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SUSTAINABILITY IN THE CITY

EXPLORING RANDSTAD – A POLYCENTRIC REGION STUDY PROGRAMME IN AMSTERDAM, UTRECHT, ROTTERDAM AND DELFT

BLOCK WEEK OCTOBER 14-17, 2013

The course will examine strategies for sustainable urban development within the context of globalization and climate change. Competition for investment, global interdependence, technological change, growing income polarization, and environmental degradation are creating new challenges that urban development in the 21st century needs to address.

Despite the commitment of national and local governments to promote equitable, efficient and sustainable cities in the last twenty years, limited progress has resulted in urban sprawl, unplanned peri-urbanization, poverty, informality, and devastating disasters related to climate change. The course will engage students in the academic discourse and real-world practice of sustainable development in cities. Planning policies and design concepts will be examined in different economic, institutional and cultural settings. Case studies will illustrate proactive strategies to promote eco-cities and green development, to retrofit suburbs and obsolete industrial areas through comprehensive regeneration as well as efforts to improve public transit and to build more sustainable communities.

OBJECTIVES

Within this overall framework the objectives of the course are:

1. To engage students in the academic discourse and real-world practice of sustainable development in cities.
2. To develop knowledge and understanding of good international practices advancing urban sustainability.
3. To develop research skills essential for the practical application of these concepts and ideas to a real-world planning and/or design project.

TEACHING APPROACH

The course consists of lectures, independent research, seminar presentations, and project work. Students will explore different aspects of urban sustainability through research and evaluation of international planning approaches and design strategies. The course is designed to provide a much-needed exposure to urban experiments promoting green, creative and equitable cities in several cities in the Netherlands, internationally recognised for their excellence in sustainable design, planning and architecture. The emphasis on international case studies is particularly helpful for students looking to broaden their knowledge on sustainability in theory and praxis, as well as to meet the requirements for an international component in their program of study. Students advanced in their master's degree project will have the opportunity to apply insights from international experiences to their research/thesis project.

Students have a great freedom in selecting a topic/theme for their course assignment. The course is offered with the active collaboration of faculty and staff from leading universities in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and Delft.

EVALUATION

Student evaluation will be based on the following assignments:

Poster	20%
Research paper	50%
Filed work & participation in discussions	30%
Total	100%

Independent research, engagement in discussions during the field study trip and poster presentations of your major research findings are the key elements providing a mechanism for student learning and evaluation. The research paper assignment will require a strategic analysis and evaluation of a sustainable community or initiative in a city of your choice explored during the course. The assignment is a creative, in-depth study of a planning/design problem and its possible solutions with an emphasis on innovative approaches to achieve sustainability at the local level.

CLASSES

The classes are taking place during the October block week (October 14-17, 2013) in The Netherlands. Completed assignments are expected to be submitted to the instructor by December 6, 2013 in electronic format. Detailed information and schedule of activities will be provided on blackboard in early September 2013. ***Please note that this schedule is subject to final confirmation.***

Oct. 14, 2013: Amsterdam – guided tour of city centre & lectures on city planning.

Oct. 15, 2013: Amsterdam – lectures and guided walk of Amsterdam Docklands & IJburg.

Oct. 16, 2013: Utrecht University Centre de Uithof - lectures and guided walks through the University area, and the city centre of Utrecht.

Oct. 17, 2013: Delft - lectures at Delft University of Technology, Delft Historic Centre walk, and field visit to Rotterdam Southbank redevelopments and cultural district.

Oct.18, 2013 (optional): Independent research in cultural districts (libraries & museums) in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague.

READINGS

Selected readings will be posted on the course blackboard site to ensure that they are available to EVDS students in Barcelona and Calgary. A general supplementary reading for the course:

UN-HABITAT (2010) The Global Report on Human Settlements: Planning Sustainable Cities. London: Earthscan Ltd.

Contact Information

For more information regarding the Environmental Design Group Study Program, please contact Dr. Sasha Tsenkova at tsenkova@ucalgary.ca or Group Study Programs at group.study@ucalgary.ca.

The course has supplementary fees \$225, payable to International Student Centre.

Final grades will be reported as letter grades, with the final grade calculated according to the 4-point range. Assignments will be evaluated by percentage grades, with their letter grade equivalents as shown.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	4-Point Scale	4-Point Range	Percent	Description
A+	4.00	4.00	92.5-100	Outstanding - evaluated by instructor
A	4.00	3.85-4.00	85-92.49	Excellent - superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter
A-	3.70	3.50-3.84	80-84.99	Very good performance
B+	3.30	3.15-3.49	76-79.99	Good performance
B	3.00	2.85-3.14	73-75.99	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.70	2.50-2.84	70-72.99	Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies
C+	2.30	2.15-2.49	66-69.99	All final grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements.
C	2.00	1.85-2.14	63-65.99	
C-	1.70	1.50-1.84	60-62.99	
D+	1.30	1.15-1.49	56-59.99	
D	1.00	0.50-1.14	50-55.99	
F	0.00	0-0.49	0-49.99	

Note: A student who receives a B- or lower in two or more courses will be required to withdraw regardless of their grade point average unless the program recommends otherwise. Individual programs may require a higher minimum passing grade. A grade point value of 3.0 on the 4-Point Scale is the minimum acceptable average that a graduate student must maintain throughout the program as computed at the end of each registration anniversary year of the program. A student who receives a grade of F will normally be required to withdraw unless the program recommends otherwise.

Notes:

- Written work, term assignments and other course related work may only be submitted by e-mail if prior permission to do so has been obtained from the course instructor.
- It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/drc/node/46>) Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.
- Plagiarism - Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:(a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),(b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,(c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,(d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course(although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved. While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted. Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence. It is recognized that clause (d) does not prevent a graduate student incorporating work previously done by him or her in a thesis. Any suspicion of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean, and dealt with as per the regulations in the University of Calgary Graduate Calendar.
- Information regarding the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>) and how this impacts the receipt and delivery of course material
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>)
- Safewalk information (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk>)

7. Contact Info for: Student Union (<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/page/affordability-accessibility/su-structure/contact-info>); Graduate Student representative(<http://www.ucalgary.ca/gsa/>) and Student Ombudsman's Office (<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/page/quality-education/academic-services/student-rights>).