

CDE4501B Topics in Challenges of Cities AY25/26

City to City: A Comparative Study (Singapore to Yogyakarta)

Course Description

How cities address challenges and transform them into opportunities varies and is influenced by multiple factors that are more often context-specific. While there is no one-size-fits-all initiative that can be applied across cities, insights drawn from understanding different and similar approaches adopted by cities are valuable to identify the strengths and weaknesses of urban practices and to foster cross-disciplinary and cross-boundary dialogues and collaborations. The act of 'doing' comparative study can lead to the formulation of novel methodologies and tactics in designing more comprehensive and inclusive urban solutions.

This interdisciplinary course introduces methods and approaches for conducting a comparative study of cities and examining the complex dimensions and drivers, whether at local, regional, or global scales, that shape 'best practices' cities implement in addressing urban challenges.

In this course, students, together with students from the University of Gadjah Mada (UGM) Yogyakarta, will embark on an immersive comparative learning journey by identifying and examining urban inquiries and challenges of Singapore and Yogyakarta. Both cities have distinct strategies and initiatives in addressing issues related to liveability and sustainability that will contribute to a broader yet tactical understanding of city-making.

Note: Immersion segment in Singapore and Yogyakarta is **compulsory** for students taking this course. A \$1000 STEER Award is available.

Course Learning Objectives:

1. **Identify** and **discuss** the role of contexts/ specificities (history, geographical, social, cultural, etc.) and their interconnections as well as transboundary challenges in shaping urban development, processes, and initiatives of the case cities.
2. **Identify** and **discuss** key concepts and theories in relation to urban inquiries posed by varying contexts/ specificities, their interconnections, and transboundary challenges/ contestations.
3. **Develop** systematic methods and approaches for conducting a comparative analysis of urban inquiries/ challenges in a comparative setting.
4. **Collect** and **analyse** information related to urban inquiries/ challenges of case cities in a comparative setting.
5. **Examine** the differences and similarities, strengths and weaknesses, of the urban strategies and initiatives being implemented by the case cities in addressing urban challenges.
6. **Reflect** and **synthesise** key principles of strategies and initiatives drawn from the case cities.
7. **Appreciate** cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural varying values/ perspectives and **demonstrate** interdisciplinary dialogues and collaborations.

Course Coordinator:

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Course Schedule:

- Immersion segment – see Table below
- Post-immersion segment – Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 12 pm. Venue: SDE 4 Forum

Immersion	
Singapore	
Early July (TBC)	Introduction to Comparative Study of Cities
13 July – 9 am to 5.30 pm	The Act of “Doing” Comparative Study of Cities: Concepts and Strategies Group activities
14 July – 9 am to 5.30 pm	Singapore: Then and Now - Singapore Sensemaking Field trip
15 July – 9 am to 5.30 pm	Building a City for All Field trip
16 July – 9 am to 5.30 pm	Building Sustainability and Resilience for All Group activities
17 July – 9 am to 5.30 pm	Place Planning and Placemaking Field trip
18 July – 9 am to 5.30 pm	Midpoint Presentation + Review Roundtable Discussion
Yogyakarta	
20 July – 9 am to 5.30 pm	Cultural Activity
21 July – 9 am to 5.30 pm	Liveable and Inclusive Urban Environment Interaction with Innovators Community
22 July – 9 am to 5.30 pm	Cultural Heritage of Yogyakarta Field trip + Cultural activity
23 July – 9 am to 5.30 pm	Smart and Green Approaches in Urban Development Interaction with the local Government Group activities
24 July – 9 am to 5.30 pm	Interaction with Innovators/ Industry Community Field trip Group activities
25 July – 9 am to 5.30 pm	Shaping future cities: opportunities & challenges Group activities
26 July – 9 am to 5.30 pm	Group Reflection/ Final Presentation
Week No	Lecture Topic
Week 01: 14 August	Workshop I: Comparative study of cities visioning case analysis, sense-making and data analysis
Week 02: 21 August	Consultation/ Tutorial: Data sense-making + analysis
Week 03: 28 August	Workshop II: Comparative study of cities re-visioning case analysis
Week 04: 4 September	Consultation/ Tutorial: Comparative analysis
Week 05: 11 September	Consultation/ Tutorial: Comparative analysis
Week 06: 18 September	Workshop III: Comparative study of cities writing case cities
Week 07: 2 October	Consultation/ Tutorial: writing case cities
Week 08: 9 October	Consultation/ Tutorial: writing case cities
Week 09: 16 October	Consultation/ Tutorial: writing case cities
Week 10: 23 October	Consultation/ Tutorial: individual assignment
Week 11: 30 October	Consultation/ Tutorial: individual assignment
Week 12: 6 November	Presentation of individual assignment + Review
Week 13: 13 November	Presentation of individual assignment + Review

Course Assessment

Mode	Description	(weightage)
1. Group presentation	Objective: To critically collect, examine, and reflect on strategies and approaches implemented by the case cities	Mid-point: 15% Final point: 15%
2. Individual assignment	Objective: To develop skills in collecting field data and critically establish an understanding of the connections between data and urban inquiries.	20%
	Objective: To develop skills in drawing syntheses from the case cities and transform them into a publicly readable resource (e.g. writing piece, video)	35%
3. Global Engagement	Objective: To develop cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural communication and collaboration skills	15%