PhD School of Politecnico di Milano

Regulations of the PhD Program in Urban Planning, Design and Policy
Cycle XXX

Location: Milano Leonardo
1. General Information

PhD School of Politecnico di Milano

PhD Course: Urban Planning, Design and Policy - UPDP

Official Language(s): English

Location of the PhD Programme: Milano Leonardo

Subjects (SSD):

- Icar 20 - Urban and regional planning (41.6%)
- Icar 21 - Urban and landscape planning (33.3%)
- Icar 17 – Drawing (8.3%)
- SPS/04 – Political science (4.2%)
- SPS/09 - Economic sociology and sociology of work and organizations (4.2%)
- SECS-P/06 – Applied economics (4.2%)
- M-GGR/01 - Geography (4.2%)

PhD School Website: http://www.polimi.it/phd

PhD Program Website: http://www.dastu.polimi.it/index.php?id=1146

2. General presentation of the PhD Program:

The PhD Program in Urban Planning, Design and Policy (UPDP) aims at exploring the significance and the impact of contemporary urban changes and at understanding the way they can be governed through planning, design and policy making activities. The program pays specific attention to the transition towards new and more sustainable and equitable modes of urban development, as well as to pro-active advancements in planning practices and to potential innovations in traditional urban studies, urban design and policy approaches.

The integration between different fields and disciplines of urban research on the one hand, and between theory and practice on the other one, distinguishes the approach promoted by the PhD program.

The objective of the UPDP Program is to provide the PhD Students with analytical and interpretative tools together with research/planning/design methodologies to advance research in the field of urban studies, spatial planning, urban design, urban policy and governance.

PhD Students are encouraged to reflect upon traditions and innovative experiences in these fields, to participate to research activities concerning cities and regions in Italy and abroad, paying particular attention to international comparison. This will be fostered through the organization of international
seminars and through a period of internship to be carried out by the PhD Student at those research institutes, universities or public agencies which constitute the international reference network for the UPDP Program.

The new PhD Program takes advantage of the rich research milieu of the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies (DAStU) and of the cooperation with two other PhD Programs held at DAStU (‘Architectural and Urban Design’ and ‘Preservation of the Architectural Heritage’).

DAStU, as a structure of thematic and interdisciplinary research, works in the field of architectural and urban projects, spatial planning and territorial governance, urban policy, conservation and intervention on heritage and natural environment, historical and critical interpretation of architecture, city and territory. The Department carries out research and field work on transformation, care and government of historical and contemporary settlements and landscapes, based on principles of environmental, social and economic sustainability.

It is one of the most important research structures in Italy in town and country planning, embedded in a well-established international network of centers of excellence, and opened at forms of cooperation with institutional and social actors at the local national and international level.

The basic research structure is represented by Laboratories that test new methods and teaching techniques and aggregate teachers, researchers, staff and external collaborators into 4 Research Lines: architecture, planning, human science, history representation and restoration, town planning. Thanks to its multidisciplinary approach it is able to offer expertise and projects to a plurality of subjects and organizations, such as European, national, regional and local authorities, social and economic groups, research institutions.

The PhD Program in Urban Planning, Design and Policy welcomes foreign and Italian students. English is the official language of the program.

3. Objectives:

This PHD Program focuses on territorial, social, economic and institutional transformations in contemporary cities, and aims at discussing them as a complex of intertwined phenomena, which calls for new governance, planning and design approaches.

By establishing a dialogue with the best European and International schools, this PHD program is the place for research and innovative approaches to urban studies, spatial planning and urban design.

On the basis of a multidisciplinary approach, the main objective of both the educational program and the individual research activities is to offer to PhD students a challenging environment, a space for international debate and research, experimentation and innovation.

