

Sustainable Cities 2: Field Research

GEOG 1620 (for students at the Johnstown campus); URBNST 1615 (for students at the Oakland campus)

Study period: May 2019 (including the preceding course Sustainable Cities 1)

Location: Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Instructor:

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Prerequisite: None, except all students must also register for Sustainable Cities 1: Theories and Concepts, which will be scheduled during the first half of the study period.

Course Description:

The course Sustainable Cities 1: Theories and Concepts explored the idea of sustainable cities as a framework for interdisciplinary planning of contemporary cities. It focused on sustainability and urban design in both a global context and on-the-ground local level in Amsterdam through studying the processes that shape the form and function of the built environment. Sustainable Cities 2: Field Research provides an opportunity for the student to build on knowledge from the prerequisite course by developing an independent project which will result in a substantial research paper on a topic relating to Amsterdam as a sustainable city. Additional field trips and guest lectures will also be incorporated into Sustainable Cities 2. All student papers will be compiled into one final course report, which will be posted on the Pitt-Johnstown Geography Department's website.

Course Format:

This is a 3-credit study abroad course offered by the University of Pittsburgh system. The course is taught in the city of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. The duration of Sustainable Cities 1 and 2 is from **May 4-June 1, 2019**. This compressed study schedule means that most days will be dedicated to intense study. In the mornings, the course participants will gather in seminar-style class periods. Each students will be responsible for presenting and discussing the field research they conducted the previous day. Moreover, students are required to conduct a literature search to find material relevant to their research topic, and this literature will also be discussed during the seminars.

In addition to classroom and individual research time, some days will include collective field trips to various sites in Amsterdam that illustrate the city's effort to be sustainable. The field trips will be arranged by Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE), an organization that will provide on-the-ground support for us in Amsterdam, or the instructor.

Before and after the trip: An initial course meeting will at the University of Pittsburgh in Oakland on **March 21, 2019** to prepare students for both Sustainable Cities 1 and 2. You will be asked to read material and hand in some assignments before the actual trip takes place in May. This is to familiarize yourself with the sustainable city concept, the city of Amsterdam, and some of the research that you will conduct while in Amsterdam. At the time of the initial course meeting, a Courseweb page will be activated online where you can access course information and submit homework assignments.

Readings:

We will start reading a few articles on designing research and writing a research paper. Beyond that, there is no pre-set literature list; instead, during the Sustainable Cities 1 phase, the student will start researching and collecting readings that can inform his/her research paper topic. Each student is responsible, in collaboration with the instructor, to create a personalized list of articles to read. The readings are meant to provide in-depth investigations of the selected topic (e.g., green buildings, water management, recycling, local food movement, bicycling culture).

Evaluation:

You will write a short paper which should be designed as a proposal for the research that you plan to conduct during the second segment of the program. The topic of the proposal is for you to determine.

Your course grade will be determined by the final paper *and* how you conducted research in Amsterdam. In other words, the effort you put into gathering field information and the level of participation during the classroom sessions will also be taken into account, not just the quality of the final paper. You may complete the paper after you come back to the United States so you have time to collect field data/take notes while in Amsterdam. Paper deadline: **June 19, 2019.**

You will also write "reflection" papers for many of the field visits. Those papers should consist of background material based on theories and concepts that have discussed in lecture, as well as your impressions from the field visit and how the field experience connects with the class material. Each paper should be approximately 2 pages.

Your course grade will be determined as follows:

Research project: 75%

Reflection papers 25%

Note: All course meetings, lectures, field trips, and the paper are *required*. Obviously, there could be legitimate reasons (e.g., illness) why you have to be absent at some point, but any potential absence have to be approved by the instructor.

Course schedule:	Lectures/Readings	Field trips/Guest speakers
<u>Week 3</u>		
Monday	Guest lecture on the 2019 Global Environment Outlook UN Report on healthy planet, healthy people: Joyeeta Gupta (10-noon)	
Tuesday	<p><u>The food system</u> – this is a “spill over” lecture from Sustainable Cities 1 (9-Noon)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crouch and Wiltshire • Girardet 2005 • van der Schans • Viviano 	<p>Guest speaker from Amsterdam Institute for Advanced Metropolitan Solutions: Nina Bohm (2.30-4.30)</p> <p>Site visit to <i>Pakhuis de Zwijger</i>, a space for creativity and innovation (5-6pm)</p>
Wednesday	<p>Exam for Sustainable Cities 1</p> <p>How to write a research paper and conduct field research (9-Noon)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huett and Koch • Jacobs • Pasek 	Site visit TBD
Thursday	<p>Student-led research seminar (9-Noon)</p> <p>Readings TBD (see above)</p>	Site visit to the Zero Emissions Cities Program with Susanne Balm (3.30-5pm)
Friday	Independent field research day (9-2pm).	

<u>Week 4</u>		
Monday	Each student should give a short presentation on his/her research topic based on an initial literature review (9-Noon).	Guest speaker on business and sustainability: Simone Altoe (1-3pm)
Tuesday		Field trip to Rotterdam with a self-guided tour to various sites of sustainability (9am-3pm)
Wednesday	Independent field research morning (9-noon).	Site visit to Amsterdam Economic Board/Amsterdam Smart City approach to innovation (3-4.30pm)
Thursday	Students will independently write a reflection essay on previous day's field trip. Submit by noon on Courseweb.	
Friday	Independent field research day (9am-3pm). Then we'll meet for a "course debriefing" at the Generator.	Farewell dinner @ Instock (6-8pm)

Readings:

Crouch, D. and Wiltshire, R. 2005. Designs on the Plot: The Future for Allotments in Urban Landscapes. In A. Viljoen, K. Bohn, and J. Howe (eds.). *Continuous Productive Urban Landscapes*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Girardet, H. 2005. Urban Agriculture and Sustainable Urban Development. In A. Viljoen, K. Bohn, and J. Howe (eds.). *Continuous Productive Urban Landscapes*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Huett, A. and Koch, R. 2011. Writing in the Social Sciences. UNA Center for Writing Excellence.

Jacobs, A. 1985. Seeing Change. In *The Sustainable Urban Development Reader*. Routledge.

Pasek, J. 2012. Writing the Empirical Social Science Research Paper: A Guide for the Perplexed. University of Michigan.

van der Schans, J.V. 2010. Urban Agriculture in the Netherlands. *Urban Agriculture Magazine*, 24 (September), 40-42.

Viviano, F. 2017. This Tiny Country Feeds The World. *National Geographic*, September 2017.