

Course PM HT22

AL2195 Sustainable Development in Developing Countries

Course leader:	Henrik Ernstson
Course moment:	AL2195, 7.5 credits
Grade:	A-Fx
Runs:	Study period 2; Monday 31 October to Wednesday 15 Dec 2022. Last deadline of the course, Monday 17 Jan 2022 at 23.59.
Activities:	Lectures, seminars connected with group work and peer-discussions (obligatory), student consultation hours, and self-directed studies. Seminars are the only obligatory moments in the course.
Seminar groups:	4 students per group, around 10-12 seminar groups in total.
Main activities:	<p>The course consists of five main activities for learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UPP1 Short written reflection on self-selected articles (1000 words, A-Fx, 25%); • INL2 Peer-feedback on UPP1 (<500words, A-Fx, 10%); • PRO4 Group work with class presentation (P/F); • UPP2 Individual essay (2500-3000 words, A-Fx, 65%).
Assessment:	<p>Feedback supporting assessment of individual learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher's oral and written feedback on individual assessments of UPP1 and UPP2, both formative and summative feedback; • Written feedback from student peer on UPP1; • Oral feedback from peers on group-based PRO4; • Discussion with teacher and peers at lectures and seminars. • Student consultation hours (weekly, voluntary) providing conversations with the teacher.
Examination:	<p>The learning process is based on individual and group-work. The grade is however based on individual work alone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UPP1 Individual reflection on articles (1000 words, A-Fx, 25%); • INL2 Peer-feedback on INL1 (<500words, A-Fx, 10%); • UPP2 Individual essay (2500-3000 words, A-Fx, 65%).
Workload:	The course runs half-time, which means 20 hours per week. Apart from lectures and scheduled activities, the course demands substantial time for individual literature studies, reflection, essay writing, and group work.

Student consultation hours

Henrik Ernstson (course leader) has "open door" consultation hours every week during the study weeks of the module. Wednesdays 14.00-16.00 and Thursdays 13.00-14.30. Because of the pandemic these will, for the time being, be held over zoom, <https://kth-se.zoom.us/my/ernstson>. If you have questions about the study material, theories, concepts, ideas or practical questions, please zoom in. Please hold on in the waiting room until you are called. (When it is possible, these consultation hours will be held at his office: Room 410C, Teknikringen 10B.)

Course description at KTH web

The course develops a critical framework for understanding uneven development including social justice and environmental change with a special focus on the rapid urbanisation of the global South. The course is fundamental for further studies in critical environmental research, sustainable development, and development studies.

In the course we will develop a theoretical framework based on three key concepts: **uneven development**, "**thinking from the South**," and **political ecology**. Political ecology emphasises how all development is about social and environmental transformation with winners and losers that shape rural and urban landscapes. In parallel, we draw upon postcolonial thought to challenge from where development, sustainability and urbanization can be understood. This expands the places, experiences and researchers that can inform development theory and practice.

Pedagogically, the course is based on creating a **community of inquiry** between students and the teacher. Lectures are followed by group work as well as seminars and individual consultation hours with the teacher. This creates an intimate learning environment, making it safe to both ask and try to answer difficult questions. Group work means to do a case study analysis of a city in the South (Kampala, Lagos, Luanda, Bangalore, etc.), applying theory to understand "messy realities" and sharing your insights. You will also train essay writing with peer and teacher feedback to support your growth as a writer and thinker.

På svenska

Kursen utvecklar ett kritiskt ramverk för att förstå ojämlik utveckling som inkluderar frågor kring social rättvisa och miljöförändringar. Det läggs ett särskilt fokus på den snabba urbaniseringen i global Syd. Kursen är grundläggande för vidare studier inom kritisk miljöforskning, hållbar utveckling och utvecklingsforskning.

