



## SCHOOL OF GLOBAL STUDIES

### **HU1221 Sustainable Cities, 15 credits**

Hållbara städer, 15 högskolepoäng

*First Cycle*

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#### **Confirmation**

This course syllabus was confirmed by Faculty of Social Sciences on 2006-11-20 and was last revised on 2022-09-02 by School of Global Studies to be valid from 2022-11-02, autumn semester of 2022.

*Field of education:* Social Sciences 100%

*Department:* School of Global Studies

#### **Position in the educational system**

This is an advanced course in the subject of human ecology. The course is offered as a freestanding course.

The course can be part of the following programmes: 1) Program in Environmental Social Science (S1SML), 2) Program in Environmental Social Science (S1SMI), 3) Programme in Environmental Social Science (SMILM) and 4) Bachelors' programme in Global Studies (S1GLS)

*Main field of studies*

Human Ecology

*Specialization*

G1F, First cycle, has less than 60 credits in first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

#### **Entry requirements**

A completed core course (15 credits) in human ecology or the equivalent.

#### **Learning outcomes**

The course intends to study, analyse and problematise how city development is carried out at different levels (internationally, nationally, and locally in Sweden), which impediments/problems and possibilities that exist and preconditions that are required to make city development more sustainable. In particular, the course intends to reveal and

contribute to a better understanding of the complexity in the context of the city development. Special focus is given to social sustainability, its implications and definitions. The course also aims to better understand the connections that exist between social sustainability and two other dimensions of sustainability (environmental and economic), how the three dimensions affect each other and what this means for sustainable urban development. The course offers an international perspective on sustainable city development and urbanisation and current and local (Gothenburg).

The course contains an interdisciplinary review of knowledge and analytical tools required to be able to understand and analyze the city's current problems and future opportunities within a sustainability context. On successful completion of the course the student will be able to:

#### *Knowledge and understanding*

- give an account of the material and social preconditions of the city and its interaction;
- understand how city development is carried out in Sweden and globally;

#### *Competence and skills*

- apply various analytical tools to conduct a status-oriented sustainability analysis of a city;
- independently describe and in an academic context present the social, environmental and structural (organizational and governance-related) problems associated with today's cities (both orally and in writing);
- select and apply relevant theoretical concepts presented in the course in an empirically based analysis of different aspects of urban sustainability

#### *Judgement and approach*

- assess the city's opportunities and obstacles to achieving urban sustainability;
- problematize how city development is carried out in Sweden and globally;
- evaluate different sources, analytical tools and perspective in sustainable city development critically.

The course is sustainability-focused, which means that at least one of the learning outcomes clearly shows that the course content meets at least one of the University of Gothenburg's confirmed sustainability criteria. The content also constitutes the course's main focus.

### **Course content**

The course consists of 2 components. The first component consists of a review of how city development is made in practice and different environmental and social problems

that are linked to cities. Urban development is mainly described through concrete local examples and focuses on conditions, problems and opportunities for sustainable urban development. Some of the environmental and social problems that are addressed include pollution (water, air, soil), transport, gentrification, communication, ecological footprints and governance strategies. The handling of these problems through town planning and consequences for social aspects is emphasised. In the second component, the future role of the city from a local and global perspective is problematized. Some of the questions that are discussed are: What is a sustainable city? Why are the cities of today unsustainable? How can sustainability be planned and be carried out?

### **Form of teaching**

The main forms of instruction of the course are lectures, seminars, exercises and written submissions both individually and in groups.

*Language of instruction:* English and Swedish

### **Assessment**

Examination of the course is arranged through four components:

- active participation in group assignments. A jointly written essay and oral presentation is included in each group assignment;
- active participation in literature seminars;
- active participation in a workshop. The results of the workshop should be presented orally of the group;
- an individual thesis.

Credits for the course (**15 credits**) are reported in two stages:

Passed submissions, presentations and active participation in group assignments, literature seminars and workshop worth **7.5 credits**.

Passed individual thesis (take-home exam) worth **7.5 credits**.

The course includes seminars with requirements on physical attendance and active participation, since it contributes to the collective learning and to develop the student's ability to communicate and discuss acquired knowledge in dialogue orally with others. These components are therefore compulsory. If special circumstances apply, written supplementary qualification of graduate student achievement is permitted. A supplementary qualification is based on the same assignment as the original examination. If a student does not submit a supplement within the set time, the student fails on the examination assignment.

A student who has taken two examinations in a course or a part of a course without obtaining a pass grade is entitled to another examiner, unless there are special reasons to the contrary. A request for change of examiner should be written and sent to the

department. The number of examination sessions is limited to five.

In those cases where a course has ceased or gone through larger changes the student should be guaranteed access to at least three examination sessions (including regular examination session) during a time of at least a year based on the earlier set-up of the course.

### **Grades**

The grading scale comprises: Pass with Distinction (VG), Pass (G) and Fail (U).

Workshop, group assignments and the literature seminars are graded with either Pass or Fail. Take-home examination is graded with either Fail, Pass or Passed with Distinction.

To obtain the grade Pass in the course, it is required that all compulsory components and examinations are passed. Pass with distinction requires Passed with distinction result in take-home examination and passed on other compulsory components and examinations.

### **Course evaluation**

The course coordinator is responsible for systematically and regularly collecting the students' views of the course, and for making sure that the results of the evaluations in different forms are taken into consideration when developing the course. The result and possible changes in the course structure should be communicated both to the students who carried out the evaluation and to the students who should start the course.