# Urban cultural studies

## Prof. Valentina Anzoise

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

What are ‘cities’? What is ‘the urban’? How can we understand urban culture?

The course will focus on the urban change and cultural urban processes and manifestations from a sociological and geographical perspective, focusing on the role played by the arts and the creative sector as well as by every-day life practices such as consumption and mobility.

*Specific course aims are:*

* To learn how cities are built upon economic forces and social structures such as race, class and government policies influence, and how that has changed over time;
* To locate culture and creativity in the current global economic landscape and analyze their organizational peculiarities
* To understand and learn how to study cities, their representations and their practices
* To develop a citical reflection on urban change and on the future of our cities in light of the emergencies that we are experiencing.

*At the end of the course, students will be able to:*

* Debate, discuss and understand global phenomena which characterize our urban scenarios.
* Understand the opportunities and limits of culture and creativity in urban development and urban regeneration prcesses
* Theoretically and empirically study contemporary urban culture
* Improve their knowledge about cities’representations
* Exercise their communication and learning skills through a guided discussion about critical issues and workgroups.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course starts by providing an overview about urban and cultural studies. Particular attention will be given to how and why cities develop particular meanings, and how these are constructed, interpreted and sustained. Modernity and Globalization processes will be considered to address the issue of most recent urban and cultural changes.

The course will dedicate specific attention to cities' representations as a means to investigate and study them, taking into consideration the narratives produced, diffused and sustained by popular culture products as well as by events and policies occuring in or addressed to urban cointexts:
More specifically, the course is articulated on the following topics:

* Blending urban and cultural studies
* Modernity and urban imaginaries
* Globalization, Migration and urban culture
* Urban development and the production of space
* Culture-led urban regeneration
* Ecocriticsm and Green Cultural studies
* Research methods and approches

***READING LIST***

The “Urban Cultural Studies booklet” is available at Container.9; additional materials will be uploaded on BlackBoard.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The professor will dedicate much attention to theories but also to real case studies and applied research. In addition, guest speakers will be invited to provide additional knowledge on specific issues. Practical exercises and fieldwork activities are envisaged to be carried out individually and in groups. When possible, in-class discussions will be organized to allow students to share their own opinions and exercise their communication capabilities. Cultural products such as comics and movies will be assigned as study material.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

*Attending students*:

The assessment will be based on:

Final oral exam (75% of each student’s grade). The exam will be based on the topics covered in the teaching materials the professor will discuss in class and publish on BB. The topics will cover both theoretical models and concrete applications/development of cases or models.

Final group assignment (25% of each student’s grade): students will be required to carry out one major assignment in a team.

Participation and effort in Class discussions and other ‘in-progress’ assignments.

*Non-Attending students:*

Students who do not attend classes need to be prepared on the same syllabus and BB material as attending students. They will have to check the professor’s instructions on BB and eventually contact me beforehand to be instructed on the possibility of carrying out an agreed exercise which will be evaluated together with the oral exam.

The exam will be composed of two or three open questions on the assigned study material.

### **NOTES AND PREREQUISITES**

There are no admission requirements.