Vi utvecklar ett teoretiskt ramverk som vilar på tre nyckelbegrepp: **ojämlik utveckling**, "**att tänka från globala syd**," och **politisk ekologi**. Politisk ekologi betonar hur all utveckling handlar om både social och miljömässig omvandling med vinnare och förlorare som formar landsbygds- och stadslandskap. Parallellt tar vi in postkolonial kritik för att utmana varifrån utveckling och hållbarhet kan förstås. Detta utvidgar vilka platser, erfarenheter och forskare som kan informera teori samt utvecklingstankens teori och praktik.

Pedagogiskt bygger kursen på att skape en **frågestyrd gemenskap** mellan lärare och studenter. Föreläsningar varvas med grupparbete samt seminarier och individuella konsultationstimmar med läraren. Detta tjänar till att skapa en intim inlärningsmiljö som gör det tryggt att båda ställa och försöka besvara svåra frågor. Grupparbetet går ut på att göra en fallstudie av städer i syd (Kampala, Lagos, Luanda, Bangalore m fl) och tränas i att tillämpa teori för att förstå "stökiga verkligheter" och dela med sig av insikter. Du kommer dessutom tränas i uppsatsskrivande med kamrat- och lärarefeedback för växa som författare och tänkare.

Rationale, *the arch of the course*

Over the coming weeks we will take an interest in the notion of **uneven development**, a theory that explains why the world is so uneven in terms of wealth. This will help to establish the origins of how the notion of development has been associated with progress in a narrow and linear fashion, giving rise to notions of "developed" and "developing" countries and regions. This will also foreground historical and geographical relations of colonialism, industrial capitalism, to the contemporary situation. Since we are interested in both social and environmental conditions and their interrelations, we will here draw upon **political ecology**, a

process- and flow-based framework that helps to understand how social, environmental, and political dimensions of the world hang together and that has the benefit to bring in questions of social and environmental justice.

In parallel, we will also engage with contemporary theoretical frameworks of "**thinking from the South**." What we have learnt from postcolonial scholars and decolonial thinkers, from disciplines as wide-ranging as urban planning, geography, anthropology, science and technology studies, to history and literature studies, are tactics and strategies to re-think how we think about established categories of progress, development, sustainability, formality vs informality, infrastructure and other concepts that litter the discourse on development. When the world is thought from locations and experiences of the global South, new possibilities to question taken-for-granted ideas opens up.

While the argument of re-thinking development from the South is broader, in the course we will focus on cities and urbanization to develop a case for **Southern urbanism** and "**heterogenous infrastructure**." These key concepts will guide parts of the group work and will be foregrounded in the lectures and guest lectures. This will also form our departure point to engage through literature and your group work to understand the conditions of change through the textures and situated understandings of groups in cities like Kampala, Accra, and Cape Town.

Taken together, by bringing together historical and geographical theory of uneven development with thinking from the South and urbanization of the South, we will start developing a platform for thinking critically, constructively, and strategically about sustainable development in developing countries.

Components of the teaching and learning environment

The course builds its **teaching and learning environment** on three main activities: Lectures, Seminars, and Student consultation hours, which you will see in the schedule.

Lectures will build a theoretical argument and engage in different case studies. We will use several **case studies** to develop a habit of "thinking through place," to become more familiar with situated understandings and "unruly contexts" that don't easily follow text book ideas about "development" or "sustainable development." The case studies we will use, partly from my own research in cities and countries in Africa, will help to illustrate and test questions and ideas from text books and articles and support a framed learning environment. We will also draw upon **audio-visual materials and films** as tools to engage with the texture of place. The way to prepare for a lecture is to read the appointed literature.

Seminars will be dedicated to your group work. In the first seminar (S1A and S1B) I will only meet half the group each to provide oral formative feedback on your case study analysis. In the second seminar we will gather around your group work findings and each group will share their analysis and learnings through a safe space of presentation, discussion, and sharing.

