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SEMINAR ON CONTEMPORARY POPULATION ISSUES

The course introduces students to the current knowledge about contemporary population and development issues, especially concerning informal settlements in Ethiopia. “Informal urban settlement” refers to residential areas where a group of housing units has been constructed on land with no legal claim. Urban informal settlement as study unit in the course aims essentially at exposing the students to the growing related literature on informal/formal distinctions and at developing new competencies on mapping intra-urban inequalities of the settlements.

SYLLABUS

Description

In the context of informal settlements, courses related with experiential and relevant endogenous knowledge are seriously lacking in Ethiopian Universities. This course is a forum to discuss the current topics in urbanization and informal settlement in Ethiopian urban context. The course allows students to examine various drivers/actors of informal settlements, their syneries and power relations at various scales in Ethiopia. Policy contexts in the framework of accessibilities, equity and inclusivity will be explored through case studies, readings, guest speakers and lectures. It also orients students to assess the practical process and outcome of informality in urban settings of Ethiopia.

The course is offered in the Department of Population Studies, University of Gondar.

Course objectives and Structure

The course is based on multiple sources and methods including field trips. Accordingly, the study unit on informality exposes students to the growing literature on challenges & responses for population growth, housing and settlements in cities of Ethiopia, which will be explored through readings, discussions, observation and lectures. The course further engages students in preparation of seminar papers, which

may be a critical literature review, an original case study on their area of interest, but students are not necessarily required to submit it to a journal.

Course Structure

The course is provided in the second term of each year on weekly basis.

Learning Outcomes

After completion of this course the students will be able to:

- Identify the main challenges of African cities and the drivers of informality in urban centers of Ethiopia
- contextualize the definition of informal settlements: as a solution of housing problems in African cities on one hand and as a problem of urban settings on the other hand
- Review and critically evaluate previous research, case studies in Ethiopia
- Identify the socio-economic implications of informal informal settlements for affected settlers
- Understand the implications of informality on urban planning
- Explore policy contexts in the framework of accessibilities and inclusivity
- Write a comprehensive seminar paper on a current topic in the sphere of informality
- improve their presentation competency

Student Workload

Students are expected to spend a total of about 2 hours per week as contact hours in class and 2 hours additionally for reading previous case studies, research, undertaking assignments.

Semester sessions	Workload (in hours)
<p>Session 1 - Introduction to informal settlements: Pre-reading and group discussion on the context-specificity definition of informal settlement - Informality in urban settlements of Africa and Ethiopia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Policy and Formalization Strategies in Africa’s Growing Cities: A Case for the Informal Settlement. https://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/trinitypapers/32/ • Housing Informality in Expanding Ethiopian Cities: Moving beyond the ‘New Normal’ Syndrome; https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Housing-Informality-in-Expanding-Ethiopian-Cities-%3A-Gondo/053c9bf172f3c3c4c0da3835c0f500699c51b0bb • Informal Settlements - Habitat III http://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/Habitat-III-Issue-Paper-22_Informal-Settlements-2.0.pdf 	3
<p>Session 2 - Discussion with guest speakers on current topics in the area of informality:</p>	2

Students will discuss in groups and with the guest speaker on key issues to explore the role of key actors, land, space and infrastructure, nature of governance systems and coping strategies of informal settlers	
Session 3 - Group discussion: Group discussion on the paradox of legalization and demolishing informality on the context of SDG	3
Session 4 - Learn by team-based case studies in Ethiopian context: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of drivers and actors in the formation of informality in settlements, Socio-economic profiles of informal settlers • Wider implications of informal settlement for cities and urban planning in Ethiopia • Case Study prepared by SES team members in Ethiopia as example 	4
Session 5: Field observation Group site visits in six informal settlement sites in Gondar. Each group of students will interact with local communities of informal settlement areas and will understand critical issues in complex urban environments through close interaction with local communities and if possible, institutions. The field observation will also include site and topic selection for their individual seminar work.	4
Session 6: Actual seminar work on paper: Seminar preparatory assignment tackling examples from Ethiopian cities	8
Session 7: Seminar presentation: Graduate education requirements allow students the opportunity to practice within the friendly confines of the department, observed by the faculty and peers. Students will be responsible for developing and delivering a seminar presentation on a seminar topic they prepared.	4

Prerequisites

Final or second year MSc students in population studies department

Grading *[assessment criteria and their weight]*

Site visit and reporting	20%
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Assessment in the course will be based on reports delivered by students in groups during their field observation in session 4	
Comparative studies in different cities of Ethiopia to explore forms of informality in housing	20%
Seminar paper work Students will be evaluated individually based on their seminar paper consisting of the following: Abstract, introduction including the problem statement, aim and main objectives; context of the area; methods and analysis; findings and their proposed recommendations and intervention actions.	30%
Presentation The students will be required to make an oral presentation of their individual seminar work in the class.	10%
Examination	20%
Total	100%

Students, based on a student feedback form, evaluate the course.