

- TO QUESTION. To reflect and to query on some introductory concepts about city and society, social change and environmental design.
- TO OBSERVE. Ethnography and architectural design. Identifying and listening through the body and the environment.
- TO REGISTER. To represent oral accounts, mapping situated knowledge and spatial community practices.
- TO DIAGNOSE. Analysing the built environment. Identification of needs and potentials. The map
- TO PROPOSE. Co-producing the built environment. Transforming the built environment

Block 2: CONCEPTUAL REFLECTIONS AND CRITICAL APPROACHES

- City-Nature fusion, decentralisation and mutual aid (the anarchist roots)
- Direct action, informal urbanism, community-based spatial design, socially-engaged architectural practices.

Full-or-part-time: 22h 30m

Theory classes: 22h 30m

2. Qualitative research through analysis of the field

Description:

On the other hand, the course displays three different collaborative exercises to trace links between the theoretical lectures and the reality of the case study. Qualitative research based on key readings, record keeping and participatory observation will allow to understand and rethink the socio-spatial dimension of the place.

Specific objectives:

- Train to apply theory and practice regarding a specific case study.

Related activities:

According to the calendar, the exercises will be explained, developed delivered as follows:

Exercise 1 - "Situated chronology and actors' map". A socio-spatial evolution of the place and its agents.

Exercise 2 - "Participatory diagnosis and critical cartography". A report on the management of local resources.

Full-or-part-time: 22h 30m

Guided activities: 22h 30m

GRADING SYSTEM

Exercise 1 (25%)
Exercise 2 (50%)
Personal Assessment (15%)
Active participation (10%)

RESOURCES

Other resources:

Atenea platform will provide the specific schedule, presentations, specific material and bibliographical references.