Moving from this perspective, the main courses and workshops focus on the following research areas:
• **Urban studies.** Contemporary cities worldwide are confronted with increasing challenges regarding local democracy, sustainable development, the management of environmental resources and landscape, social cohesion and cultural diversity. Looking at recent cross-scalar urban changes, the main issues addressed are: social, economic, environmental and territorial transformations; governance problems, technological innovation. The main research topics are: forms and processes of spatialization of social and economic inequalities; urban segregation; differentiation of urban populations; processes and institutions of urban governance; spatial impact of social innovation; forms and processes of regionalization; processes of social, economic and territorial development in local contexts.

• **Planning theories and practices.** Urban planning is not a unitary and self-contained discipline and the planning knowledge and activities can be improved by delving into (and jointly considering) theoretical and practical issues. First, the cultures, ethics, traditions and paradigms of planning are varied and have been evolving differently according to their geographical, institutional and political context. Similarly, planning practice is multiform and can be understood from several perspectives (by sectorial planning; by different analytical and operative techniques; by the relationships between planning and its impact on urban and regional change). Studying the characteristics, the peculiar interpretations and the effects of planning practices constitutes a second relevant research field. Thirdly, the selection and discussion of the crossroads between planning and other disciplines (e.g. architecture, environmental sciences, policy studies, philosophy and others) can dramatically innovate planning theories and practices, going beyond traditional approaches and perspectives, such as growth-centered urban development, commoditization of the urban environment and others.

• **Design topics, forms and tools.** In a scenario of changing socio-economic, environmental and territorial conditions, theoretical and technical issues for the construction of urban projects and for the implementation of governance policies are experimented as a way to improve the quality of life. Specific research themes are: the role and form of urban projects in leading territorial transformation; innovation in the description and representation of urban environment and landscape; tools for the evaluation and management of urban projects and policies aimed at mastering the feasibility and equity of land development, as well as the sustainability and the design quality of the physical outcomes; strategies for land and biodiversity preservation and energy conservation.

The three research areas reflect the contents and themes of the ongoing research at DASU and represent the framework of future proposals. They will be the backbone for PhD Students’ educational and research activities.

**4. Professional opportunities and job market**

According to its international orientation, the UPDP Program intends to train highly qualified researchers and professionals and expects them to work in academic institutions, research centres, public administrations and the private sector, in the following fields: spatial planning, design and management of urban projects and policy, urban studies and urban governance.
Doctors with such profile could be employed by Italian and International academic institutions, public bodies and research centres, public and private development agencies.

5. Enrolment at the PhD Program

5.1 Admission requirements
Italian and foreign citizens can apply. They are requested to have graduated in accordance with the pre-existing laws D.M. 3.11.1999 n. 509 or they are requested to have a master of science degree in accordance with D.M. 3.11.1999 n. 509 or a master of science in accordance with D.M. 22.10.2004 n. 270 or similar academic title obtained abroad, equivalent for duration and content to the Italian title and for an overall duration of university studies of at least five years.
The certified knowledge of the English language is a requirement for admission. Please refer to the Ph.D. School web site for details.
The admission to the programs will be decided according to the evaluation of the curricula of the studies, the motivation letter and according to an illustrative paper about the development of a possible PhD research, which candidates will send contextually with their application to the admission announcement.

5.2 Admission deadlines and number of vacancies
The number of vacancies is indicated in the announcement for the admission to the 30° cycle of PhD Programs: www.polimi.it/phd
Scholarships both related to general and specific themes are available, in accordance with what is specified in the call for admission.

6. Contents of the PhD Program

6.1 Requirements for the attainment of the title:
The attainment of the PhD title in Urban Planning, Design and Policy requires a study and research activity of at least three years and implies full time study, research and development of the PhD thesis.

The PhD in Urban planning, Design and Policy entails a minimum of 35 credits from PhD level courses to be completed as indicated in the following paragraph 6.3.

6.2 Development of the PhD thesis
The aim of the PhD Programs of Politecnico di Milano is the development in the candidates of a research-oriented mind-set and the training of skills and expertise relevant to specific research topics. To develop a research-oriented mind-set, candidates need to acquire the capability of problem-solving in complex contexts, which includes a deep analysis of the problem, its possible reformulation, the identification of an original solution and the ability to evaluate solutions and their applicability in given contexts.

