

MASTERS IN SOUTHERN URBANISM

Fostering the next generation of urban scholars
from Africa rooted in Southern city perspectives



AFRICAN CENTRE FOR CITIES
urbanism from an african perspective

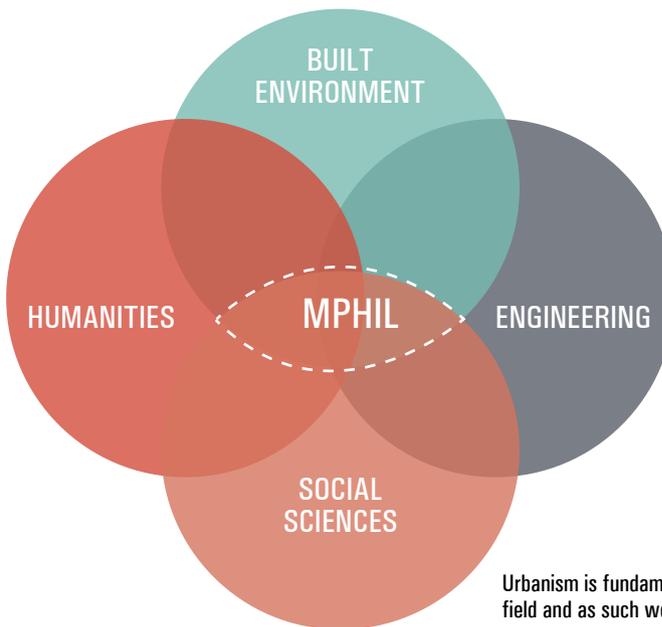


It is well known that the world is transitioning to an irrevocable urban future whose epicentre has moved into the cities of Asia and Africa, which together will account for 86% of all growth in the world's urban population over the next four decades.

This unprecedented increase will pose new environmental, economic and social challenges, the full implications of which cry out to be understood as city-making and remaking are entangled in these profound multi-dimensional shifts.

These shifts also highlight a profound epistemic crisis that forces us to question taken-for-granted assumptions about the Urban Studies canon. It demands critical engagement with the dominant Global North theories, bold methodological experimentation, plural perspectives brought into conversation through co-production and critical engagement from a Global South perspective, resisting easy generalisations.

The MPhil in Southern Urbanism is a learning platform for students interested in taking up this challenge. Through a combination of guided learning in seminars, experimentation in city spaces and independent thesis research the programme provides a unique opportunity to ground yourself in the realities, theories and practises of cities of the Global South.



Urbanism is fundamentally an interdisciplinary field and as such we welcome scholars from diverse academic background to the MPhil course



AFTER THE MPhil

Continue from MPhil to PhD

The programme has been designed to act as a bridgehead for those who wish to continue with a PhD and academic career. The MPhil provides both the theoretical and methodological tools essential for PhD-level work.

Continue from MPhil to practice

Your field of professional expertise augmented by the theoretical and methodological foundation obtained through the programme can be applied in a wide range of opportunities for research, professional practice and consulting in urban-related fields.

THE ACADEMIC JOURNEY

The MPhil curriculum combines course work (50%) and a minor dissertation (50%), a full-time load completed over a period of 18 months. The language of instruction is English.

In year one students complete the Masters coursework, which includes a compulsory City Research Studio, a choice of two of three interdisciplinary urban modules, and an urban-focused elective.

In year two students write minor dissertations based on their own fieldwork, under the supervision of expert faculty in either the Humanities, Engineering and the Built Environment, or Science Faculties at the University of Cape Town.

YEAR 1

Coursework
90 credits

Three Core Courses

City Research Studio (Compulsory, year-long course)

2 of 3 Mphil Urban Studies courses

- Urban Theory
- Urban Everyday
- Arts of Space

Designated Urban Course (minimum of 23 credits)

Existing courses with a disciplinary or thematic urban focus from approved list and with convener approval

YEAR 2

Mini-dissertation
90 credits

Semester 1: Minor Dissertation Research

Semester 2: Thesis submission/examination

CORE FACULTY

PROFESSOR EDGAR PIETERSE

Edgar Pieterse is the director of the African Centre for Cities and holds the South African Research Chair in Urban Policy, both at the University of Cape Town.

PROFESSOR SOPHIE OLDFIELD

Sophie Oldfield holds the University of Cape Town—University of Basel Professorship in Urban Studies, based at the African Centre for Cities, University of Cape Town.

DR ANTÓNIO TOMÁS

António Tomás is a senior lecturer at the African Centre for Cities, UCT and the convenor of the Masters in Southern Urbanism.

DR ANNA SELMECZI

Anna Selmeczi holds the University of Cape Town—University of Basel Research Fellowship in Urban Studies, based at the African Centre for Cities, University of Cape Town.

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Technology, Kumasi

Dr Vyjayanthi Rao, New School for Social Research, NY

Prof AbdouMaliq Simone, Honorary Professor, ACC



CORE COURSES

CITY RESEARCH STUDIO (CRS)

The City Research Studio is the cornerstone of the MPhil programme. It is a year-long compulsory course that runs alongside the core and elective modules. CRS is designed as learning context in which you will experiment with multiple forms of urban knowledge, expertise and research methodologies beyond the conventional classroom setting. It is a laboratory space where the students and faculty will learn to walk, see, smell, touch, embrace, explore and reimagine the city through intimate engagements with the aim of exploring and understanding the city.

