



PhD in Urban and Regional Planning: Description of Courses and Thesis

1- Description of the required courses.

The required courses represent the cornerstones of the research-triangle in the realm of Urban and Regional Planning. They are selected to improve the researching ability of the PhD student and to enable him to stand on, or to approach as much as possible, the scientific-frontier of how to strategically plan for sustainable development, i.e., being able to identify the limit beyond which he articulates his scientific addition. That would enable him as well to publish part of his PhD research findings in one of the peer refereed journals.

Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Prerequisite
URP710	Research Design and Writing	3	

Course Description

The course aims at improving the researching abilities and capabilities of the PhD students to appropriate academic standards. Theme includes three points. Firstly, how to carefully identify the scientific frontier of their areas of researches that beyond which they should formulate their scientific additions in their articles and PhD theses. Secondly, to pin point the difference, in contents and methodological structure, between various scientific papers, e.g., research article, review article, letter to editor, technical communication, etc., while using limited number of pages. That will be in comparison to the structure and the contents of the PhD thesis as a large-scale research work. Most important is how to formulate the scientific background (introduction) to scientific paper or manuscript, including what have been published on the issue in hand with proper citation, referencing, encoding and symbolization. Thirdly, how to design, formulate, and present the research method, the data-structuring, the proposed model, the quantitative and qualitative analysis, and the result of the academic research in most informative and defendable way? At least one written paper and oral presentation to the class is required of all students.

Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Prerequisite
URP711	Strategic Planning & Sustainable Development	3	

Course Description

The course aims to widen the planning scope of the PhD student to cover what is in between the two planning extremes: local and global. Topic includes the dynamic road-map towards achieving sustainable development in various planning fields and at various developmental levels: global, continental, national, regional, and/or local, using the strategic thinking approach. The principal focus is on the process for formulating strategic/action plans for a city or part of it, which includes but not limited to, e.g., problem identification, environmental analysis, identification of weaknesses, strengths, and opportunities, formulation of policies and actions: projects and programs, setting priorities, and operationalization for implementation. The secondary focus is on the formulation of the strategic planning agendas on the top developmental levels, i.e., from national to global, including the design of the development indicators and the three types of planning evaluations concerning: planning outputs, planning outcomes, and the participatory planning processes



Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Prerequisite
URP794	Research Methods and Techniques	3	
Course Description	<p>The course allows practicing the steps that have to be taken at the beginning of the process of designing a research project in such planning field. The core theme concerns the most efficient and effective techniques for questioners-design, field-sampling, and physical-recording, as well as for organizing participatory workshops. It discuss the answer to the question how to do it, in order to investigate only the true planning-problem(s) or the relevant research-question(s) of the project under consideration; while respecting the time limitations and the availability of financial and human resources. It also includes the diverse techniques for modeling and pursuing quantitative and qualitative analysis. One oral presentation to the class is required of all students.</p>		

2- Description of the elective courses.			
<p>The elective courses were selected as an answer to the question, what are those things that would strongly contribute to make cities and geographic regions work in effective, efficient and equitable way, with better living state, and could be sustainably develop? The elective courses are classified following the three main developmental components acquainted by the International Organizations (e.g., United Nations, World Bank, etc.), that namely: (i) the city's physical/spatial systems & recourses, (ii) the human resource, and (iii) the urban managerial, legislative, and expert/information systems. Every PhD student will register in three elective courses, according to the scope of the proposed PhD thesis, in order to establish his ground in that particular area of knowledge, showing him the advances and the drawbacks in that field of planning and development and its related philosophy or technical milieu.</p>			
Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Prerequisite
URP720	GIS and Remote Sensing	3	
Course Description	<p>The course combines discussion and practice of the use of the geographic information systems, remote sensing, spatial analysis, and cartography for guiding the developmental decision making process at local, regional, and national levels. Its prime core focuses on: the design and programming diverse and responsive evaluation models and producing friendly interface applications, using the available databank(s), while achieving the flexibility to accommodate the future changes and additions in terms of types and amounts of the database, as well as the geographic expansion of the areas under consideration.</p>		

Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Prerequisite
URP721	Space Syntax	3	
Course Description	<p>The course discusses the up to-date theories, techniques and analysis of spatial configurations (e.g., integration, choice, and depth distances) and allows practicing their use for evaluating the status cue of the path systems and urban spaces in the city, in both flat and mountainous areas, as well as for guiding the developmental and improvement decisions concerning, e.g., the city's spatial-configurations, street-network, pedestrian-movement, and traffic-management.</p>		



Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Prerequisite
URP730	Land Management	3	
Course Description	<p>The course presents and discusses approaches on how to manage (guide, control, or liberalize) the use of land to support and consolidate the core and secondary functions of the city and its diverse urban markets (housing, services, tourist, industrial, commercial, etc). Principal focus is on the use of land resources to maximize the urban productivity, increase city revenues, reduce economic loss, and create job opportunities while providing the population with adequate and affordable houses and services based on equitable geographic distribution. Discussions also include the various techniques for evaluating the current land uses of the city, and how to conserve land for future uses.</p>		

Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Prerequisite
URP731	Housing Policies and Programs	3	
Course Description	<p>The course presents and discusses the diverse types of housing policies at global, national, regional and local levels, accompanied with: legal, financial, social, and other closely related policies; that would enable the housing markets to work in an efficient and effective way. Theme includes as well discussions on the best regional and international practices concerning the formulation and implementation of housing policies and programs, which had ensured the inclusion of the low income groups and poor families and enabled the supply and the demand sides of the housing market.</p>		

Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Prerequisite
URP740	National and Regional Development Policies	3	
Course Description	<p>The course presents and discusses the diverse types of national policies that would increase the nationwide productivity, indicated by the increase in the share pre-capita from the country's Growth National Product-GNP. The national policies for each economic sector will be discussed in relation to the amount of governmental expenditures needed as part of the GNP for providing services, roads and infrastructure in the country as well as to encourage new investments in the most promising sectors and geographic areas, to collectively create new job opportunities with adequate wages, and to achieve equity and equality among the members of the society in all sectors, while ensuring the increase of the nationwide productivity.</p>		



Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Prerequisite
URP741	World Development Indicators	3	
Course Description	<p>The course aims to enable the PhD student to design and evaluate any type of urban observatories. Theme includes the process of design and evaluation of the diverse types of development indicators that are used, or could be used, world wide or in any country, in the realm of human settlements development. It covers what is in between the two extremes of development indicators: from local to global and from absolute to relative. It addresses as well the use of the development indicators in the process of evaluating the status of developments in terms of assessing outputs, outcomes and the participatory planning process.</p>		

Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Prerequisite
URP742	Urban Management & Public Finance	3	
Course Description	<p>The course aims to enable the PhD students to identify the weakness in the urban managerial practices, as well as to propose the likely solutions. Topic includes discussing various urban managerial concepts and tools, e.g., fiscal and administrative autonomies, decentralization in decision making process, participatory urban management, top-down and bottom-up managerial discourse, fiscal functions, public-private partnership, levying taxes and/or impact-fees, vertical and horizontal cooperation, in addition to stirring, controlling, and liberalization mechanisms in urban management.</p>		

Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Prerequisite
URP743	Socio-Economic Development	3	
Course Description	<p>The course discusses the economic consolidation and social enhancement of the districts of the poor and low-income groups and the informal sectors, particularly those of illegal living status. Theme includes discussing various governmental policies and actions, e.g., empowerment, enablement and giving the right to the city, with respect to the limitation of the constitutional and legitimate national legislations. Theme also covers discussions on related developmental concepts, e.g., organized society, community participation, urban-productivity, self-supporting and public private partnership in relation to international, regional, and local practices in KSA.</p>		



Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Prerequisite
URP750	Social Services and Public Utilities	3	
Course Description	<p>The course discusses the array of legislative and technical policies, as well as the best practices in developed, developing, and/or underdeveloped countries, for the provision and delivery of social services and public utilities in the human settlements in efficient, effective, and equitable ways, while mobilizing and/or conserving the recourses and respecting the diverse affordability of the target groups in comparison to the direct and/or indirect prices of the provided services. Topic also includes the concepts of privatizing services and infrastructures.</p>		

Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Prerequisite
URP751	Public Transport and Traffic Management	3	
Course Description	<p>The course discusses the array of legislative and technical policies, as well as the best practices in developed, developing and/or underdeveloped countries. Theme focuses on the provision and delivery of affordable, safe, and environmentally friendly public transportation systems, and how to achieve the integration with other appropriate private transport modes in order to reduce congestion and to provide accessibility to the areas that lack the service.</p>		

Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Prerequisite
URP752	Environmental Regulations	3	
Course Description	<p>The course discusses the formulation and evaluation of legislative environmental policies at national, regional and city levels. Topic includes the legislations and the bylaws for controlling and minimizing the environmental hazards from production and consumption processes, as well as those related to disturbing the natural stability and the ecology of geographic regions. That will be in accord to the terms of the global policies that were published and approved upon by all countries during the Earth Summit in 1992 and that titled Agenda-21; in addition to the policies of the following summits.</p>		



Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Prerequisite
URP760	Human Resources Development	3	
Course Description	<p>The course discusses the array of economic/managerial policies, financial programs and best practices in developed, developing and/or underdeveloped countries for empowering the marginal labor force, of men and women, in either imperfect or monopolized labor-market. Theme includes policies and actions for providing access to educational-facilities, training-programs, health-care, mortgage-finance, insurance-system, nutrition-systems, and labor-market.</p>		

Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Prerequisite
URP770	Planning Philosophy	3	
Course Description	<p>The course discusses the utopian models of the city in the ancient civilizations and their counterparts in modern time. Focus is on two interrelated questions: what are the features of the city that made it in better state for living in the past; during either the agriculture or industrial revolutions? And, what are those that would make a city in better state for living in the era of globalization and information revolution? The issues of conserving the physical identity of the place and the means of solidarity among its amalgamated or segregated societies will be accordingly addressed.</p>		

Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Prerequisite
URP771	Special Studies in Urban Planning	3	
Course Description	<p>The course discusses special developmental issue in urban planning, related to the research topic(s) of the PhD student(s). Core theme depends on the availability of the faculty member.</p>		



Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Prerequisite
URP799	Thesis	30	Requires getting GPA equivalent to 70% in the Qualifying Exam
Course Description	The PhD thesis is an original research work, which should be completed following the academic guidelines for writing a PhD thesis and to be carried-out under the direction of the academic supervisor(s). In developing and writing the thesis, the PhD candidate should cover the following: to choose a topic for the PhD thesis related to true public problem in the realm of urban and regional planning, to write a comprehensive literature review, covering earlier and current researches, theories and applications related to the topic of the thesis, with proper citations and referencing, to design and develop the research methodology, hypothesis, and technical model, to test the validity of the proposed model by various means either in the lab, in public workshop and/or in the field, to show the quantitative and qualitative results and pointing out the strengths and drawbacks of application, and to formulate the research conclusion and recommendations.		