

URBAN STUDIES/GEOGRAPHY 394/395

Urban Studies/Geography Sustainable Urban Design in European Cities

Timetable: Spring Session 2008

Instructor: Byron Miller and Cameron Owens

Tel. TBA

Texts (suggested/optional):

Ostergren, R. and J. Rice (2004) The Europeans: A Geography of People, Culture, and Environment, New York: Guilford Press.

Beatley, T. (1999) Green Urbanism: Learning from European Cities, Washington, D.C.: Island Press.

Turner, C. (2007) The Geography of Hope: A Tour of the World We Need, Random House Canada.

Required readings will be posted to Blackboard.

Course Content

Geography 395.XX will be offered during the Overseas Field School, Spring Session, 2009; an extensive, mandatory pre-session will be held during the Winter Session, 2009.

These two linked half courses focus on issues of urban sustainability. The first part of the course, linked to Geography 394, will be held during the Winter 2009 semester (one evening per week). The first part of this course will focus on the historical geography of urban systems in Europe, emphasizing economic, cultural, and political processes. This introduction to European urban systems will lay the groundwork for addressing contemporary debates surrounding urban sustainability issues and policies in Europe. Economic, political, and cultural aspects of sustainability will be considered with respect to urban form, social geography, and mobility systems. Theoretical and practical links between urban, national, and European Union policies, on the one hand, and global sustainability discourses, on the other, will be made.

Understandings gained in the extensive pre-session component will undergird the second half course, GEOG 395, in which theoretical and practical conceptions of urban sustainability will be illustrated and challenged through field observations and interviews with a diverse array of local experts in European cities. Students will be introduced to examples of sustainable urbanism exemplified by select European cities and neighbourhoods. Best practices in subjects such as urban planning, transportation, energy systems, sanitation, recycling, residential and industrial design and many other social and political aspects of European cities will be addressed. The array of political structures, legal frameworks, and social forces that influence European urban sustainability practices will also be addressed so that students will understand the differences between European and Canadian sustainability policies and practices in context. Students will consider the potential transferability of European sustainability policies and practices to Canadian cities.

While overseas, students must complete one oral presentation, three field study assignments, an

extensive field notebook, and a final examination. **Note:** Group travel study is interspersed with numerous opportunities for small group and individual instructor-approved studies. The following components are included: pre-session assignments, group project, on-site lectures; field notes and assignments and a final essay exam.

The final course grade for Geog 394/395 includes these components:

one pre-session assignment	20%
one pre-session group project	15%
an on-site individual presentation(from group work).....	10%
two on-site assignments.....	30%
a final exam (essay question based on field notes).....	25%

500-level courses associated with GEOG 394 and GEOG 395:

Those enrolled in the associated 500-level course will be required to complete all these components but will be held to more rigorous marking criteria for them, including incorporation of more theoretical aspects of geography. In addition, they must complete a proposal for field research, including a literature review, prior to departure. An interim report on data collection will be due half-way through the field course, and a final report resulting from this research will be submitted no later than 6 weeks after the completion of the travel portion of the course.

It is **not** necessary to pass each component in order to pass the course. The Registrar will **not** schedule the Final Exam; it will be scheduled on the last day of the Field School.

Expectations:

By the conclusion of the program, a successful student will have acquired:

- **an in-depth introduction to the economic, political, social, and environmental context of European cities with specific relation to policy debates and initiatives**
- **a theoretical and practical understanding of sustainable development in general and urban sustainability in particular**
- **insights into social and economic processes in European cities, the organization of human activities in European cities, and environmental impacts of various forms of human action in European cities**
- **a well rounded understanding of the relationships between urban form, mobility, and the potential to function sustainably**
- **a broad context within which to discuss the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainability with specific reference to the City of Calgary**