

URBAN STUDIES: SPATIAL AND STRATEGIC DESIGN IN TIMES OF POLITICAL, ECOLOGICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATIONS

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1. Urban Studies

URBAN STUDIES are an interdisciplinary specialist post-master program of spatial and strategic design of complex urban systems, phenomena and transformations. The study program is developed and led by DELTALAB - Center for Urban Transition, Architecture and Urbanism at the University of Rijeka.

The innovative curriculum of URBAN STUDIES brings together experts from a wide spectrum of scientific and artistic disciplines in a dynamic educational process that combines lectures and workshops program, research and methodology practice based on a thematic focus of the generation, a rich program of guest lectures, and mentored development of the individual student's final project.

Intended for everybody whose research or practice influences the built and programmed environment, strategic planning, infrastructural capacities, or collective imaginaries, URBAN STUDIES offer a comprehensive interdisciplinary education necessary for a meaningful contribution to the development of open, inclusive and resilient urban systems in the context of contemporary political, ecological and technological crises.

All terms used in this Call include all persons, regardless of their gender identity.

2. Structure

- BEGINNING OF STUDIES
beginning of October 2024
- END OF STUDIES
end of January 2026

Study program consists of 3 semesters, with 1. and 2. semester conducted on site in block classes lasting 4 – 5 days (weekend included), while 3. semester is conducted through continuous, freely organized, work with mentors on the student's individual final project.

The study program includes one field work trip organized for all students.

Classes are conducted in Croatian and English language.

- FIRST SEMESTER \approx 2×WEEKEND + 3×BLOCK CLASSES
from October 2024 to February 2025

It consists of lectures, seminars and guided research of a chosen topic as a starting point for the development of the individual final project over the period of three semesters.

- SECOND SEMESTER \approx 1×WEEKEND + 3×BLOCK CLASSES
from March 2025 to July 2025

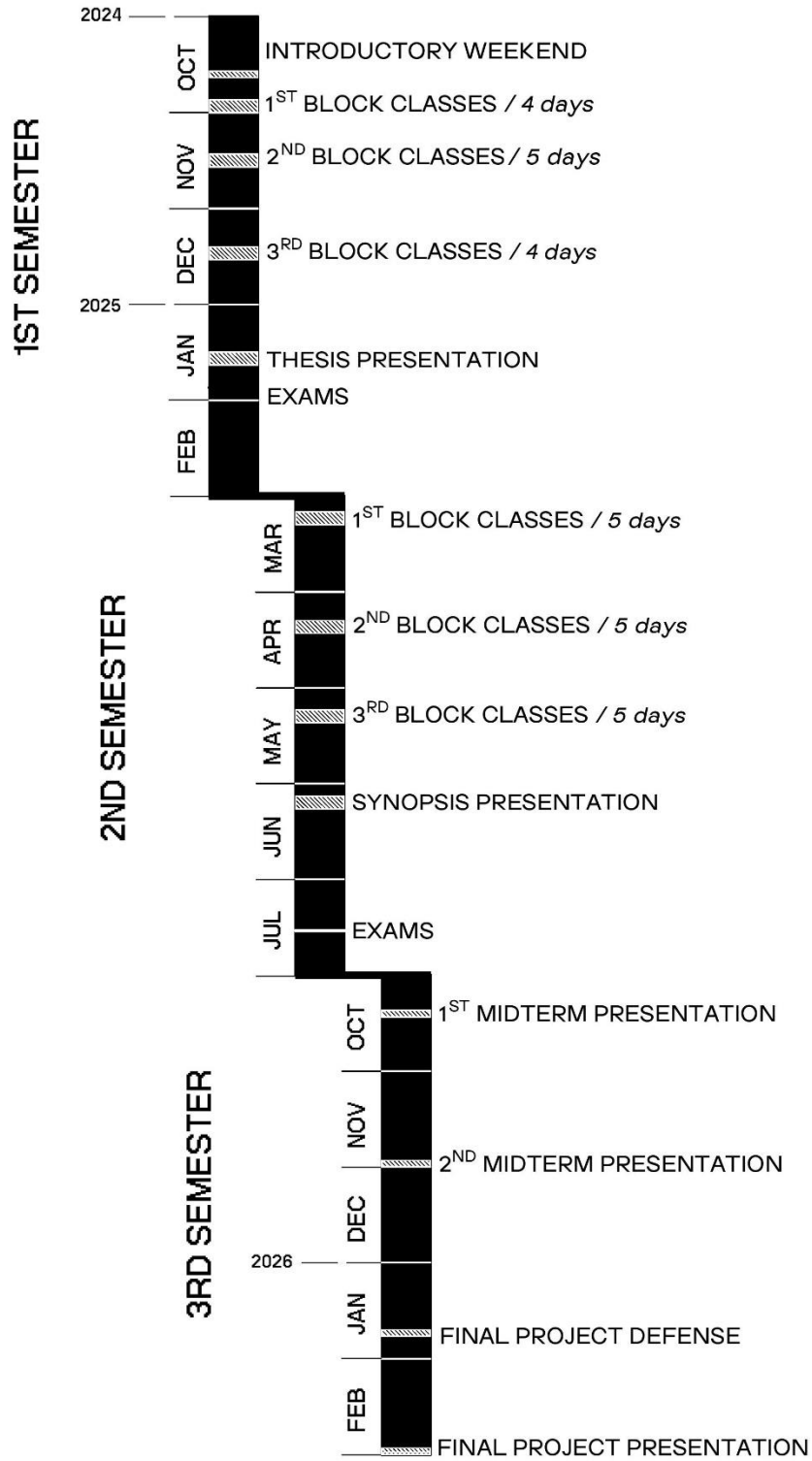
It consists of lectures, seminars and group methodological workshops in which students are introduced to or refine their comprehension of a wide range of approaches to spatial and planning problems through practical tasks and mentored independent development of the concept of the individual final project.

