

Studies in the Netherlands Off-Campus Semester Program

Program Philosophy

The goal of the Studies in the Netherlands Program is to offer an off-campus semester where students in engineering and the sciences and can participate without extending their academic program. This program is open to all students but priority is given to engineering and science students.

The main theme of the program is the environment, more specifically, environmental modification and sustainability.



The Setting

This off-campus semester program is offered in the Netherlands - a small, densely populated country in Western Europe. With Calvin's Dutch roots, this is a natural location for an off-campus semester program. More importantly, the Netherlands is a great place to study issues of environmental modification and sustainability. The Dutch have a long history of making significant modifications to their natural environment. They have drained wetlands and lakes, reclaimed flooded lands, and built massive, environment altering structures designed to protect the land from flooding. Human activities over many centuries has resulted in settlement of the ground surface in much of the low Netherlands creating a country where 65% of the land mass is below sea level at high tide. The Netherlands faces an uncertain future as global climate change and resulting sea level rise threatens their security with more intense flooding. Issues of flood safety, protection of the existing natural resources, and development of new green spaces dominates the environmental conversation.

Courses will be taken at the VU University Amsterdam and students will live at the university's housing complex. For more on the VU University Amsterdam visit the website - <http://www.vu.nl/en/>.



Planning

Engineering students are eligible to participate in this program in their sophomore year. By way of careful planning, beginning with fall sophomore year courses, these students will be able to participate and still finish their engineering degree after four years at Calvin.

Cost

The Spring 2010 cost for this program is around \$19,000. This is only \$3000 above the one semester, on-campus cost for tuition, room and board. Students can use 100% of their Calvin financial aid on this program. The program price includes:

- Tuition (four courses)
- Round-trip air transportation from Grand Rapids to program site
- Room and Board
- Administrative fee
- Program excursions

Additional expenses not included in program fee include books, passport, spending money, medical insurance (required) and independent travel.



Courses

Two courses are required for all students in the Studies in the Netherlands Program. During the January Interim term prior to departure all students will take a 1 semester hour course in Dutch Language offered at Calvin. This course can be taken in addition to a regular Interim course. While in the Netherlands (February through May) all students will be enrolled in STNL 230: *Toward Environmental Sustainability in the Netherlands: Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Practices*. This course fulfills the core requirement in the Cross Cultural Engagement and Global and Historical Studies categories. In addition to STNL 230, students will be enrolled in three courses, taught in English, at the VU University Amsterdam. Engineering students will take their second physics course, a basic science elective (both offered in English specifically for our students) and one humanities course from the University's list of courses regularly taught in English.

Contact

The Engineering Department contact for this program is Robert Hoeksema. He has been taking engineering students to the Netherlands on an off-campus Interim course since 1995.

Contact Information:

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Website

Additional information about this program can be found at the Off-campus Programs website - <http://www.calvin.edu/academic/off-campus/programs/netherlands/>