These skills provide the PhD candidates with major opportunities of development in their research both in the academic field and in public and private organisations.

The main objective of PhD programs is the development of an original research contribution. The PhD thesis has to contribute to increase the knowledge in the research field addressed by the candidate. Moreover, it has to be coherent with the research topics developed in the department within which the PhD Program chosen by the candidate is carried out.

The original research has to be submitted through a PhD thesis which contains and discusses the contribution, with reference to the state of the art of the research hitherto developed on the chosen topic.

The PhD research will be developed under the guidance of a supervisor, who supports the candidate in the setting-out of the research project and accompanies him/her throughout the development of the thesis.

The supervisor can be external to the Board of Professors and can also belong to an institution different from Politecnico di Milano. The supervisor can be supported by one or more co-supervisors. In order to develop the capability of carrying out research activities, the candidate will have to attend the courses organized within the PhD program, defined in his/her study plan, and to complete them with a positive evaluation.

For each candidate admitted to the program, a tutor belonging to the Board of Professors is appointed. The tutor supervises and supports the candidate during the overall training path. The supervisor and the tutor can coincide. The choice of the courses will be overseen by the tutor, and it will be formalized in a study plan and approved by the Coordinator of the PhD Program.

Further activities for the development of individual skills and research expertise are encouraged during the PhD path.

The candidate has to acquire the capability to present and discuss his/her work vis-à-vis the academic community working on his/her research topic.

Consequently, both the participation to international conferences and the publication of the research results in peer-reviewed international magazines are encouraged.

The candidates are also encouraged to carry out part of their research activities in collaboration with other research groups active in the addressed field, preferably abroad.

Research visits of at least three months at research groups through which the candidate can acquire further skills to develop his/her research work and the thesis are strongly encouraged.

The duration of the program is normally three years.

6.3 Objectives and general framework of the teaching activities

The PhD Programs and the PhD School can activate teaching forms of various kind and of different value (courses, seminars, project workshops, laboratories). All the activities will aim at:

- creating the starting knowledge common to the PhD program;
• examining the basic research issues (problems, theories, research methods) which represent the founding element of the PhD Program and which identify clearly its cultural position;
• specializing some research issues connected with the problems developed in the thesis.

Courses are held in English, with the exception of single lectures differently planned.

Some teaching activities provide eligibility to acquire ECTS credits (structured teaching activities); other activities, typically specialised and for which it is difficult to evaluate the learning and its quantification, fall within the scientific activities of which the Board of Professors takes into account in the overall evaluation, but the value of which is not quantified in ECTS.

Research projects are supported by introductory courses, which focus on research methods and core themes, comparative assessment of best practices and design workshops.

The main courses and workshops provided in the first year are the following:
- specialized courses on Research Methods, providing a methodological introduction to the doctoral dissertation (literature review, drafting of a research project), as well as research tools in the fields of urban planning, policy and design;
- intensive and interactive seminars, focusing on specific sets of topics in the three research areas of urban studies; planning theories and practices; design topics, forms and tools, emphasizing a comparative approach among relevant Italian and international experiences;
- a design workshop, in which different experiences and skills are combined in order to explore themes and methods of urban planning, policy making and project design. The workshop integrates lectures, site tours, design projects and debates among practitioners, researchers and students in one intensive period of work.

Each learning activity is subject to grading through oral examination and the submission of written papers and essays. Detailed programs are available on the program’s website.
Within the end of the first year, PhD students will be required to submit a project for their PhD dissertation.

The core activities of the second year are:
- a bibliographic essay related to the PhD dissertation, to be presented and reviewed within the first month of the first semester;
- an internship of six months in a foreign university or agency working in the field of urban planning and policy; a written report is due to the Board;
- at least one paper presented to an international journal and the participation to an international conference as speaker.

During the third year the PhD candidate should devote his/her time to research and to the development of the PhD thesis. For each candidate, one Member of the Board will be appointed as Tutor for supervising and supporting the candidate's work.