Student consultation hours are dedicated time for you to visit me in my office or on zoom to ask whatever questions you might have. I really like when you come to my office, so please do. Since we have lots of code-locked doors at KTH (*why is that?*), you will need to call my office phone 08-7908687 if you cannot get in on my floor. I am very close by so won't take long for me to come and open the floor.

More generally, the pedagogy of the course will follow a **communities of inquiry approach** [1] that seeks to blend *social presence* (your engagement with your student peers in risk-free

forums of expression), *cognitive presence* (you applying and connecting ideas), and *teaching presence* (design of lectures, selection of materials, discussions in class, seminars and Student consultation hours, and sharing my interpretations.)

Assessment, examination, and feedback

I have planned the assessments so that they align to support a community of inquiry, i.e. a an environment where you as an individual can learn and grow while we make the most of being together to shape group processes of learning as well. The assessments are there to spur both individual reflection and a collective atmosphere of curiosity and questioning.

Code	Objective	Grade	Ratio of grade	Time available from assignment to hand-in	Feedback and assessment
UPP1	Short reflection on self-selected articles (1000 words)	A-Fx	1.5 hp 25%	Start 16 Nov and hand-in c. 30 Nov (c14 days).*	Formative feedback from peer and teacher. Summative feedback.
INL2	Peer-feedback on UPP1 (<500 words)	A-Fx	0.5 hp 10%	Start 1 Dec and hand-in 6 Dec (6 days).*	Summative feedback.
PRO4	Presentation of group case study work.	P/F	2.5hp -	Start 2 Nov to 12 and 15 Dec (c. 40 days).*	This will include mid-course oral formative feedback from teacher (Seminars S1).
UPP2	Individual essay (2500-3000 words)	A-Fx	3 hp 65%	Start c. 30 Nov and hand-in 17 Jan 2022 (45 days).*	Formative and summative feedbacks from UPP1 feeds into writing process.

*) These dates and days are indicative only.

Apart from feedback and assessments above, I will also be available in the **Student consultation hours** to discuss all your questions and queries. I can also answer questions for 15-20 minutes after each lecture.

Intended Learning Outcomes

The overall goal of the course is to provide a deeper insight into how the world's historically and geographically unequal development affects opportunities for more just and environmentally sustainable development. After completing the course, the student should be able to:

- Provide an historical and geographical background to the concept of uneven development and its relationship to sustainable development.
- Describe the emergence of social, economic, and ecological regional differences with a focus on countries in the global South.
- In a written essay and based on scientific literature, analyze, and discuss how infrastructure and technology affect various aspects of sustainable development in low- and middle-income countries.
- Discuss scientific methods for the analysis of social, ecological, and technical aspects of sustainable development with a focus on countries in the global South.
- To develop, in groups, a critical case study about the conditions for uneven development and sustainable development.

- Search scientific literature within the subject area of the course to use as reference material in an essay.
- Give a group oral presentation of a case study.

Translated to Swedish: Lärandemål

Kursens övergripande mål är att ge en fördjupad insikt i hur världens historiskt och geografiskt ojämlika utveckling påverkar möjligheter till en mer rättvis och miljömässigt hållbar utveckling. Efter avslutad kurs skall studenten kunna:

- *Ge en historisk och geografisk bakgrund till begreppet ojäm utveckling och dess relation till hållbar utveckling.*
- *Beskriva uppkomsten av sociala, ekonomiska och ekologiska regionala skillnader med fokus på länder i det globala Syd.*
- *I en skriftlig uppsats och med bas i vetenskaplig litteratur analysera och diskutera hur infrastruktur och teknik påverkar olika aspekter av hållbar utveckling i låg- och medelinkomstländer.*
- *Diskutera vetenskapliga metoder för analys av sociala, ekologiska och tekniska aspekter för hållbar utveckling med fokus på länder i det globala Syd.*
- *Att i grupp utveckla en kritisk fallstudie om villkoren för ojäm utveckling och hållbar utveckling.*
- *Söka vetenskaplig litteratur inom kursens ämnesområde för att använda som referensmaterial i en uppsats.*
- *Ge en muntlig presentation i grupp av en fallstudie.*

Transferrable skills trained in this course:

- Capacity to read and make sense of social scientific and interdisciplinary articles.
- Writing skills to develop ideas and arguments.
- Develop skills for case study analysis and desktop research.
- Presentation and sharing of findings in a larger group.
- Providing constructive feedback to an individual and to a group.
- Essay writing skills and how to develop and present an argument in text.

