

## **Sustainable Cities 2: Field Research**

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

**Study period:** May 2017 (including the preceding course Sustainable Cities 1)

**Location:** Amsterdam, the Netherlands

**Number of credits:** 3

**Grading:** Letter grade only

### **Instructor:**

Ola Johansson, Ph.D.

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During the spring semester 2017 I'm on sabbatical leave; please contact me via email

**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. Students can write individual papers or team up two-and-two. 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 1-29, 2017**. 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 (depending on the number of people enrolled in the course, the

students may be divided into two groups who'll meet separately). Each student 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. During the field research, students will be required to keep a detailed time log on what they did.

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 by the course instructor.

**Before and after the trip:** An initial course meeting will be held on the campus of the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown on **DATE TBD** to prepare students for both Sustainable Cities 1 and 2. If you are a Pitt student on the Oakland campus, a live feed will be transmitted to a location on the Oakland campus. (If you are neither an Oakland nor a Johnstown Pitt student, the instructor will communicate with you personally in lieu of this initial meeting.) 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:**

Each student is responsible, in collaboration with the instructor, to create a personalized list of articles to read. 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. 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:**

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 15, 2017.**

You will also write "reflection" papers for each field visit. Those papers should consist of background material based on theories and concepts that have been 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 2-3 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
Week 3  (Note: Week 1 and 2 are dedicated to Sustainable Cities 1)	TBD (see above)	Visit <i>The Edge</i> , a sustainable office  Visit to <i>Houthavens</i> , a new climate neutral district  Volunteering work at sustainable café/restaurant <i>De Ceudel</i>  Guest speaker from <i>Urgendato</i> – on circular economy and renewable energy
Week 4	TBD (see above)	A discussion about finding sustainable solutions for a city like Amsterdam; with the Amsterdam Institute for Advanced Metropolitan Solutions  Guest speaker from <i>Metabolic</i> , a clean tech development consulting firm  Visit <i>Pakhuis de Zwijger</i> and the “Cities in Transition” project

**Academic Integrity**

Cheating/plagiarism will not be tolerated. Students suspected of violating the University of Pittsburgh Policy on Academic Integrity, from the February 1974 Senate Committee on Tenure and Academic Freedom reported to the Senate Council, will be required to participate in the outlined procedural process as initiated by the instructor. A minimum sanction of a zero score for the quiz or exam will be imposed.

**Disability Resources**

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and the Office of Disability Resources and Services, 140 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890/412-624-3346 (Fax), as early as possible in the term. Disability Resources and Services will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course. For more information, visit [www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/drsabout](http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/drsabout).

**Email Communications**

Each student is issued a University e-mail address (username@pitt.edu) upon admittance. This e-mail address may be used by the University for official communication with students. Students are expected to read e-mail sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. The University provides an e-mail forwarding service that allows students to read their e-mail via other service providers (e.g., Hotmail, AOL, Yahoo). Students that choose to forward their e-mail from their pitt.edu address to another address do so at their own risk. If e-mail is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to official communications sent to their University e-mail address. To forward e-mail sent to your University account, go to <http://accounts.pitt.edu>, log into your account, click on Edit Forwarding Addresses, and follow the instructions on the page. Be sure to log out of your account when you have finished.