The Tutor and the whole Board will follow the preparation of the Thesis, and will hold regular meetings with the candidates.
In particular, two moments of in-depth discussion of the contents of the Thesis are foreseen:
- Before the end of the second year, each PhD student will be required to organize a seminar at Politecnico di Milano in order to discuss the ongoing work of research and its first outcomes – position paper, methodology and contents – with researchers to be invited from outside the Department;
- By the end of September of the third year, each student will be required to present the draft of the PhD thesis, and to discuss it with the Supervisor and the Board of Professors.

The tables below show the candidates’ educational path, mainly referring to course activities. The candidates are expected to constantly develop their research activity, following the lead of his/her Supervisor, Tutor and of the Board of Professors, according to the abovementioned schedule.

**First Year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Possible details or reference to following tables</th>
<th>N. cr.</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhD School Courses</td>
<td>To be chosen by the PhD student</td>
<td>5- max</td>
<td>The list of the courses is available in <a href="http://www.dottorato.polimi.it/en/during-your-phd/phd-school-courses">http://www.dottorato.polimi.it/en/during-your-phd/phd-school-courses</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses characterising the PhD Program</td>
<td>Introduction to Research Methods in Urban planning, policy and design</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Governance of Urban Policy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic spatial planning in a global perspective</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban design recent forms and tools: an exploration of approaches and realizations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban design workshop</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other activities</td>
<td>First mile-stone: review of the content and approach to the thesis</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Second year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Possible details or reference to following tables</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activities connected to the thesis drafts</td>
<td>Bibliographic research paper on the thesis project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Submission of article(s) on a peer-reviewed international journal and/or participation in an international seminar as speaker

Internship abroad in a foreign university or agency with the production of papers

Second milestone: evaluation of the content of the thesis with a seminar

Third year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review thesis</th>
<th>1° Drafting of the thesis – evaluation by the tutors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2° Drafting of the thesis – discussion of the contents of the research in a public seminar with the participation of expert discussants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final writing of the thesis and discussion in a seminar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PhD PROGRAMS

A) The PhD Program in Urban Planning, Design and Policy organises the following Characterising Courses (see table A). For the admission to the final exam the acquisition of at least 35 credits is mandatory. 25 credits have to be acquired through the attendance to the “characterising” PhD courses offered by the PhD Program.

B) The PhD School organises every year general and Interdoctoral courses and courses with foreign professors. The acquisition of at least 5 credits is mandatory among the courses of B type. The list of Ph.D. courses organized by the PhD School is available at the following page http://www.dottorato.polimi.it/en/during-your-phd/phd-school-courses

C) Credits can be obtained by choosing among other courses provided by other PhD programs of Politecnico di Milano and/or external entities. In this case the previous approval of the supervisor, of the tutor and of the coordinator is mandatory.

PREPARATORY COURSES

If the Supervisor and the Tutor find useful or necessary for the candidate to attend preparatory
courses (to be chosen among the activated courses at the Politecnico di Milano), the Board of Professors of the PhD program can assign some extra-credits to be acquired to complete the training path. The credits acquired in this way will be considered as additional to the mandatory credits to be earned with the PhD courses.

**SPECIALISTIC COURSES, LONG-TRAINING SEMINARS**

The attendance to Specialized Courses, Workshops, Seminars cycles is strongly encouraged and, when certified and evaluated, may grant credits upon approval of the study plan submitted by the candidate by the Board of Professors.

These courses and workshops can be included in the study plan, even if they are not evaluated (and therefore not providing credits), as optional “additional teaching activities”.

In the following table, the scheduled planning is reported for academic year 2014-15 and 2015-2016. It is possible that other courses are activated by the PhD School afterwards; in this case the candidates will be promptly informed. The candidates will be able to add these new courses in their study plan.