- THIRD SEMESTER \approx 2×WEEKEND
from October 2025 to February 2026

It consists of mentored work and intensive self-organized individual work on the final project.

Throughout all three semesters, DELTALAB organizes guest lectures of experts from various disciplines and professions, which provide students with insights into contemporary advances in research and practices related to various aspects of urban systems, phenomena and transformations.

STUDY PROGRAMME CALENDAR



3. Curriculum

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

- ECTS
Minimum of 90 ECTS points required to finish the study programme (30 ECTS per semester)
- ACADEMIC TITLE
university specialist in urban studies (univ. spec. stud. urb.)

COURSES

- INTERDISCIPLINARY LEXICON
The interdisciplinary lexicon serves as a preparation for the development of the final project that focuses on a specific area of research interest or a problem that reflects on the contemporary spatial production and activities within the space in question. Through a series of examples, both from students' own work and works of others, the students will explore concepts and terms closely related to contemporary and innovative spatial activities and agencies. The course will be conducted as a combination of theoretical lectures, seminar discussions and practical tasks.
- PROJECT STUDIO 1
The purpose of Project Studio is to learn to critically observe and devise steps towards the transformation of the city into the metropolis of the future. The study is dedicated to the interdisciplinary research of complex forces that shape the Anthropocene environment and propose new theories and visions. Studio 1 combines group and individual work through classes in the form of intensive thematic workshops.

— EVOLUTION OF ARCHITECTURE IN 20TH AND 21ST CENTURY

The course follows the evolution of 20th and 21st century architecture, from historical avant-gardes to the contemporary moment, with a focus on radical and experimental tendencies. The course analyzes the relations between architecture and the social context, and the ambitions and capacities of architecture with regards to shaping social reality, with the purpose of discerning the cultural, political, economic, technical and other circumstances that determine the architectural project. The goal of the course is to expand fundamental knowledge and develop skills necessary for research, interpretation and critical analysis of modern and contemporary architecture. Through the course, students will acquire widely applicable knowledge and skills that will further prepare them for the advanced academic work in Project Studio.

— ARCHITECTURE & INFRASTRUCTURE 1

The traditional interpretation of urban infrastructure as built systems for support of human activity is changing in many ways. Infrastructure is no longer just traditional (such as roads, pipelines or waste disposal systems), but also virtual, digital or social, and in all cases, it is expected to be "sustainable". The goal of this course is to look at infrastructure not only as a general term that describes certain physical technologies, but more broadly, as a set of assumptions about the designed environment. This course studies the relationship between architecture and infrastructure simultaneously on three levels: technical, architectural and theoretical.

