

International PhD course

Bio-Cultural Diversity and Governance aspects of Urban Green Infrastructures

Copenhagen, Denmark 28.Sept – 02.Oct 2015

Course Themes and Lectures:

Biocultural Diversity as Framework for Sustainable City Development. From Local Creativity to Global Concern

Dr.BHM **Birgit Elands**, Forest and Nature Conservation Policy Group, Dep. of Environmental Sciences, Wageningen University (NL)

Governance and Management of Urban Green Infrastructure

Professor **Cecil Konijnendijk van den Bosch**, Head of the Department of Landscape Architecture, Planning and Management SLU, Alnarp (S). Professor of Green Space Management at the University of Copenhagen. (DK)

Making sense of ‘place’: Reflections on Pluralism and Positionality in Place Research

Research Social Scientist **Daniel R. Williams** Associate Professor, University of Illinois, (US)

The Psychological Nature and Significance of Urban Green Space: The View from Ecological Psychology

Professor & Chair, **Harry Heft**
Faculty of Psychology and Environmental Studies, Denison University, Ohio (US)

Governance aspects of Urban Green Infrastructure

MBA. **Natalie Marie Gulsrud**
Landscape architecture and Planning, University of Copenhagen (DK)



DET NATUR- OG BIOVIDENSKABELIGE FAKULTET
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Subject area

In a time of accelerating urbanization, the quality and amount of urban green and blue spaces can be understood as an indicator for urban quality of life. The quality of the urban green infrastructure - encompassing all green and blue natural elements - influences where people choose to live and work as well as the well-being of individuals, groups, society and the natural environment. Urban green infrastructure is under pressure from the dynamic demands of changing climate and population as well as the increasingly diverse urban populations using urban green spaces. One major challenge facing cities is how to prioritize the amount and quality of urban green infrastructure in the face of increased urban density, diversity and decreasing city budgets. Viewing urban green infrastructure through the lens of bio-cultural diversity is one such method of prioritizing access to nature in urban centers.

Scientific content

The concept of urban bio-cultural diversity (BCD) investigates and describes the various ways that human cultures positively reflect on- and contribute to our urban green infrastructure. Innovative bio-cultural trends and ideas (conceptual or practical) that encourage engagement with urban nature and expand our understanding of it are important components of future urban green infrastructure development. The amount and quality of the urban green infrastructure depends on the way we (users, planners and decision-makers etc.) engage with, handle and prioritize this resource. Urban green areas and urban biodiversity are being developed and influenced by the many ways we use them, and by our motivation to protect or develop both. To ensure permanence and quality of our urban natural resource, it is crucially important to work across disciplines and share knowledge, experience and responsibility between existing and future practitioners, planners, users.

Modern green space governance is a field dealing with the complexity of this matter: the diversity of the green/blue resource, the wide range of interests and actors, the different sets of rules and institutions, as well as the links between sectors. Green space governance can be described as those efforts to direct human action towards common goals, and more formally as the setting, application and enforcement of generally agreed to rules. Governance takes place at different hierarchical levels, from city policy making and planning to place making and place keeping at the site level. From a tradition of public-authority led urban forestry and urban greening (governance by government), a shift has been occurring to shared decision making and involvement of a wide range of actors (governance with government, and in some cases even governance without government). Important changes have also been occurring in terms of discourses (such as the compact vs. the green city) and an increasing focus on green space quality and standards. These developments have gained increasing research attention.

Learning outcome

This PhD-course aims to provide a platform for discussing state-of-art theories and methodologies for analyzing bio-cultural diversity approaches and governance in the context of urban green infrastructure. It will provide an interdisciplinary framework for future research, including:

- Discussing relevant theory and methodology on governance, biocultural diversity, understanding of place, urban green infrastructure planning and development.
- Enhancing the theoretical and methodological foundations of individual PhD research associated with the conditions of urban design, planning and management, and ways to address this.

Within the frame of the course and its interdisciplinary perspective, participants reflect upon own research. The course will focus on the process as well as on the production of knowledge. The course structure is based on a mix of individual work prior to-, during and after the course as well as lectures, individual presentations, group exercises, group discussions, case-studies and field trips. The course will have a primary focus on the written production reflecting on inputs from the course through an active and process oriented course structure.

A compendium covering extracts from key literature within the field will be distributed to the participants prior to the course and participants are expected to read this before course start. Participants will also upload a short essay about their research to a shared course folder prior to the course in order to share their thesis subjects with fellow participants. The knowledge exchange between participants is regarded a key element of the course why there will be created web-based course folders for sharing writings and readings but also scheduled time for group discussions in plenum and oral knowledge exchange. After the course, participants will deliver an elaborated version of their essays with imbedded reflections of the course themes.

The course will take place in the beautiful settings at 'Skovskolen' in Nøddebo (north of Copenhagen). Joined transportation from Copenhagen can be arranged.
Course Fee: 2000dkr /270 Euro include housing, excursions and all meals.

Contact info

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