



## Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2025

### 8,647: Kreativität/Creativity: Exploring Urban Atmospheres (European Haniel Program, Summer Academy 2025)

ECTS credits: 6

#### Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

decentral - Presentation, Analog, Group work group grade (40%)

Examination time: Term time

decentral - Oral examination and technical discussions, Analog, Group work individual grade (10%)

Examination time: Term time

decentral - Written work, Digital, Individual work individual grade (50%)

Examination time: Term time

#### Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[8,647,1.00 Kreativität/Creativity: Exploring Urban Atmospheres \(European Haniel Program, Summer Academy 2025\)](#) -- English

-- [Steyaert Chris](#), [Beyes Timon](#)

#### Course information

#### Course prerequisites

Participation in this course is not via bidding but via a (max) one-page motivation explaining your interest and affinity to the course theme and its design. Students interested in this course are asked to send their letter to [chris.steyaert@unisg.ch](mailto:chris.steyaert@unisg.ch) between Tuesday, 4 February and Tuesday, 11 February 2025 (midnight).

The European Summer Academy, enabled by the German Haniel Foundation, brings together MA students and teachers from four different European business schools and universities: the University of St. Gallen, the Copenhagen Business School, Leuphana University Lüneburg and Ca'Foscari University of Venice.

The Academy will have its base in Berlin, Germany. Thanks to the generous support of the Haniel Foundation, we can offer free accommodation as well as supporting train travel (up to 100 Euro) to Berlin and back.

#### Learning objectives

The course will enable students:

- to understand the notion and phenomenon of urban atmospheres as an organizational, entrepreneurial, and political phenomenon;
- to acquire the use of performative (ethnographic) methods of exploring urban atmospheres;
- to conduct a field study of urban atmospheres in the urban context of Berlin through identifying and reflecting 'site-specific' organizational challenges and responses;
- to devise and realize an exhibition experience drawing upon visual, spatial, and performative approaches.

#### Course content

2025's European Summer Academy will investigate the organizational, entrepreneurial, and political conditions, consequences and potentials of urban atmospheres. To do so, current forms of political polarisation as well as practices of solidarity – witness the current ascent of the far right and the struggles around ecological and social well-being – are understood as atmospheric phenomena: as propelled by, and themselves shaping, collective affects and moods.



The seminar aims to provide students with theories, concepts, and methods to critically examine the emergence, modulation, and management of urban atmospheres. The students are asked to conduct fieldwork-based analyses of atmospheric spaces, their constitution and consequences.

Cities have always been perceived as atmospheric. Time and again, urban atmospheres are imagined and perceived as liberating, emancipating, and entrepreneurial. Also, cities have been endlessly depicted and imagined as spaces of sensory overload, of excess, of violence, of anxieties and estrangement. While these tropes have a long history, we can observe – for one – a rise in atmospheric struggles and conflicts fuelled by the current polarization of collective moods as they manifest in political extremism, racist and antisemitic sentiments and heterogeneous processes and practices of protest, but also in affective atmospheres of solidarity and togetherness. Moreover, recent decades have seen a political and economic shift towards emphasizing and engineering urban cultural vitality through atmospheric means. Consider, for instance, the staging of sensual experiences and spectacles, the turn to urban cultural heritage and consumption, and the images and branding of so-called creative cities. Urban spaces and urban cultures are increasingly subject to atmospheric engineering.

This seminar is dedicated to understanding and exploring these developments. Its aim is to conceptually and methodologically equip the students with a basic understanding of the 'urban sensible': of the city as first and foremost an embodied and atmospheric phenomenon. Moreover, students are challenged to venture out into the city and encounter the urban everyday themselves, conducting sensory fieldwork and enacting their own stories of the 'atmospheric city'. Studying the atmospheric can be done through, for instance, interviews, observations, pictures, sound recordings and video-takes, drawings, and maps, reports, and articles. Joined by researchers from all participating universities, the teams will then transform their empirical work into presentations of how a city can be sensed, how its atmospheres organize urban life, and how such atmospheres become a technology of power as well as resistance.

## Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

After an (online) introduction/preparation session, the course is organized in four parts. It runs over 5 full days, which consist of thematic discussions, guest lectures, preparatory methodological exercises, on-site visits and fieldwork, project analysis and putting together an exhibit of findings.

Through mixed groups made up from participants from the participating universities, the learning process centres on the fieldwork on and in the atmospheric constitution of sites in the urban context of Berlin, which are reflected conceptually and personally by respectively drawing upon the preparatory readings and group reflections.

Part 1 consists of exploring concepts of and methodologies of urban atmospheres.

Part 2 consists of fieldwork and empirical research based on specific locations in the city of Berlin.

In Part 3, we develop and analyze empirical findings through interweaving observations with findings from literature research.

Part 4 is for preparing, setting up the exhibition, and presenting the findings.

Contextual Studies are considered part of **Contact Learning**; thus, taking part properly implies **regular attendance**. It is the students' own responsibility to ensure that there is **no timetable clash** between the courses they have chosen. A detailed course outline and all relevant documents will be made available on **StudyNet**. Only the current timetable as published on **Courses** does apply.