— STRATEGIC PLANNING 1

The purpose of the course is to develop an understanding of the concept of strategic spatial planning and the evolution of

planning systems in different countries, through lectures, discussions and practical work. The intention is to develop an understanding of planning systems and the relationship with other transdisciplinary fields. During the lectures, the students will acquire an extensive insight into the theories and practices of strategic planning. During the practical tasks, the students will compare strategic and spatial-planning documents from the national planning system, discuss the models for analysis of the selected area, and become acquainted with the methods of participatory planning, the method of scenario planning and the methods of producing ex-ante and ex-post evaluation of the strategic development document.

— JUSTICE IN A CITY

The course presents, discusses and explores the relationships between different political discourses and the built environment, analyzing the foundations of urban inequality, justice and politics through close encounters with diversity of the public. The course examines the issue of the management of the development of the state and the city, with the aim of introducing the students to new, advanced models of city legislation and public-private partnership. Given that political philosophy is at the center of the course, it will provide explanations of approaches to justice in the context of spatial planning, that are different from current models that emphasize competitiveness and reducing the intervention of the government and local authorities in relation to private investments. The focus will be on enacting the values of equality, democracy and diversity in the context of spatial planning of the city.

— PROJECT STUDIO 2

Project Studio 2 is dedicated to researching the complex forces that shape the built environment and to envisioning

new city development strategies and models. The aim of the course is a better understanding of the relationship between ideas about the city and the materialized urban reality through technology, energy, ecology and new media. Special emphasis is placed upon visiting external collaborators in order to combine the academic environment with practical activities and to promote cooperation between disciplines. Work on the given topic also navigates the concept of the final work, which aims to define alternative strategies of the cities of the future.

— METHODOLOGY IN PRACTICE

The course focuses on the development of the specialist final project, and it is conducted in coordination and complementarity with the Project Studio course. The course is focused on working on the project research understood in two ways: as an intellectual problem, i.e. researching the relationship between design and theory for the purpose of knowledge production, and as a practical problem, i.e. learning how project research can influence urban development. Through course work, students will learn to recognize, interpret and use the various presented methods and approaches, situate them within different theoretical and scientific frameworks and systems, and identify their potential and limits for studying and working in complex urban environments.

— PHENOMENA OF CONTEMPORANEITY

The course sets a problem framework for understanding diverse contemporary phenomena relevant to architecture. This course builds on the course Evolution of Architecture in the 20th and 21st Centuries, and, based on the premise of porous disciplinary boundaries, it expands the discussion of architecture and the development of the built environment into the areas of philosophy, sociology, theory and practice of visual arts and other

disciplines. The aim is to strengthen the fundamental knowledge and skills necessary for research, historical interpretation and critical analysis. Through the history and theory curriculum, students will acquire research skills and prepare for advanced academic work in Project Studio.

— ARCHITECTURE & INFRASTRUCTURE 2

Building on the course Architecture and Infrastructure 1, the goal of this course is to expand and deepen the analysis and research of infrastructure systems of cities in a changing environment. The course includes a detailed examination of the concept of a "smart city", which connects various aspects of city management: construction, energy, government, life, education and, of course, mobility. The goal is to prepare students for the changes that this concept brings and to incorporate it into solutions for complex infrastructural challenges.

— STRATEGIC PLANNING 2

The course continues on Strategic Planning 1 and expands the discussion concerning strategic planning. The special focus of the course is on social welfare states and housing systems, but also on other topics such as spatial planning of the sea. The aim of the course is to strengthen the fundamental knowledge and skills necessary for research, interpretation and critical analysis. Through the curriculum, students will acquire research skills and prepare for advanced academic work related to their final specialist thesis.

— ART AND SOCIETY

The course examines the relationship between contemporary architecture, cultural heritage and the natural environment from the perspective of maintenance and temporary occupation. The course follows the development of the relationship of art to the object, whose significance is radically changing in a

consumer society, which is opposed by the methods of ephemeral actions whose goal is the cultural appropriation of space without material objectification. The purpose of the course is to develop – through discussions and practical work – a methodology for understanding art as a key imaginative discipline.