**Table A: PHD COURSES CHARACTERISING THE PHD PROGRAM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Course</th>
<th>Professors</th>
<th>A.A./Semester</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Research Methods:</td>
<td>Massimo Bricocoli,</td>
<td>2014/15, 1st</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Research tools in urban planning, policy and design</td>
<td>Valeria Fedeli, Stefano Moroni</td>
<td>2014/15, 2st</td>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bibliographical review</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic spatial planning in a global perspective</td>
<td>Alessandro Balducci, Luca Gaeta</td>
<td>2014/15, 1st</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban design recent forms and tools: an exploration of approaches and realizations</td>
<td>Corinna Morandi (coord.)</td>
<td>2014/15, 1nd</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Design Workshop</td>
<td>Antonella Bruzzese, (coord.)</td>
<td>2014/15, 2nd</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table B SUGGESTED CROSS –SECTORAL COURSES OR WITH A FOREIGN PROFESSOR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Course</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courses offered to the 30th cycle students by the Phd School</td>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.4 Presentation of the study plan

Each PhD candidate will have to submit his/her study plan. The candidate will have the opportunity to review it periodically in order to adequately it to every possible change of the training offer or to needs motivated by the development of his/her study plan. The study plan is approved by the Coordinator of the PhD program, according to the modalities established by the Board of Professors of the PhD Program itself.

6.5 Instructions for the annual exams

Every year each candidate is evaluated in order to be admitted to the subsequent year of the program.
At the end of the third year the candidate is evaluated in order to be admitted to the final exam (held by the external Commission). The candidate presents his/her thesis work to the Board of Professors at least once a year. After every annual meeting, the candidate receives an evaluation (A/B/C/D) or, in case the candidate is not considered sufficient, he/she is qualified “Repeating candidate” (Er) or “not able to carry on with the PhD (Ei)”.
The last year, the candidate who has achieved sufficient results, but who needs more time to complete his/her thesis, can obtain an extension up to a maximum of 12 months.

6.6 Instruction for the preparation of the PhD thesis

The PhD study and research work will be carried out, full time, during the three years of the PhD course. The possibility of stages or study periods in Italian or in foreign companies or external entities and universities is foreseen.
The main objective is the development of an original research contribute.
The PhD thesis has to contribute to increase the knowledge in the research field of the candidate. Besides, the thesis has to be coherent with the research issues developed in the department at which the PhD program, chosen by the candidate, is developed.
The candidate has to present the original thesis, discussing its contribution to the state of the art in the research field in the research community.
The PhD research will be developed following the lead of a supervisor, who supports the candidate in the setting out and in the everyday activities regarding the thesis development.
At the conclusion of the studies, admission of the candidate to the final exam will be evaluated by the Board of professors, and, afterwards, a final exam for the attainment of the title, in which the research work carried out and the thesis will be evaluated by an examination Committee composed by three members, of which at least two external evaluation members.

7. PhD Secretary Services

Dr. Marina Bonaventura
Department of Architecture and Urban Studies
8. Internationalisation and other activities

The carrying out of study and research activities at other laboratories is strongly recommended. The university proposes also the opportunity of PhD joint paths with foreign universities and of joint and double PhD programs. Further information are available on the PhD School Website and on the PhD program Website.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foreign university</th>
<th>Kind of collaboration (*)</th>
<th>Agreement (**) (yes/no)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universiteit van Amsterdam, Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences</td>
<td>Training activities - seminars</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HafenCity Universitaet Hamburg</td>
<td>Training activities - seminars</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartlett School of Planning, UCL</td>
<td>Training activities - seminars</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Université Paris-Est Laboratoire Techniques Territoires et Sociétés (Latts)</td>
<td>Cotutela (GPT)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katholieke Universiteit Leuven</td>
<td>Training activities - seminars</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universitat Politecnica de Catalunya, Esc. Tecn. Sup. d’Arquitectura</td>
<td>Training activities - seminars</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne</td>
<td>Training activities - seminars</td>
<td>NO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bauhaus-Universität Weimar</td>
<td>Training activities - seminars</td>
<td>NO</td>
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</table>