

NCO212 The ‘Smart City’ and Society

Level: 2

Credit Units: 5 Credit Units

Language: ENGLISH

Presentation Pattern: EVERY SEMESTER

Synopsis:

The ‘smart city’ paradigm is increasingly popular across the globe as the world continues to urbanise. Many societies seem to uphold a common understanding that a ‘smart city’ is one that exploits information and communication technologies (ICT) for more efficient service delivery. Yet, there is little consensus on the definition of a ‘smart city’, and the pragmatic push to use the technologies provides little room for critical examinations on existing and potential societal consequences. The social, cultural, and political enablers and impacts of the ‘smart city’ implementation may vary across local and regional contexts. While advancements of ICT open opportunities for addressing challenges on managing services, spaces, and infrastructures of urbanising populations, critical questions on the impacts of technology-driven development linger in many societies. What is the emerging social and cultural life of societies in ‘smart cities’? To what extent do conceptual understandings of the ‘smart city’ and its contexts (dis-)allow citizens to play a role in shaping their societies? This course enables students to critically explore the ‘smart city’ as a concept and a challenge in contemporary societies and to apply those conceptual understandings. Students will have opportunities to reflect these critical lenses and conceptual explorations on observations of real-life examples that range from everyday experiences to practices in industry partners and in policy-making. Through this course, students will be equipped with basic understandings to conceptually assess the impact of technologies in the everyday life of a ‘smart city,’ and with basic skills to navigate the challenges of rapidly changing information societies.

Topics:

- What is a ‘Smart City’?
- ‘Smart City’ and Urban Life (1): ‘Smart’ Technologies as Problem-Solving?
- ‘Smart City’ and Urban Life (2): Digitalisation in and of Everyday Life
- ‘Smart City’ and Urban Life (3): ICT Trends in Industries, Policies, and their Social Impacts
- ‘Smart City’ Governance (1): Big Data and Small Data
- ‘Smart City’ Governance (2): Open Data and Transparency
- ‘Smart City’ Governance (3): Critical Perspectives on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Identification, Classification, and Automation
- A ‘Democratic’ ‘Smart City’? (1): The Challenges of Crowdsourcing and Citizen Science
- A ‘Democratic’ ‘Smart City’? (2): Social Media: Algorithms, Information, and Civic Participation
- A ‘Democratic’ ‘Smart City’? (3): Contradictions of Surveillance, Control, and Privacy
- Current Issues in Contemporary ‘Smart Cities’ (1): Economic and Societal Transformations
- Current Issues in Contemporary ‘Smart Cities’ (2): Sustainability
- Current Issues in Contemporary ‘Smart Cities’ (3): Challenges in Southeast Asia

Learning Outcome:

- Describe the role of data and ICT in the definition of the ‘smartness’ of cities and societies
- Identify social, cultural, and political enablers and consequences of the ‘smart city’ paradigm
- Explain the conceptual components of the ‘smart city’ and potential contradictions in their pragmatic implementation
- Discuss the role of the government, private sector, communities and citizens in a ‘smart city’
- Analyse the impacts of ‘smart’ technologies on the everyday life of communities, business practices, and society at large
- Develop practical strategies for addressing and averting problematic practices as well as negative influences of ubiquitous ICT implementation in society

Assessment Strategies (Daytime Class):

Components	Description	Weightage Allocation (%)
Overall Continuous Assessment	PRE-CLASS QUIZ 1	10
	GROUP BASED ASSIGNMENT 1	45
	TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT 1	45
Total		100