

GEOG2132 World Cities (6 credits)

Course Teacher: Dr Victor Tsang

Objectives

This course will provide students with an introduction to and overview of the world cities from economic, social, cultural and environmental perspectives.

Course Synopsis

World cities have been contributed to the international networks of human activities, including flows of goods, services and finance which constitute the world economy. The course is divided into three main sections with two introductory lectures outlining the key concepts and terminologies to be used in the latter part of discussion and two concluding lectures focusing on the challenges of livability, sustainability and vibrancy of world cities. It begins with a discussion of urban economies. World cities are concentrations of capital, international firms, and professional workers. This part of the module offers an economic rationale for the existence of world cities and explains how a world city is shaped by the process of globalization. The discussion is followed by providing an overview of urban issues, including uneven development, concentrated decentralization, fragmentation, polycentrism, regionalization, segregation and exclusion. Different world cities will be chosen as case studies. Growth sustainability of world cities will be discussed before concluding this course.

Lecture Topics

- Globalization and world cities
- Cities in a world economy
- Global city regions
- Uneven development and gentrification in North America
- Emerging middle class and consumption in Asian cities
- Financial centres in global digital era
- Transformation of cities
- Cities of the Future: urban challenges and sustainability

Assessment

100% Coursework: Final test (40%), Take-home test (20%), and Homework (40%)

Learning Outcomes

Knowledge:

- An understanding of the nature of world cities
- Social and economic issues related to the urban process in world cities
- The sustainable forms and challenges of world cities

Skills:

- A fondness for critical thinking in urban geography
- Skills in interpreting urban issues, analyzing research materials, and reporting research findings

Recommended Reading List

1. LeGates R.T. and F. Stout (eds.) (2015) *The City Reader* (6th ed.), Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge
2. Sassen S. (2012) *Cities in a World Economy* (4th ed.), Los Angeles: Sage.
3. Brunn S.D., M. Hays-Mitchell, and D.J. Zeigler (eds.) (2012) *Cities of the World: World Regional Urban Development*, Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.