Skills and Employability

During this course unit, you will furthermore be encouraged to develop the following abilities and skills:

- Critical thinking and reflection.
- An ability to assess the merits of contrasting theories and explanations.
- An ability to relate theoretical argument with empirical evidence, including the construction of theoretically informed analysis.
- An ability to translate theory into an assessment of the value of practice.
- Motivation and self-directed learning.
- Awareness of your responsibility as a global citizen.

Learning support and disabilities (KTH's FUNKA)

If you have a disability you may receive support from Funka. It is also important that you immediately, no later than the beginning of the course, contact me and provide information on your needs, and if necessary a certificate from KTH Funka coordinators. This must be done for me to take into account your specific needs during the course and its various parts. Please read more here <https://www.kth.se/en/student/studentliv/funktionsnedsattning>

Overview of the schedule

For details and course literature, see Canvas course web.

- **Lectures:** Different lecture halls across KTH main campus, see schedule below.

- **Seminars:** See schedule below.
- **Student consultation hours:** My office in Room 410C, Teknikringen 10B (if you cannot get in, call my office phone, 08-790 86 87, and I come and open). Or my zoom room, <https://kth-se.zoom.us/my/ernstson>.

Activity	Notes	
WEEK 44		
Lecture 1 HE, AL2195 Monday 31 Oct 2022 13:00 to 15:00 U1, Brinellvägen 26	Introduction to the course Lecture 1: Introduction and Uneven Development Part 1 Foregrouding historical and geographical relations to understand the uneven and unequal development of the world, geographies of difference, origins of capitalism, colonization, racial capitalism, and some of its contemporary active remains. Also introducing a search for “Southern knowledge centres” and How to think critically about the name of the course	Henrik Ernstson
Lecture 2 HE, AL2195 Wednesday 2 Nov 2022 15:00 to 17:00 U1, Brinellvägen 26	Lecture 2: Political Ecology and Thinking from the South Part1 Models of development, critique of linear and modernist notion of development, “waiting room of history,” political ecology of sugar as an historical world ecology commodity, compared with lithium batteries, production of inequality. Part 2 Challenging from where the city and urbanization can be understood, developing a case for Southern urbanism, how this fits within the wider historical and geographical frame from lectures 1 and 2, critique of urban planning and the idea of “heterogenous infrastructure”, Sothern knowledges. Introduction to group work ÖVN1 and finding your group. Preparation task for Seminar 1.	Henrik Ernstson
Student consultation hours Thursday 3 Nov 2022 12:30 to 14:00	Bring your questions and meet me at my office or over zoom. Room 410C, Teknikringen 10B https://kth-se.zoom.us/my/ernstson	Henrik Ernstson
WEEK 45		

