

Liveable Cities

Title	Liveable Cities
Semester	E2025
Master programme in	Nordic Urban Planning Studies
Type of activity	Course
Teaching language	English
Study regulation	Read about the Master Programme and find the Study Regulations at ruc.dk

REGISTRATION AND STUDY ADMINISTRATIVE

You register for activities through [stads selvbetjening](#) during the announced registration period, which you can see on the [Study administration homepage](#).

Registration When registering for courses, please be aware of the potential conflicts and overlaps between course and exam time and dates. The planning of course activities at Roskilde University is based on the recommended study programmes, which should not overlap. However, if you choose optional courses and/or study plans that goes beyond the recommended study programmes, an overlap of lectures or exam dates may occur depending on which courses you choose.

Number of participants

ECTS 5

Responsible for the activity David Pinder (dpinder@ruc.dk)

Head of study Tatiana Fogelman (fogelman@ruc.dk)

Teachers

Study administration IMT Registration & Exams (imt-exams@ruc.dk)

Exam code(s) U60323

ACADEMIC CONTENT

Through a focus on current cases, this course aims to provide critical knowledge and understanding of contemporary urban planning practices in Nordic welfare states. The course is concerned specifically with agendas of 'liveability' that have been prominent in recent urban development in the Nordic and specifically Danish contexts, and with examining the social, political, cultural, economic and technological processes that have been shaping efforts to make more 'liveable cities', including new entrepreneurial forces associated with local-global interrelations.

Overall
objective

The course introduces and critically explores different perspectives on what makes cities liveable, and for whom. Referring to cases from around the world and in particular Copenhagen, attention is given to specific sites through which ideas and practices of urban living are being explored, promoted and contested, and to the potential lessons of these for wider efforts to improve urban conditions. Through collaboration with local practitioners, site visits and conducting their own group research, students learn from multiple perspectives while gaining practical experience of planning analysis, in the process developing insights into real-life challenges experienced by various urban agents

Detailed
description of
content

Themes to be explored in theory and practice centre on questions of the 'liveable city'. This year they include the 'public city' and the planning, use and experience of public spaces; the 'mobile city' and strategies of green mobility in relation to cycling and walking; the 'green city', in relation to nature-culture relations and ecological practices; and the 'peripheral city' through a focus on the border region between Denmark and Germany, in collaboration with a research and development project (the BELT Plan & Network initiative).

Particular attention will be given to learning from different cases, initiatives and practices. That includes through participating in three-day studio tour, and in the GRASP festival, which brings together academics, activists, artists and practitioners from many fields to address questions about sustainable societal transformation (<https://graspfestival.dk>).

Course
material and
Reading list

Readings for each session are provided on Moodle 14 days before each session. Texts that are relevant to the course as a whole are:

Weiss, K. (ed) (2019) *Critical City: The Success and Failure of the Danish Welfare City*. København, Arkitektens Forlag.

Simpson, D., Gimmel, K. Lonka, A., Jay, M. and Grootens, J. (eds) (2018) Atlas of the Copenhagens. Berlin, Ruby Press.

Cave, R. and Wagner, F. (eds) (2018) Livable Cities from a Global Perspective. New York, Routledge.

Study intensity

Overall plan and expected work effort

5 ECTS = 135 hours of study. The proposed distribution of hours is approximately: 40 hours for lectures, discussions and excursions; 40 hours for reading and class preparation (8 hours per session); 55 hours for project work relating to the studio.

The course is taught through lectures, discussions, excursions and a three-day studio. It also involves participating in the GRASP festival on 25/26 September 2025. Details will be uploaded to Moodle.

Format

The course is taught at RUC and at varied locations and sites in Copenhagen and the surrounding area. It includes site visits, tours and some off campus teaching.

Evaluation and feedback

Evaluation is via an anonymous online survey distributed to all participants. The course will also be discussed with participants in the final session and reviewed at the NUPS Education Committee with input from student representatives.

Programme

ASSESSMENT

On completing this course, students should be able to:

Overall learning outcomes

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of contemporary agendas and practices of urban planning in the Nordic context, specifically in relation to liveability and its relations to welfare-state traditions of planning
- Understand social, political, cultural, economic and technological aspects of urban planning projects

- Show knowledge of the political economic basis of urban planning projects, including in relation to public-private partnerships, urban innovation and strategic planning
- Show knowledge of urban innovation and entrepreneurship in relation to planning
- Use interdisciplinary theories and methods to develop holistic analyses of planning projects and cases, and to evaluate their conditions and possibilities
- Understand and discuss different elements and professions involved in planning processes with respect to specific cases, and to communicate analyses of these effectively to different audiences
- Understand the positions of different and potentially conflicting urban actors, and their implications for joint action proposals and/or strategies based on a holistic understanding of planning challenges and opportunities.

Active, and satisfactory participation

Active participation is defined as:

The student must participate in course-related activities (e.g., workshops, seminars, field excursions, process study groups, working conferences, supervision groups, and feedback sessions).

Form of examination

Satisfactory participation is defined as:

- e.g., oral presentations (individually or in a group), peer reviews, mini projects, tests, and planning of a course session.

Assessment: Pass/Fail

Individual portfolio exam

Form of Re-examination

The character limit of the portfolio is maximum 16,800 characters, including spaces. Examples of written products are exercise responses, talking points for presentations, written feedback, reflections, written assignments. The preparation of the products may be subject to time limits.

The character limits include the cover, table of contents, bibliography, figures and other illustrations, but exclude appendices.

The portfolio is written after the course has ended.

The entire portfolio must be handed in at the same time.

Assessment: Pass/Fail

Type of
examination
in special
cases

Examination
and
assessment
criteria
(implemented)

The course is examined through active and satisfactory participation. This is assessed in terms of active participation in a three day studio that involves conducting group-based research on an assigned subject relating to urban liveability. The group work requires drawing on materials from earlier in the course and participating in forms of qualitative and ethnographic research, and presenting and discussing findings through an oral presentation and photo essay. Further details will be posted on Moodle by the start of the course.

The re-exam is an individual portfolio with a maximum of 16,800 characters, including spaces. This includes 2-4 written assignments on questions relating to urban liveability, and based on course materials, as specified on Moodle

Exam code(s) Exam code(s) : U60323

Course days:

Hold: 1

Liveable Cities

Time 25-09-2025 08:15 til
25-09-2025 18:00

Teacher David Pinder (dpinder@ruc.dk)

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Time 26-09-2025 08:15 til
26-09-2025 18:00

Teacher David Pinder (dpinder@ruc.dk)

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Time 29-09-2025 08:15 til
29-09-2025 12:00

Location 02.1-095 - Kort og sten-salen (60)

Teacher David Pinder (dpinder@ruc.dk)

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Time 06-10-2025 08:15 til
06-10-2025 15:00

Location 20.1-009 - Teorirum (72)

Teacher David Pinder (dpinder@ruc.dk)

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Time 13-10-2025 09:00 til
13-10-2025 15:00

Teacher Søren Christensen (schr@ruc.dk)

Liveable Cities

Time 20-10-2025 08:15 til
20-10-2025 12:00

Location 02.1-031 - Geofagsal 02 (70)

Teacher Jonas Larsen (jonaslar@ruc.dk)

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Time 20-10-2025 12:15 til
20-10-2025 15:00

Teacher Jonas Larsen (jonaslar@ruc.dk)

Liveable Cities

Time 03-11-2025 08:15 til
05-11-2025 18:00

Teacher Lasse Martin Koefoed (lmartin@ruc.dk)