Calvin
UNIVERSITY
Summer 2022

Dutch Sustainability:

Is Orange the New Green?

When faced with sustainability challenges, the Dutch have always innovated their way towards a more stable and resilient environment. Through daily field excursions, students learn about this country's richly varied history of land reclamation, water management, infrastructure design, energy production, food production, and environmental preservation. These innovations are each an important part of understanding the complex interrelationships between Dutch society, technology, and environment. Excursions throughout the Netherlands are guided by short online lectures, visits to historic and culturally significant sites, conversations with local experts, and class discussions. Course assessment is based on reflective assignments and online quizzes. Students can expect to learn some Dutch in this course, but knowing Dutch is not required since many people in the Netherlands speak some English.

IJburg floating neighborhood

Join us Sept 8 or 27 at 7-8 pm in SB 103. Apply here by Sept 30 and here by Oct 4.

Dutch Sustainability (Biol/IDIS 354GS) is a regular 3-credit Calvin course approved for Summer 2022.

Course Setting and Accommodations:
During our stay in the Netherlands, we will be using online lectures and in-person discussions to introduce us to sustainability science, human-environment interactions, and related aspects of Dutch culture, language, and history. These will prepare us for place-based learning activities involving daily excursions to sites that illustrate Dutch answers to eco-sustainability challenges.

You will room with classmates in group accommodation facilities. Our primary home base is Slot Assumburg, a 13th century castle in the city of Heemskerk about 30 km from Amsterdam.


Slot Assumburg castle in Heemskerk


Dutch innovations towards sustainable agriculture

Excursions:
We travel throughout the Netherlands in 9-passenger vans, by train, and sometimes by walking or bicycle. On our excursions we learn directly from Dutch experts on their country's innovations in the face of challenges. We also visit important cultural sites. Class discussions, quizzes, and writing assignments provide opportunities for reflection on what we have encountered and learned in our adventures.


Class tour of the Eastern Scheldt Storm Surge Barrier in Zeeland

Personal Travel Days:
Students have five days (incl. two 2-day weekends) for personal exploration. Extra travel costs for these days are not included in the course fee.

Meets Requirements:
- Core: CCE or Environmental Sustainability tag + Global Regions and Cultures tag
- Biology or Environmental Health & Conservation elective
- Dutch elective
- Engineering basic science elective, sustainability and international designations
- Environmental Science, Environmental Studies, or Geography elective

Course Fee:
The course fee is estimated to be $4000. This includes all travel, lodging, and food expenses for May 2-20. Personal travel costs and summer tuition fees are extra. Various scholarships are available to help offset costs.

Instructors:
David Koetje brings biological expertise in sustainability science, agriculture, and food systems into this course. He will also provide insights about Dutch ecosystems and biodiversity conservation strategies.

Herm DeVries is the Frederik Meijer Chair in Dutch Language and Culture. In this course he will share insights from living in the Netherlands and from his expertise in Dutch language, culture, politics, literature, and history.

Robert Hoeksema literally wrote the book on how the Dutch have responded to hydrology and environmental engineering challenges. He will also share insights from his many work and teaching ventures in the Netherlands.