UCL SUMMER SCHOOL

GLOBAL LONDON: CONTEMPORARY URBANISM, CULTURE AND SPACE

Key Information

Module code          ISSU1005
Taught during        Session One: Monday 2 July - Friday, 20 July
Module workload      45 teaching hours plus approximately 100 study hours
Module leader        Hayley Gewer
Department            Centre for Languages and International Education
Credit                15 UCL credits, 7.5 ECTS, 4 US
Level                 Level 1, first year Undergraduate
Pre-requisites        Standard entry requirements
Assessment            Portfolio of fieldwork (40%)
                      1,500-word essay (30%)
                      5-minute presentation (30%)

Module Overview

This module will use London to explore how contemporary cities are being theorized, experienced and understood. Consideration will be given to how cities are conceptualised in and through the context of globalisation. The concept of ‘global cities’ will be contrasted with perspectives that emphasise the ‘ordinary’ quality of cities, to allow students to engage analytically and critically with the complexities and diversities of urban life and experiences. A range of interdisciplinary themes within urban studies will be employed to explore the diverse socio-spatial and cultural dynamics and practices both with respect to London and to student’s home cities.

Each week students will use a different theme through which to understand processes in London and other urban contexts.

Week One: London in a World of Cities – Global vs Ordinary Cities
- Introduction to key concepts
- What is a city? What is the urban?
- The global vs ordinary city hypothesis
- Dynamics of urban growth
- Orientation to the city of London

Week Two: A World of Two Cities – Urban Diversity
- Exploring multi-ethnic London

Please note that this module description is indicative and may be subject to change.
• Urban diversity and cosmopolitan encounters
• Community, identity and sociality.
• Inequality and segregation
• Citizenship and the Right to the City

Week Three: Urban Culture and Neighbourhood Change
• Unpacking culture
• Vernacular and everyday culture
• Cultural industries and the ‘creative’ city
• Neighbourhood change and gentrification

Module Aims
The module aims to:

• Introduce students to key academic theories, frameworks and concepts so as to better understand contemporary cities.
• Engage students around the social, economic, cultural and political dynamics that shape London and its urban life.
• Enable students to critically reflect on and apply urban theories and concepts to London and to their own cities.
• Provide students with the opportunity to learn about London and to understand the complexities and diversities contained within the contemporary city.
• Allow students to experience a range of different learning methods and environments (case studies, field-trips, project and portfolio work) when analysing everyday urban life.
• Provide students with the opportunity to experiment with different research and data collection methods so as to record everyday urban experiences and practices.
• Encourage students to develop critical awareness and reflective skills through working both independently and as part of a team.

Teaching Methods
The module will comprise a mixture of classwork and fieldwork.

During classwork students will be introduced to key concepts/themes through short lectures/different forms of input (lasting roughly an hour per session). This will be followed by group work, seminars, classroom debates and reading-based exercises where students will be expected to work collaboratively around both the concepts and the experiences they had in the field. Fieldwork and assessment requirements will also be covered.

Fieldwork will involve trips to different sites or museums that relate to the different themes/concepts being explored. Students will be given tasks to undertake at each site, which will lead into their project and assessment work (including building a portfolio of research evidence).

In addition a Moodle site and module specific page will be set up for the group. This will be used to communicate with students re: reading lists, relevant material and tasks. Different collaborative resources and activities will be used (forums, questionnaires, schedules, etc.) to engage students and to foster independent studying and learning.

Please note that this module description is indicative and may be subject to change.
Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this module, students will have:

- Been introduced to key academic theories, frameworks and concepts for understanding contemporary urbanism and cities.
- Had the opportunity to reflect on and apply these theories and concepts to London and to their own cities.
- A sound understanding of London’s local particularities, global connections and place within a world of cities.
- Developed an understanding of the complexities and diversities contained within contemporary urban life, both in London and in other cities across the globe.
- Utilised case studies, fieldtrips, classroom tasks and personal portfolios to better record and understand urban processes.
- Experimented with different methods to observe, engage with and analyse data around everyday urban experiences and practices.
- Produced clear, coherent and academically well-supported written and oral reports
- Reflected critically on decisions, learning styles, and research undertaken to be able to improve one’s own engagement in both independent and team work

Assessment Methods

- Portfolio of fieldwork (40%)
- 1,500-word essay (30%)
- 5-minute presentation (30%)

Key Texts

The module will use abridged extracts and chapters from the following publications:
Gandy, M (2012) Urban Constellations
Hall, S. (2010) City, Street and Citizen — the measure of the ordinary

In addition a selection of relevant journal and magazine articles will be used.