Lecture 3 AL2195 Monday 7 Nov 2022 14:00 to 16:00 U31, Brinellvägen 26, vån 3, Övningssal, 72 platser	Lecture 3: Thinking from the South: From the Nubian Forest to the Self-Help City Focus on Nairobi, Kenya, historical analysis and case-based and practice-based work to intervene, based on years of architectural and place-based analysis.	Guest lecture: Dr Joe Mulligan, KTH
Lecture 4 AL2195 Wednesday 9 Nov 2022 14:00 to 16:00 Q36, Malvinas väg 6B, vån 3, Övningssal, 60 platser	Lecture 4 Thinking from the South: What counts as development? Nairobi. Role of state in producing informality and illegality, how imperial and colonial remains are active in current city planning with police brutality, community based organisation and resistance, the problematic role of NGOs, coloniality.	Guest Lecture Dr Wangui Kimari, Univ. of Cape Town (with Joe Mulligan introducing)
Student consultation hours Thursday 10 Nov 2022 10:00 to 12:00	Only over zoom this day: https://kth-se.zoom.us/my/ernstson	Henrik Ernstson
WEEK 46		
Voluntary activity Monday 14 November 2022	Attend keynote lectures at SU/KTH workshop on “Archives of the Planetary Mine” 10:00-11:30 Keynote by Paula Serafini 15:00-16.30 Keynote by Martín Arboleda	Organized by Gianfranco Selgas, Henrik Ernstson and Thais Borges
Tuesday 15 November 2022 Keynotes held at Stockholm University, Nordic Latin American Institute Library and can be watched over Internet.	10:00-11:30 Keynote by Jeff Diamanti NB! These will be brilliant and perhaps challenging talks on mineral extraction, the extractive logic of capital, and uneven development. I would highly recommend attending onsite at Stockholm University. The keynotes will also be broadcasted on the Internet. Details on the website.	
Lecture 5 HE, AL2195 Wednesday 16 Nov 2022 15:00 to 17:00 U1, Brinellvägen 26	Lecture 5. TBD.	
Student consultation hours Thursday 17 Nov 2022 10:00 to 12:00	Bring your questions and meet me at my office or over zoom. Room 410C, Teknikringen 10B https://kth-se.zoom.us/my/ernstson	Henrik Ernstson
WEEK 47		
Seminar 1A, AL2195 NB! Only Group A (obligatory attendance) Monday 21 Nov 2022 13:00 to 17:00 E34, Osquars backe 2, vån 2 28 platser	Sharing of preparation to other groups. Feedback from peers. Individual feedback to each group from the teacher. Decision on how to move forward.	Henrik Ernstson

Seminar 1B, AL2195 NB! Only Group B (obligatory attendance) Wednesday 23 Nov 2022 13:00 to 17:00 E34, Osquars backe 2, vån 2 28 platser	Sharing of preparation to other groups. Feedback from peers. Individual feedback to each group from the teacher. Decision on how to move forward.	Henrik Ernstson
Student consultation hours Thursday 24 Nov 2022 10:00 to 12:00	Bring your questions and meet me at my office or over zoom. Room 410C, Teknikringen 10B https://kth-se.zoom.us/my/ernstson	Henrik Ernstson
WEEK 48		
Lecture 6 HE, AL2195 Monday 28 Nov 2022 10:00 to 12:00 V22, Teknikringen 72	Lecture 6: Political ecology and uneven development: Cape Town and three analytical methods Situating uneven development and exploring contemporary situation through water, electricity, and housing. Further developing the idea of how postcolonial theory helps to re-think political ecology.	Henrik Ernstson
Lecture 7 HE, AL2195 Wednesday 30 Nov 2022 at 15:00 to 17:00 U1, Brinellvägen 26	Lecture 7: Large-scale infrastructure, coloniality and uneven development We are living in an “infrastructure-led” mode of development some claim. How to understand this? Is this a re-colonization through new modes of extraction or are their progressive possibilities embedded here?	Henrik Ernstson
Student consultation hours Thursday 1 Dec 2022 10:00 to 12:00	Bring your questions and meet me at my office or over zoom. Room 410C, Teknikringen 10B https://kth-se.zoom.us/my/ernstson	Henrik Ernstson
WEEK 49		
Lecture 8 HE, AL2195 Wednesday 7 Dec 2022 15:00 to 17:00 U1, Brinellvägen 26	Lecture 8: Summing up the argument of uneven development, thinking from the South, and political ecology We will sum up the argument across the course and its lectures and explore the centrality of infrastructure and technology in developmentalist discourse. Also: Feedback on INL1 and PEER1. Discuss what is a good essay and how to prepare well for the essay (INL2).	Henrik Ernstson
Student consultation hours Thursday 8 Dec 2022 10:00 to 12:00	Room 410C, Teknikringen 10B https://kth-se.zoom.us/my/ernstson	Henrik Ernstson
WEEK 50		