— EPISTEMIC SYSTEM DESIGN

The course deals with the fundamental theoretical principles of epistemology of complex social systems, social and institutional technologies that instantiate the key insights of epistemology of complex social systems, and the application of insights and tools of epistemology of complex social systems on a practical task in system design. The aim of the course is to introduce students to the conceptual foundations and institutional technologies in the field of fundamental and applied epistemology of complex social systems and their application in the context of urban studies.

— SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The course deals with issues of mitigation and adaptation to climate change, and concepts of sustainable urban development. The aim of the course is to provide students with knowledge in the field of sustainable urban development in Europe. Students will gain knowledge about different approaches related to the use of urban spaces and the possibilities of financing sustainable urban development projects. Students will be introduced to the European Green Plan as a strategy for achieving sustainability as well as to the conceptual content of popular syntagms such as green infrastructure, nature-based solutions and brownfield regeneration, all through selected examples from practice.

4. Theme 2024/2025

URBAN STUDIES are focused on hybridity, resilience, networks, adaptability, complexity, unpredictability and heritage in the states of crisis, with the aim of understanding and developing design-driven approaches to challenges of urban futures. While these focuses permeate all the educational contents of the study, they are crucially exemplified through the practical tasks of research and methodological testing on the specific problem through the thematic focus of the generation called WATERWORLD FUTURES.

Rijeka has recently been declared a cargo port of great economic and strategic importance in shaping the dynamics and logistics at the global level, so its improvement is currently one of the biggest investments in the country. The narrative that the urban development of a city is proportional to the development of its port is only partially correct, because the port and the city have historically developed as separate entities. In order to transform the narrative of the future urban development of Rijeka, it is necessary for this narrative to become a shared vision of those who live and work in that city and those who make decisions about the city. In order for this vision to meet the challenges of climate change and constant crises, and moreover for this vision to turn into policies, the multidisciplinary knowledge of diverse experts is necessary. The expansion of the land part of the port by filling the extracted soil is a continuation of the land-based approach, which, beside its many limitations and its exclusive use barring alternative approaches, is also fragile in terms of (expected) risks, as evidenced by

a recent study for the Kvarner area (Institute for Spatial Planning PGC: "Analysis of the Vulnerability of the Coastal Area Primorje-Gorski Kotar County due to Sea Level Rise", 2023).

The thematic focus recognizes the territory of the port of Rijeka as a potential for the future development of the city of Rijeka. "Water perspectives" steer the focus towards the visions of the city's future from the position of the sea and the sea coast, the Rječina and the river coast, or the Dead Canal as a technical service for the land. These perspectives will serve to create new imaginaries for Rijeka 2050 - the port city or city port of the future.

5. Application and enrollment

A – ENROLLMENT CONDITIONS

The right to enroll in the study program is awarded to applicants who:

- have obtained (at a minimum) a master's degree, i. e. have completed a graduate degree or an integrated undergraduate and graduate degree with a minimum of 300 ECTS credits
- submit all the (below listed) application documents within the prescribed period
- were evaluated positively following their application interview
- have a good command of English language

B – APPLICATION DOCUMENTATION

Application consists of the following documents that the applicant must submit:

- 1 – EXTENDED CV
 - in Europass CV format
 - must contain general information: the applicant's name and surname, place of residence, year of birth, and contact – e-mail address and mobile phone number
- 2 – PROOF OF IDENTITY
 - copy of identity card or passport
- 3 – PROOF OF QUALIFICATIONS
 - copy of the completed master's degree diploma - applicants who have obtained a foreign diploma must submit a copy of the decision of the competent authority concerning the recognition of the foreign higher education qualification
- 4 – PROOF OF PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE
- 5 – PORTFOLIO
 - portfolio of selected authored (or co-authored) works / projects in a format by applicant's choice (including the possibility of submitting a web link)
- 6 – MOTIVATIONAL LETTER IN ENGLISH
 - a short essay (1000 words maximum) in which the candidate should present themselves and their previous work, indicate study areas in which they situate their research and/or project interests, and state the goals they want to achieve through URBAN STUDIES.
- 7 – ONE (1) LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION
- 8 – SIGNED APPLICATION FORM

