



## MESS35, Urban and Rural Systems and Sustainability, 10 credits

*System för hållbarhet i stad och landsbygd, 10 högskolepoäng*  
Second Cycle / Avancerad nivå

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### Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by The Board of the Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies on 2013-11-19 to be valid from 2014-01-20, spring semester 2014.

### General Information

The main field of study is *Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science*. The course constitutes the 5th course at LUMES, Lund University International Master's Programme in Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science.

The course is compulsory for all the LUMES students. The course is also offered as a single subject course.

*Language of instruction:* English

*Main field of studies*

Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science

*Depth of study relative to the degree requirements*

A1F, Second cycle, has second-cycle course/s as entry requirements

### Learning outcomes

Upon the completion of the course, the student shall demonstrate the ability to

- Identify key characteristics of urban and rural systems and their complex inter-relations.
- Relate distinctive spatial features to current sustainability challenges.
- Critically analyse and apply conceptual frameworks and planning tools for developing (more) sustainable communities.
- Identify and suggest concrete activities for sustainable urban/rural transformation.

## Course content

The overall objective of this course is threefold. First, it aims to give the students an understanding of the distinctive features of urban and rural systems and the feedbacks between these systems (systems-thinking competence). Secondly, it shows the linkages between the identified urban/rural features and current sustainability challenges, such as increasing risk caused by climate change, disasters, diseases, and food or water insecurity (systems-thinking and anticipatory competence). Thirdly, it focuses on how the identified urban/rural features need to be considered in the design and implementation of activities for creating more sustainable and resilient communities (normative and strategic competence). Emphasis is on providing concrete planning tools, measures, and hands-on practice, which includes a study visit to relevant sites.

The course is divided into four building blocks. It first presents key issues and tendencies in urban and rural development on an international scale. Topics include global land use changes, agriculture, forestry, grazing, urbanisation trends, and the differences and linkages between urban and rural systems. The complex interconnections between built systems and environmental, socio-cultural, economic, and political factors are highlighted. On this basis, key sustainability challenges faced by urban and rural communities, and how they are linked to urban-rural differences, are discussed. Thirdly, the course covers space-related theories, concepts and tools relevant for the planning of (more) resilient communities. The focus here is on climate-resilient and disaster-proof adaptation planning for achieving sustainable urban/rural transformation. The students are also introduced to Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Finally, concrete and hands-on planning practices are studied. Predominant approaches to adaptation planning in urban and rural contexts are discussed and their differences analysed. Related topics can, for instance, include top-down and bottom-up approaches, urban-rural networks, as well as differences in approaches coming from the 'Global North' and 'Global South'.

## Course design

The course is comprised of several learning activities, including lectures, literature and case study seminars, group discussions, in-class exercises, study visits, and an individual assignment/paper.

Consistent, regular class attendance and fully engaged participation is expected from all students in LUMES. Attendance at the sessions where graded activities take place is compulsory to pass the course.

## Assessment

For a passing grade the student must (a) have an overall passing mark on the individual assignments; (b) have an overall pass on combined group work and individual assignments; (c) have participated in the mandatory sessions.;

Students who fail a test have the right to re-examination. An opportunity for re-examination will be offered after the end of the course. If necessary, a second re-examination will be arranged at a later date. A student who has taken two examinations in a course or a part of a course without obtaining a pass grade is entitled to the nomination of another examiner, unless there are special reasons to the contrary. Students getting pass mark cannot re-take an exam or re-submit a paper

to get a higher grade.

*Subcourses that are part of this course can be found in an appendix at the end of this document.*

## **Grades**

Marking scale: Fail, Three, Four, Five.

The grades awarded in examinations are 5-4-3-Fail. The highest grade is 5 and the lowest passing grade is 3. The grade for a non-passing result is Fail. The student's performance is assessed with reference to the learning outcomes of the course. The grade "5" denotes outstanding performance in *all* learning outcomes. The grade "4" signifies very good performance in *all* learning activities. To receive the grade of "3", the student must obtain minimum criteria in fulfilling *all* course learning objectives. The grade of Fail signifies that the student has not fulfilled the learning outcomes of the course, or that additional work is required before the credit can be awarded.

## **Entry requirements**

Admittance to the course requires the successful acquisition of at least 17.5 credits in the LUMES programme.

## **Further information**

This course cannot be included in a degree together with MESS13 and/or MESS14.

The course was approved by the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Lund University, on December 13, 2012.

## Subcourses in MESS35, Urban and Rural Systems and Sustainability

Applies from H13

1201 Urban and Rural Systems and Sustainability, 10,0 hp  
Grading scale: Fail, Three, Four, Five