Sustainable Cities in a Comparative Perspective

New York University
Wagner Graduate School of Public Service
URPL-GP 2613
Fall 2015
Wednesday, 4:55-6:35 PM
Location: Silver, Room 414

Instructor

Carlos Restrepo
Office: Jacobs Administration Building, 5th floor, Office 551c, NYU Polytechnic
Phone: 646-997-4065
E-mail: cer202@nyu.edu
Office Hours: Thursday, 4-6 PM or by appointment.

Course Description

According to estimates by the United Nations, between 2000 and 2030 the share of the world’s population living in urban areas will increase from 47% to 60%, with the fastest growing cities located in developing countries. This course examines the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability in cities. Policies and programs that try to address the challenges of sustainability from both developed and developing countries are studied and compared. Opportunities for avoiding unsustainable practices in developing countries through the use of modern technologies are also analyzed. Some of the major themes explored in the context of the sustainability of cities are indicators of sustainability, demographic trends, urban poverty and slums, green building, urban sprawl, global climate change, and sustainable energy and transportation policies.

Course Readings

Two books are required for the course. They are available at the NYU Bookstore (located at 726 Broadway, New York, NY 10003). The books are:


These books will also be available in the Course Reserves Desk, on Lower Level 2 of Bobst Library, or electronically through the NYU library.
An additional set of required and suggested readings from academic journals, the Internet and various media sources will be listed on blackboard.

**Class Assignments and Grading**

1. Four short written assignments (40%)
   - Climate change – September 23
   - Measuring sustainability – October 7
   - Environmental justice – October 28
   - Sustainable transportation – November 18

2. Final paper (40%) – due December 9

3. Class attendance and class participation (20%)

**Schedule of Lectures**

1. September 2. Introduction to sustainable urban development and the sustainability framework
3. September 16. Urban areas and global climate change
4. September 23. Urban areas and global climate change
5. September 30. Measuring sustainability and indicators of sustainable urban development
6. October 7. Measuring sustainability and indicators of sustainable urban development
7. October 14. Urban sprawl and smart growth
8. October 21. Environmental justice, social equity and social dimensions of sustainability
10. November 4. Urban parks and urban farming
11. November 11. Sustainable transportation
12. November 18. Sustainable energy use
   *November 25: Thanksgiving Break – No class*
13. December 2. Sustainable waste management