

The Urban Unit Joins Hands with the University of Gujrat Course on Urban Sociology Introduced at MPhil Level

The Urban Unit has always strived to create arenas, where the research capacity of current and future academicians and professionals can be nurtured, who take up the responsibility of contesting for better urban governance. Education is a recognized and best available method to achieve these objectives of sustainable social development through creating a cadre of academically strong professionals. Therefore, the Urban Unit has been involved in talks with the University of Gujrat (UoG) to develop a partnership. The negotiations have culminated in the formation and teaching of Urban Sociology course for MPhil students at the university. The course was inaugurated on 31st December, 2010.

The course has been especially developed, to meet the needs of students at UoG, by the expert and academically accomplished staff at the Urban Unit. The course comprises of three credit hours per week. The Urban Unit is also providing complete faculty support to UoG in teaching the course. Lectures will also be conducted by experts from outside the Urban Unit, to give a multidisciplinary outlook to the course and make available a range of viewpoints to the students.

MOU Signed With the University of Gujrat

A very important Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the Urban Unit and the University of Gujrat on December 31st, 2010.

Dr. Nasir Javed, Project Director the Urban Unit, delivered the inaugural lecture to a full house, including students and faculty. He introduced the students with a range of urban sociology and urban development concepts and existing urban management practices. He told the students that the central focus of the course is to introduce the students to the history of urban development and its intrinsic relationship with social milieu. He further emphasized that the objective of the course is to equip students to work effectively as urban policy makers, planners and deliverers in Pakistan's contexts. He pointed out that the course will enhance their analytical and strategic capacities to create a change towards socially just urban governance. The students welcomed the inauguration of urban sociology course.



Dr. Nasir Javed & Dr. M. Nizamuddin exchanging MoU

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The MoU was signed by Dr. Nasir Javed, Project Director, the Urban Unit (Planning and Development Department, Government of the Punjab) and Dr. Muhammad Nizamuddin, Vice Chancellor, the University of Gujrat. The proposed areas of cooperation may include any program or project at either institution that could help foster the relationship to the mutual benefit of both partners. Moreover, the development and implementation of other specific activities of mutual interest will be negotiated separately and agreed upon between the partners.

The MoU will pave way for establishing a mechanism towards promoting mutual cooperation in developing academic and research excellence in Urban Sociology and other relevant subjects. The understanding between partners is aimed at enhancing scope of human resource development, exchange of research initiatives and short-term training courses related to urban sector. The MoU also summarizes that human resource development initiatives will be promoted through exchange visits of faculty, students and staff.



Salient features of the MoU:

- Launch of Urban Sociology course
- Exchange of faculty and professional staff
- Internship Opportunity
- Collaborative research projects on urban sector
- Lectures and seminars
- Short term training courses
- Exchange of academic publications and research
- Promote academic co-operation

Urban Sociology Course Objectives:

The Urban Sociology course has a focus on the interface between theoretical paradigms and practices across a diverse range of topics from 'understanding urbanization' to 'urban design' and 'urban disaster management'.

The students will be introduced to many key debates that have shaped the current discourse on urbanization in developing countries. The seminar series will facilitate the students to pursue debates of their own interests.

The curriculum has been designed primarily to:

- Engage at an advanced level with the most important and innovative theoretical ideas on cities and urbanization
- Develop an interdisciplinary and historically informed understanding of the urban field
- Understand better the complex relationship between theory and practice and the cultural, political and social context for processes of urban change
- Provide an opportunity for advanced research
- Improve the knowledge and skills necessary for careers in academia, public and private research, and other commercial and professional fields where an advanced understanding of cities and urban change is requisite

Outline of the Course

1	Understanding Urbanization
2	Urban Demographics
3	Urban Development Theorists
4	Anatomy of Cities
5	Urban & Regional Planning
6	Urban Social Challenges
7	Urban Design
8	Housing and Slums
9	Urban Services

10	Environmental Issues
11	Disaster Management
12	Cultural Heritage
13	Urban Governance
14	Participatory Development in the Urban Realm
15	Spatial Analysis in Social Sciences
16	Role of Media in Urban Life

The Urban Unit developed a dedicated web link on Urban Sociology Course

A special webpage has also been developed by the Urban Unit for existing and prospective students, and instructors to acquaint them with details of the Urban Sociology program. Details are available on www.urbanunit.gov.pk/uog

A Combination of Research and Training

The Urban Unit has an established reputation for organizing and conducting quality research. The Unit will ensure that the educational and internship training are supervised by recognized professionals from within the Unit or acclaimed visiting faculty and established practitioners.

Networking Opportunity for Students

Students will get many opportunities to interact with prominent government officials, well known urban sector professionals and celebrated social scientists. This educative, as well as networking, opportunity for UoG postgraduate students will provide them a competitive edge in the urban sector.

A Fusion of Theory and Application

The objective of this course is to cultivate well trained sociologists to apply their knowledge for the betterment of society. The course aims at equipping students by enhancing their capacity to apply sociological concepts in contemporary urbanization perspective.

A Gainful Collaboration

The quality of an academic program depends on more than just the curriculum and syllabus. It hinges, first and foremost, on the quality of instruction. The teaching team, the Urban Unit professionals and other external experts, is made up of professionals who are among the best in their respective fields in the urban sector. For this course alone, the Urban Unit has contacted a range of guest speakers to deliver lectures and talks.



Visiting Faculty Members

Dr. Ghulam Abbas Anjum

Dr. Anjum is the Chairman of City & Regional Planning Department at the University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore. He has a PhD in Transportation Planning from the Heriot-Watt University, UK. He has written extensively on urban transport, land subdivisions and urban housing problems.

Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib

Dr. Saqib is the founder of Akhuwat, a non-profit organization. He studied Public Administration at American University, Washington, USA, and served as a civil servant from 1985 to 2003. Dr. Saqib is a regular speaker at Civil Services Academy (CSA), National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA), and Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS).

Mr. Arif Hassan

Mr. Hasan is a widely acclaimed architect. He has received national and international awards. He has been a member of Aga Khan Award for Architecture in different positions. He has published on subjects of housing, planning, environment and social development. He has been honoured with Hilal-e-Imtiaz for his services.

Mr. Oriya Maqbool Jan

Mr. Jan is a renowned columnist and belongs to the civil services of Pakistan (DMG Group). Currently, he is working as the Director General of Walled City Project in Lahore. Mr. Jan has contributed to various research papers. He is a regular guest speaker at various academic institutions and forums.

Mr. Tasneem Ahmed Siddiqui

Mr. Siddiqui has a MA in Political Science and served in the civil services of Pakistan. He held many prominent positions as Director General and Chairman of Sindh Katchi Abadis Authority (SKAA). He is also involved with Saibaan, a non-profit organization, working on housing issues and micro credit for poverty alleviation.

Dr. Faiza Asghar

Dr. Asghar is a member of provincial assembly in Punjab. She is a child rights activist. She is one of the founding members of Child Rights Bureau, where she served as the Chairperson for many years.

Mr. Sarmad Saeed

Mr. Saeed belongs to the Police Services of Pakistan. He has worked on Police Reforms and Community Policing. He is currently serving as Additional Inspector General Training Punjab.

The Urban Unit Faculty Members

Dr. Nasir Javed

Dr. Javed is the Project Director at The Urban Unit, P&D Department, Govt. of Punjab. He is a member of the Pakistan's Civil Services (DGM) since 1998 has served at various key positions. He has also been involved in several consultancy projects with the Asian Development Bank, UNICEF, UNDP, and WWF. With over 20 years of work experience, Dr. Nasir has been at the forefront of various urban development Projects.

Ms. Sani-e-Zahra Naqvi

Ms. Naqvi is an academically trained and practicing Urban Planner and Architect. She holds a master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning (with a focus on Transportation and Land Use Planning) from the University of Michigan, USA. Ms. Naqvi is working with the Urban Unit as Urban Planner. She will be teaching 'Urban Design' as part of the Urban Sociology course at UoG.

Ms. Nadia N. Qureshi

Ms. Qureshi is an academically trained and practicing Architect and Urban Planner. She holds a Master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Michigan, USA. Ms. Qureshi is working with the Urban Unit as an Urban Planner, Designer and Architect. She will be teaching 'Urban Theorists' as part of the Urban Sociology course at UoG.

Mr. Abdul Razaq

Mr. Razaq is a Civil Engineer from University of Engineering & Technology Lahore, with a Masters in Program and Project Management from the University of Warwick, United Kingdom. He will be teaching Disaster Management as part of Urban Sociology course at UoG.

Mr. Muhammad Ozair Shah

Mr. Shah works as a Senior Transport Specialist at The Urban Unit. He did Engineering from Texas University, Texas USA. He has 25 years of work experience in the transport sector. He will be teaching Urban Services as part of Urban Sociology course at UoG.

Mr. Fawad Saeed

Mr. Saeed is an experienced Civil Engineer with a Masters in Water Resources Engineering from UNESCO-IHE Institute, The Netherlands and Masters in GIS from the University of Melbourne, Australia. He is working with the Urban Unit. He will be teaching 'Spatial Thinking in Social Sciences' as part of the Urban Sociology course at University of Gujrat.

Dr. Kiran Farhan (PhD)

Dr. Farhan is academically trained in Environmental Engineering with a PhD in Solid Waste Management from the University of Grenoble, France. She is working with the Urban Unit as Solid Waste Management Specialist. She will be teaching 'Environmental Issues' as part of the Urban Sociology course at the University of Gujrat.

Mr. Shaukat Ali

Mr. Ali has been a practicing journalist for 18 years. He has a Master in journalism. He has also taught mass communication and broadcasting at the virtual university. He is working with the Urban Unit as Communications Specialist. He will be teaching 'the role of media in urban life' as part of the Urban Sociology course.

Message from Dr. Nasir Javed, Project Director, The Urban Unit

I am very pleased that the Urban Unit has been successful in forging a partnership with one of the promising educational institution. Both partners are aware of the challenge posed by rapid urbanization, and have joined hands to contribute toward a long term solution of urban management.

It gives me great satisfaction that the Urban Unit has brought together a cadre of qualified and accomplished professionals, who will be teaching Urban Sociology course. I envision this collaboration as a long term effort toward strengthening linkages between academia and urban sector practitioners.

I extend strong support to the Vice Chancellor of UoG for successful completion of the course.

Message from Dr. M. Nizamuddin, Vice Chancellor, the University of Gujrat.

The University of Gujrat is a proud partner of the Urban Unit. The foundation of this partnership is based on a shared vision for a better managed urban Pakistan.

I hope that our mutual cooperation would go a long way, as UoG is also planning to establish department of Urban & Regional Planning. I encourage students to gain maximum benefits from the course and produce valuable research and knowledge.

I take this opportunity to extend my full support in creating better learning environment for the students of Urban Sociology course and the instructors.



Pakistan Urban Forum 2011



Government of Punjab is organizing an event 'Pakistan Urban Forum 2011' from March 1st to 5th, 2011 at Alhamra Arts Council, The Mall, Lahore. The event will be managed by the Urban Unit, Planning and Development Department, Punjab. A large number of celebrated national and international delegates will be attending the forum, presenting technical and conceptual papers and deliberating on the challenges posed by urbanization in Pakistan.

For More Details:
www.pakistanurbanforum.com