COURSE OVERVIEW

Title: Landscapes of the Public Realm: Urban Themes and Sites
Prerequisites: None
Number of Credits: 4
Type of Course: Seminar
Semester: Fall
Language: English
Instructor: Francese Munoz
Email: francese.munoz@alba.edu

Course Description

The aim of the course is to focus on the explanation of recent urban evolutions and transformation processes in urban Europe taking as an example and study case the city of Barcelona. The course will consider the main trends characterising contemporary urban transitions from the economic, social and territorial perspectives. The discussion on the changing patterns in landscapes is presented as a useful approach to both evaluate and to achieve a better understanding of the processes of urban change and transformation. In this way, the “shifting landscapes” of Barcelona are explained as the physical and morphological translation of other hidden shifts in the urban economy, society and culture.

The course will be developed in two different types of sessions. Some of the sessions will be dedicated to the presentation of the theoretical framework and the discussion of the contents. Other sessions will be arranged as workshops to discuss some key texts selected from the bibliography.

Learning Outcomes

Assessment Criteria

The seminar offers a series of lectures to be complemented with a paper that should cover a given topic by developing the necessary research and documentation together with a personal interpretation of the topic. The paper should be produced individually and should be based on research conducted at the library, and through other sources that should be properly acknowledged. Its extension should not exceed 15 pages and should include the necessary images to accompany the text.
Sessions

Session 1
- Presentation of the seminar
- Theoretical framework I. A global urban world

Session 2
- Theoretical framework II. New conditions for urban space
- Workshop I. Urbanization processes after the end of cities (Robert Fishman text)
- Workshop II. A global urban form and urbanism? (David Clark and Marc Auge texts)

Session 3
- Theoretical framework III. Urban complexity and public space: plurality versus simplification, diversity versus specialization. Old and new definitions for public space.
- Workshop III. Public spaces and urban regeneration in contemporary cities (Sharon Zukin text)

Session 4
- European cities in a global society. The "homogeneous diversity' of the European urban world
- Main trends of the recent urban evolutions:
  - Economy: new requirements of economic integration in economic European space
  - Territory: metropolitan fragmentation and specialisation vs urban renovation in central spaces.
  - Population: a new urban demography made by new urban population: new typologies of families, new social behaviours. The relationship with activity and housing accessibility
  - Society: the post-welfare state transition, global immigration flows and the new morphology of urban social exclusion
  - Government/Management: The lack of efficient metropolitan governments and the European Union effects on future regional development (planning, mobility patterns and flows of people, goods and information)

Session 5
- Historical overview I: De-industrialisation dynamics and the "urban decline' (1970-1980)
- Historical overview II: The urban renewal and the "colonisation' of the urban centre (1980-2000)
Session 6
- The post-industrial change and the new requirements of the Informational Urban Economy

Session 7
- Telecommunications and the urban networking processes. Trans-European Networks for mobility of flows, goods and information

Workshop IV. Traditional and contemporary forms of urban growth and expansion (Ute Lehrer text)

Session 8
- Urban processes currently at work in urban cores:
- "Shifting landscapes" key issues: from the urban complexity of the compact city to the specialization patterns. From the places of diversity to the construction of safe "worlds apart".
- Workshop V. Market, place and urban space: From the "loft living" to gentrification processes (Sharon Zukin texts)

Session 9
- Urban processes currently at work in metropolitan areas:
  - Relocation of activities (technology parks and suburban business areas) and population (migration flows from central cities to medium and smalltowns). The post-urban sprawl and the peripheral "flex-spaces": expansion of low-density urbanisation and its suburban patterns of containers for consumption and leisure (theme parks, shopping malls and festival markets).
  - Shifting landscapes' key issues: from density to mobility. Consumption of land for new urban growth and ecological unsustainability. A new territorial model for urban Europe: low-density habitats and high-intensity mobility flows.
- Workshop VI. Market, place and urban space: Post-modern urban design and architecture (David Harvey text)
Session 10

- The 'festivalization' of urban policies
- Workshop VII. The global tourism and the production of public space for the tourist gaze. (John Uny texts)

Session 11/12

- Final presentations and concluding remarks

Texts


