

CDE4501B Topics in Challenges of Cities AY24/25

Cities for Health, Ageing and Social Wellbeing

Course Description

Cities are dynamic environments where the intersection of urban planning, public health, and social wellbeing profoundly impacts residents' lives. In this interdisciplinary course, students explore the intricate relationship between urban environments and human health, focusing on promoting equity and enhancing quality of life within cities. Through a combination of lectures, seminars, case studies, and participatory research, students delve into key themes such as demographic changes, urban design, climate change adaptation, and social determinants of health.

Course Learning Objectives:

1. **Recognize** the interdisciplinary approach of urban planning and public health in advancing health equity and social wellbeing in urban settings.
2. **Analyse** the impact of demographic shifts, including ageing populations, on urban environments and corresponding public health policies.
3. **Evaluate** the influence of urban design and environmental factors on physical, mental and socio-cultural health outcomes in cities.
4. **Examine** strategies for addressing climate change within urban contexts and its implications for public health.

Key Themes:

Throughout the course, students will explore key themes that underpin the course's objectives:

- **Interdisciplinary Approach:** Students discover how collaboration between urban planners, public health experts, policymakers, and community stakeholders can foster innovative solutions to urban health challenges.
- **Demographic Dynamics:** The course delves into the demographic shifts occurring within cities, particularly the implications of ageing populations on urban environments and public health policies.
- **Urban Design and Health:** Students critically evaluate the role of urban design, green spaces, transportation systems, and built environments in shaping physical, mental, and social wellbeing.
- **Climate Change Resilience:** With climate change posing unprecedented threats to urban areas, students explore strategies for building climate-resilient cities while safeguarding public health.
- **Social Determinants of Health:** Through in-depth analysis, students examine how social, economic, and environmental factors influence health disparities within urban populations.

Course Leaders:

- Dr Loke Wai Chong, Adjunct Professor, NUS Cities (lokewc@nus.edu.sg)
- Dr Su Aw, Assistant Professor, Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health, NUS (awsu@nus.edu.sg)

Teaching Assistant:

- Alborz Mirzaie, Senior Associate (Research Assistant), NUS Cities (amirzaie@nus.edu.sg)

Course Schedule:

- Lecture Venue:
- Time: 9 a.m. to 12 pm. every Wednesday

Week No	Lecture Topic
Week 01: 15th Jan	Introduction to Public Health and Health Equity Introducing Health-In-All Policies
Week 02: 22nd Jan	The 'slum' and Urban Planning
Week 03: 29th Jan	Holiday due to CNY
Week 04: 5th Feb	Reacting to the 'slums' - Utopian Urban Planning
Week 05: 12th Feb	Urban Environments as Determinants of Health
Week 06: 19th Feb	Social Inclusion and Places
Week 07: 5th Mar	Urban Mobility and Physical Health
Week 08: 12th Mar	Open Space and Nature
Week 09: 19th Mar	Food, Environment and Planning
Week 10: 26th Mar	Housing and its Effect on Health
Week 11: 2nd April	Real and Perceived Safety
Week 12: 9th April	Impact of Climate Change on Public Health
Week 13: 16th April	Broad Assessment of the Module – An Overview

Course Assessment

Mode	Description	(weightage)
1. Group presentation	<p>Objective: to apply concepts from our lectures to real-world sites in Singapore using recognized analytical frameworks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In your pre-allocated interdisciplinary groups, you will evaluate an issue related to one of the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social Inclusion and Places ○ Urban Mobility and Physical Health ○ Open Space and Nature ○ Food, Environment, and Planning. • Using an appropriate analytical framework, assess the selected issue and gather relevant data through an actual site visit. Your analysis should lead to actionable recommendations for improvement. • Group Presentation: 10 min presentation of the analytical framework as well as the application/assessment of site, concluding with recommendations 	40%
2. Individual report	Critically assess a specific intervention proposed by your group, linking theory with practical application.	50%
3. Overall class participation (graded by peer review)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active participation in class discussions • Peer Reviews 	10%