## Course literature

A compendium of journal articles and book chapters will be made available online, see indicative list below:

### *On the concept of atmospheres*

Anderson, B. 2009. Affective atmospheres. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 2(2), 77-81.

Jorgensen, L. & Beyes, T. 2023. Organizing half-things: Knowing, theorizing and studying atmospheres. *Organization Theory*, online.

Jack, R.L. 2021. Expanding feminist affective atmospheres. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 41, online.

Stewart, L. 2011. Atmospheric attunements. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 29(3), 445-453.

### *Methodological approaches*



Latham, A. 1999. Powers of engagement: on being engaged, being indifferent, and urban life, *Area*, Vol. 31, 2, 161-168.  
Latham, A & McCormack, D.P. 2009. Thinking with images in non-representational cities: Vignettes from Berlin. *Area*, 41(3), 252-262.  
Michels, C. 2015. Researching affective atmospheres. *Geographica Helvetica*, 70(4), 255-263.  
Wildner, K. and Tamayo, S. 2004. Cartographic options in cultural and social sciences: Excerpts from research projects in Mexico City. In: N. Möntmann, Y. Dziewior and Galerie für Landschaftskunst (Eds). *Mapping a City*. Hamburg: Hatje Cantz

## Exemplary studies

Bissell, D. 2010. Passenger mobilities: Affective atmospheres and the sociality of public transport. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 28(2): 270-289.  
De Backer, M. 2021. „Being different together“ in public space: Young people, everyday cosmopolitanism and parochial atmospheres. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 22(4), 480-500.  
De Molli, F., Mengis, J. & van Marrewijk, A. 2020. The aestheticization of hybrid space: The atmosphere of the Locarno Film Festival. *Organization Studies*, 41(1): 1491-1512.  
Kemmer, L., Peters, C. H., Weber, V., Anderson, B., & Mühlhoff, R. (2018). On right-wing movements, spheres, and resonances: an interview with Ben Anderson and Rainer Mühlhoff. *Distinktion: Journal of Social Theory*, 20(1), 25–41.  
Michels, C. & Steyaert, C. 2017. By accident and by design: Composing affective atmospheres in an urban art intervention. *Organization*, 19(1), 43-59.  
Wall, I. rua. (2019). Policing atmospheres: Crowds, protest and 'Atmotechnics'. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 36(4), 143-162.

## Additional course information

Chris Steyaert is Professor for Organizational Psychology at the University of Sankt Gallen. He has published in international journals and books in the area of organizational theory and entrepreneurship. He is teaching courses on creativity in relation to the field of team dynamics, urban creativity and craftwork. He experiments with pedagogical approaches drawing up aesthetic forms such as drama, dance, design, documentary and (digital) display.  
Timon Beyes is Professor of Sociology of Organization and Culture at Leuphana University Lüneburg where he was a founding director of Leuphana University's Centre for Digital Cultures. He is also the director of the European Haniel Program on Entrepreneurship and the Humanities, which enables and organizes the European Summer Academy. His research focuses on the spaces, technologies and aesthetics of organization in the fields of media culture, art, cities as well as higher education.

## Examination information

### Examination sub part/s

#### 1. Examination sub part (1/3)

##### Examination modalities

Examination type	Presentation
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination
Examination mode	Analog
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Group work group grade
Weighting	40%
Duration	--

##### Examination languages

Question language: English  
Answer language: English

##### Remark

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##### Examination-aid rule



## Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

### Supplementary aids

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## 2. Examination sub part (2/3)

### Examination modalities

Examination type	Oral examination and technical discussions
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination
Examination mode	Analog
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Group work individual grade
Weighting	10%
Duration	--

### Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

### Remark

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### Examination-aid rule

Open Book

Students are free to choose aids, apart from the following restrictions:

- pocket calculator models which are not part of the Texas Instruments TI-30 series, as well as any programmable electronic devices that are capable of communication such as electronic dictionaries, notebooks, tablets, smartphones, headsets, additional screens, etc. are not admissible;
- there is an option for faculty members to explicitly define exceptions under supplementary aids.

Procuring any aids, as well as ensuring their working order, is the exclusive responsibility of students.

### Supplementary aids

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## 3. Examination sub part (3/3)

### Examination modalities

Examination type	Written work
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Written work
Examination mode	Digital
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	On Campus



Grading type	Individual work individual grade
Weighting	50%
Duration	--

## Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

## Remark

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## Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

## Supplementary aids

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## Examination content

1. The students are asked to write a preparatory (conceptual) paper (12.000 characters with spaces (exclusive of front page and references)) on the organization and entrepreneurship of urban atmospheres. 50%
2. In groups that intermix participants from the various universities, students will devise, prepare, and realize an exhibition of their findings presented at the end of the week. 40%
3. Furthermore, students explain their learnings and reflections following the exhibition. 10%

## Examination relevant literature

The exam literature consists of the readings in the literature list and all handouts of presentations.

## Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW21) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 13 (Monday, 25 March 2025) are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 04 (Thursday, 23 January 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 17 March 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 14 (Monday, 31 March 2025);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before ending with de-registration period in CW 15 (Monday, 07 April 2025).



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