

About M.A. Transformation Studies Course Overview Application



Studying Change – M.A. Transformation Studies

Listen

Welcome to the homepage of the Master's Program 'Transformation Studies' at the Europa-Universität Flensburg, which will start in autumn 2017. On the following pages you will receive information about the program as well as details on interesting offers available to students on campus.

The M.A. Transformation Studies was developed at the Norbert Elias Center of the Europa-Universität Flensburg in cooperation with numerous scientists from different disciplines. Accordingly, an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary study program emerged that focuses on the historical and contemporary causes and consequences of socio-ecological challenges, including climate change, loss of biodiversity or environmental pollution. During the course of the program, the opportunities and limits of social transformation are analyzed, reflected and discussed in the wider context of sustainability. [Continue](#)



› About M.A. Transformation Studies

› Course Overview

› Application

In October 2010, the dam of an aluminum factory's landfill basin burst in the Hungarian town of Ajka. As a consequence, approximately one million cubic meters of corrosive red mud flooded the surrounding area. Ten people died, dozens were injured, hundreds evacuated. The heavily polluted mud poisoned soils and waters. This photo was taken six months after the accident. Aluminum is used, among other things, for the production of vehicles as well as in the packaging and electronics industry. © Palíndromo Mészáros

The Dharavi Slum in Mumbai, India, is considered to be one of the largest slums (low-income areas?) in Asia. According to UN estimates, one in eight people are currently living in slums. Irregular settlements are growing all over the world and not infrequently the poorest are pushed into the most dangerous areas: near toxic waste dumps, floodplains or slippery hillsides. Mike Davis writes that the yearly growing number of victims of natural disasters is not only the manifestation of our changing natural climate, but further provides valuable insights into the risks that the poor face in their desperate search for survival opportunities.

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The top of Huayna Potosi seen from El Alto, Bolivia. The inhabitants of El Alto suffer from great water scarcity. While the urban population is growing rapidly, the supply of water is becoming increasingly difficult. Being dependent on the melting water of the glaciers of the surrounding Andean peaks, the metropolis is especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change as the glaciers slowly disappear.

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Palm oil plantations on the river Kinabatangan, Borneo, Malaysia. Countless products contain palm oil, ranging from food, cosmetics, washing agents and paints to biofuels. Oil palm trees grow best in a tropical climate where the thriving rainforest often has to (illegally) pay the price. The resulting massive monocultures represent an enormous threat to biodiversity.

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Oil Sands, Canada. The extraction of oil from oil sand consumes massive amounts of water and energy and is associated with immense environmental degradation such as the clearing of huge forest areas, artificial toxic wastewater sewage, acidified soils and the sulfurization of forests, or contamination of the groundwater. Solely the mining area in Canada covers an area the size of England. Due to the growing scarcity of fossil resources, rising raw material prices and new technical developments, the extraction from oil sand has become profitable in recent years. Extraction of oil from oil sand results in nearly a quarter more CO₂ than from conventional oil production.

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Back to top Page # 21653 Permalink 05/28/2019

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