C – APPLICATION DEADLINE

The deadline for application is **September 15th 2024, until 16:00 (4 PM) CET**

D – APPLICATION PROCESS

- application documentation must be submitted digitally to the following e-mail address: info@deltalab.hr
- the application e-mail subject must have the following form:
[NAME and SURNAME of the applicant > Application to Urban Studies]

E – EVALUATION PROCESS

Applications will be reviewed and evaluated by minimally three (3) expert members of the Admissions Committee.

Criteria for evaluation of an application include:

- interest in interdisciplinary work,
- clearly articulated ambition for upgrading their discipline and knowledge,
- previous work in professional, scientific or art projects.

If the application, consisting of above listed application documentation, is positively evaluated by the Admissions Committee, the applicant will be invited for an interview on **September 20th, 2024**, either online or on site. The interview will be dedicated to the applicant's previous work, education, areas of research interest, and motivation.

All applicants will be informed of the final decision on their application eight (8) days after the interview. The final decision will be sent to the e-mail address provided in the application documentation.

Incomplete application, as well as applications received after the deadline, will not be considered. The Admissions Committee may request additions to the application.

F – TUITION

Tuition fee for URBAN STUDIES is 3.000,00 euros (1.000,00 euros per semester).

Furthermore, the student must pay a one-time enrollment fee in accordance with the Decision of University of Rijeka Senate.

The tuition fee for any student of URBAN STUDIES can also be paid by a legal entity.

6. Additional links

– YUFE VIRTUAL CAMPUS

All students of the University of Rijeka have the possibility to attend, free of charge, the study courses, language courses or professional development programs at one of 10 European universities included in the YUFE network.

<https://virtualcampus.yufe.eu/p/StudentPortal>

– COURSERA FOR CAMPUS (C4C)

All students of the University of Rijeka have the option of enrolling in any of the offered courses on the leading online learning platform, and the right to obtain one certificate per year upon successful completion of the course, free of charge.

<https://uniri.hr/en/about-university/coursea/>

– VIZKULTURA: Kriza otvara prostor za kreativna djelovanja

<https://vizkultura.hr/kriza-otvara-prostor-za-kreativna-djelovanja/>

– Vox Academiae: Kritičko promišljanje urbanog prostora

<https://novine.novilist.hr/vox/2024/02/4/>

– NOVI LIST: Sveučilište u Rijeci dobilo prvu generaciju specijalista Urbanih studija

<https://www.novilist.hr/ostalo/sci-tech/znanost/sveuciliste-u-rijeci-dobilo-prvu-generaciju-specijalista-urbanih-studija/>

– TPORTAL: VID BARIĆ intervju IDA KRIŽAJ LEKO

<https://www.tportal.hr/kultura/clanak/voditeljica-urbanih-studija-zelimo-biti-aktivni-sudionici-u-razvoju-boljih-sustava-foto-20230709>

– NOVI LIST: Žilavi park

<https://www.novilist.hr/rijeka-regija/fotona-trsatskom-kampusu-otvoren-zilavi-park-sportski-tereni-namijenjeni-su-svim-gradanima/>

7. Info / Contact

DELTALAB – Center for urban transition, architecture and urbanism

URBAN STUDIES – University specialist studies at the University of Rijeka

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1 – ADDRESS:

Delta 5, 51000 Rijeka, HR

2 – EMAIL:

info@deltalab.hr

3 – WEB:

www.deltalab.hr

4 – FACEBOOK:

www.facebook.com/deltalab.rijeka

5 – INSTAGRAM:

www.instagram.com/deltalab_rijeka/

6 – LINKEDIN:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/deltalab-centar-za-urbanu-tranziciju-arhitekturu-i-urbanizam-475119278/>

7 – HEAD OF URBAN STUDIES:

Doc. art. Ida Križaj Leko
ida.krizajleko@uniri.hr

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September 15th 2024,
until 16:00 (4 PM)
CET