

## THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

### Master of Urban Design (Full-time study mode)

#### CREDIT UNIT STATEMENT

The University's credit unit system is based on the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). The normal study load per credit consists of 25 hours ( $\pm 5$ ) of student learning (i.e. within the range of 20 to 30 hours), which includes all learning activities and experiences, both within and outside the classroom, and any assessment tasks and examinations required to achieve the learning outcomes of a course. The normative study load of one year Master's degree is 60 credits, subject to a maximum of 90 credits.

The Master of Urban Design Programme, full time mode, is 3 semesters long (Fall, Spring, Summer), 90 credits. Each semester consists of a total 30 credits of courses. The Master of Urban Design Programme comprises four different categories of courses using distinctive teaching and learning modes.

The majority of the courses are 6-credit courses. The norm for a 6-credit course consists of 150 hours of student learning activity (including both class contact hours and other student learning efforts). Studios are 12-credit (240-300 hours of student learning) and capstone experience the Dissertation/Design Thesis 30-credit (600-750 hours of student learning) courses respectively. Design Studio and Capstone require more intensive student-staff interaction and/or greater student learning inputs than in a normal lecture course. Assessment methods are decided by the Programme Director and course leader to tally with the intended learning outcomes of the courses, ranging from 20% to 100% coursework and 0% to 80% examination. The organization of the semesters are as follows:

1. Fall Semester: 3 \* 6 credit core course, 1 \* 12 credit Studio core course = 30 credits
2. Spring Semester: 2 \* 6 credit core course, 1 \* 6 credit elective course and 1 \* 12 credit Studio core course = 30 credits
3. Summer Semester: 1 \* 30 credit course

The four categories of Urban Design courses are summarized as follows:

1. *Core courses* (6 credits each)

These are the foundation and essential courses that provide students with the theoretical and professional knowledge in urban design. 5 courses fall into this category. These courses are delivered primarily by means of lectures and/or tutorials/seminars (normally 24 hours in total). Assessment tasks may include the writing of essays and reports of around overall 3,000 words ( $\pm 10\%$  excluding abstract, bibliography, list of figure and tables, etc), or an equivalent combination of equivalent intermediary progressive draft, in-class tests, in class individual or group presentation, teamwork performance, examination, class participation and so on.

2. *Elective course* (6 credit, assessment ratio and written output will depend on which elective courses is enrolled)

These are specialization courses in connection with the sub-fields of urban design to be selected and approved by the Department from time to time. These sub-fields cover transport, housing, environment, physical planning, architecture, landscape architecture, and conservation, and special study. Students are required to take one elective course. The selection of courses shall be approved by the Department and normally shall be related to the topic of the dissertation to be completed by the student. The teaching pedagogy, delivery format and assessment methods are similar to those of the core courses.

3. *Studio courses* (12 credits each)

These courses, using the format of experiential learning design studio, are teaching students the use of research about design, research for design and research by design which blend analytical, generative and

synthesis deployment of practical professional skills through a simulated real-life environment and providing them with the opportunity to integrate theory with application in tackling urban design problems through learning-by-doing. Two Studios are offered in the Programme which covers different urban scales and local and international cases. Class contact hours range from 24-48 hours. The assessment projects for these courses require development of urban design knowledge and methods and team work both inside and outside the classroom.

Formative assessment:

- Required design seminar and workshop attendance
- Required Weekly tutorial attendance and design progress presentation/discussion (40-45 min each)
- Required progress presentation/discussion (40-45 min each) @ baseline and design strategies, options and variations and preferred option Design Review: 3-4A0 at options stage and 4-5A0 at preferred option stage with adequate text)
- Individual and group Urban Design Brief, physical and digital simulation model making and so on.

Urban design summative assessment: final submission of design boards (4-6A0 with adequate text)

4. *Dissertation/Design Thesis* course (30 credits, 100% continuous coursework assessment)

*Dissertation/Design Thesis* is the Capstone course that aims at providing students with an opportunity to demonstrate their interests and capacity at both research and practice of urban design under the supervision of a teacher. Contact hours are flexibly organized between students and supervisors; and not less than 30 contact hours are required. The teaching of *Dissertation/Design Thesis* consists of three components:

1. a research about urban design in the manner of academic research aiming at contributing to the scholarly knowledge of the discipline (6,000 words and figures  $\pm 10\%$  excluding abstract, bibliography, list of figure and tables, etc),
2. a comprehensive urban design project proposal in the manner of urban design project. The urban design project assessment follows the studio assessment format (formative and summative).
3. an urban design project report in the manner of an urban design brief & research for urban design report (3,000 words and figures  $\pm 10\%$  excluding abstract, bibliography, list of figure and tables, etc.).

The urban design project should be informed by the research component. Demonstration of knowledge use and limitations of research about design, research for design and research by design should be provided.

A *Dissertation/Design Thesis* briefing will be held at the beginning of the research and method for urban design course (MUDP2010). Additional seminars and training on research methodology are provided starting from the spring semester (MUDP2010).