Seminar 2A, AL2195 Full class, all groups. Obligatory attendance. Monday 12 Dec 2022 13:00 to 17:00 V35, Teknikringen 76 48 platser	Each group present their insights of their case study and share lessons learnt on how to approach “messy realities” about places you might not have visited. Each group has 15+5 minutes followed by general discussion to capture the learning from our community of inquiry. What are the wider questions we have addressed? And what is still to be addressed.	Henrik Ernstson
Student consultation hours Thursday 15 Dec 2022 10:00 to 12:00	Room 410C, Teknikringen 10B https://kth-se.zoom.us/my/ernstson	Henrik Ernstson
AL2195 Seminar 2B Full class, all groups. Obligatory attendance. Thursday 15 Dec 2022 13:00 to 15:00 V1, Teknikringen 76 (90) <i>And from (NB!)</i> 15:00 to 17:00 V34, Teknikringen 76 (60)	See above.	Henrik Ernstson

Course literature

For course literature, see Canvas course web. But typical literature would include:

(Smith 1990; Escobar 1998; Watson 2003; 2009; Rademacher 2009; 2015; Ernstson, Lawhon, and Duminy 2014; Lawhon, Ernstson, and Silver 2014; Parnell and Oldfield 2014; Silver 2014; de la Cadena 2015; Parnell and Pieterse 2016; Roy 2016; Monstadt and Schramm 2017; Lawhon et al. 2018; Ernstson and Sörlin 2019; Schindler and Kanai 2019; Guma 2020; Kimari and Ernstson 2020; n.d.; Mulligan et al. 2020; Kimari 2021; Nsangi Nakyagaba et al. 2021; Ernstson and Nilsson 2022)

Cadena, Marisol de la. 2015. ‘Uncommoning Nature’. *E-Flux Journal* 65: 1–8.

Ernstson, Henrik, Mary Lawhon, and James Duminy. 2014. ‘Conceptual Vectors of African Urbanism: “Engaged Theory-Making” and “Platforms of Engagement”’. *Regional Studies* 48 (9): 1563–77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2014.892573>.

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Ernstson, Henrik, and Sverker Sörlin, eds. 2019. *Grounding Urban Natures: Histories and Futures of Urban Ecologies*. Cambridge: MIT Press. <https://direct.mit.edu/books/book/4522/Grounding-Urban-NaturesHistories-and-Futures-of>.

Escobar, Arturo. 1998. ‘Whose Knowledge, Whose Nature? Biodiversity, Conservation, and the Political Ecology of Social Movements’. *Journal of Political Ecology* 5: 53–82.

Guma, Prince K. 2020. ‘Incompleteness of Urban Infrastructures in Transition: Scenarios from the Mobile Age in Nairobi’. *Social Studies of Science* 50 (5): 728–50. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306312720927088>.

Kimari, Wangui. 2021. ‘The Story of a Pump: Life, Death and Afterlives within an Urban Planning of “Divide and Rule” in Nairobi, Kenya’. *Urban Geography* 42 (2): 141–60. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02723638.2019.1706938>.

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- Nsangi Nakyagaba, Gloria, Mary Lawhon, Shuaib Lwasa, Jonathan Silver, and Fredrick Tumwine. 2021. 'Power, Politics and a Poo Pump: Contestation of Legitimacy, Access and Benefits of Sanitation Technology in Kampala'. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, no. Published Online. <https://doi.org/10.1111/sjtg.12381>.
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