URBAN EVERYDAY

The Urban Everyday approaches urban studies through literature grounded in everyday practices central to the dynamism that shapes African and Southern city contexts and their transformations. The course reflects on the productive tensions in and between structural forces (the state, capital etc.) with ordinary forms of agency (citizenship, collective movements, and ordinary acts of encroachment) and thinks through the ways the everyday locates and disrupts theorising Southern cities.

URBAN THEORY

The course sets out with the contention that urban theory is in crisis because it is not able to account for the diversity and innate complexity of urban worlds,

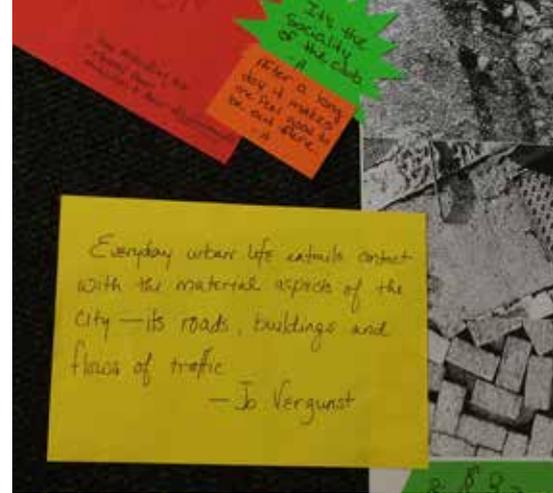
especially as manifest in the Global South. The empirical basis of this contention is briefly explored before students are engaged to learn the craft of theoretical analysis and construction. Key urban theory works from the traditional canon and the Southern counterpoint will be explored to equip students to read critically, and ultimately be able to locate contemporary urban theory debates in a geo-historical context and place their own positionality within such a conceptual landscape.

ARTS OF SPACE

Arts of Space thinks the city and its material forms through literatures on design from humanities and the spatial sciences, particularly architecture and planning. The course pays careful attention to genealogies of knowledge and ways to trace theoretical associations. It engages how the given problematics were originally formulated, and how they continue to shape debates in contemporary urban studies. Problematics such as affect, methodology, and the question of housing are addressed in the course.

THE MINOR DISSERTATION

The pinnacle of the MPhil is the minor dissertation. To graduate from this degree, students must complete a minor dissertation of 25 000 words maximum. It is the chance to complete original research, engage in fieldwork, put methods into action and experience the satisfaction of producing original writing under supervision.



REQUIREMENTS

In order to apply for the Masters in Southern Urbanism (an MPhil specialising Urban Studies) prospective students need to have completed a four-year Bachelors or Masters degree.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply go to www.africancentreforcities.net/programme/mphil-southern-urbanism

Download, complete and submit the following two forms to:

tanya.basadien@uct.ac.za:

- Environmental & Geographical Science departmental application form
- MPhil Reference form

You also need to submit an online University of Cape Town application form, which you can find at: applyonline.uct.ac.za

CLOSING DATE: 31 August 2018

FUNDING

Funding for both local and international students is available. For more information send an email to Course Convener António Tomás at antonio.tomas@uct.ac.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The MPhil aims to attract a diverse and interdisciplinary cohort and therefore encourages international students from Africa, the Global South and elsewhere to apply for the course. To find out more about fees, VISA applications and other considerations for international students go to www.iapo.uct.ac.za



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The value ACC brings as a hosting institution is an established track record of pedagogical experimentation based on configuring innovative collaborations among a broad range of public and civic institutions and competencies. This has enabled ACC to reach widely across various modalities of urban deliberation, research, and policy formulation. It has accumulated wide ranging experiences across the heterogeneous venues and instruments through which urbanisation processes are understood and affected, which in turn is incorporated into the curriculum and pedagogical approaches of the MPhil programme. A “view from the South” not only represents particular historical and territorial specificities but the amalgamation of specific exigencies and ways of working, and few other institutions in the “South” have the depth of field that ACC possesses in these matters.

Prof AbdouMaliq Simone, MPhil International Advisory Board member

ABOUT AFRICAN CENTRE FOR CITIES

Established in 2008 and rooted at the University of Cape Town, African Centre for Cities (ACC) is one of the leading knowledge centres conducting meaningful research on how to understand, recast and address pressing urban crises, particularly on the African continent.

Since most urban challenges—for example, food security, climate change adaptation, economic inclusion, cultural vitality and tolerance—are inherently interdisciplinary and spatially layered, ACC nurtures the co-production of knowledge favouring and cultivating

critical Southern perspectives.

Through its research ACC aims to develop imaginative policy discourses and practices to promote vibrant, just and sustainable cities. This purpose has become all the more pertinent with the adoption of Agenda 2063 at a pan-African level, which chimes with the 2030 global agenda for sustainable development. Thus, a lot of the research and capacity development work seeks to foreground the urban dimensions of these new political horizons, embedded in an epistemic commitment to Southern solidarity and theory building.



The Masters in Southern Urbanism is hosted by the Department of Environmental and Geographical Sciences at the University of Cape Town and made possible with by generous support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

COURSE CONVENOR

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POSTGRADUATE ADMINISTRATOR

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