

[KIIS Netherlands Program, Summer 2023 \(May 25 – June 23\)](#)

GEOG 385 Society, Resources and Climate

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Course Description: An examination of environmental issues and solutions in the Netherlands. Through readings, short lectures, organized visits, and independent assignments, we will learn about Dutch innovations associated with alternative forms of transportation, agriculture and food production, coastal engineering, and transitions to a green energy economy.

Major Topics



Alternative transportation. We will examine how the Dutch get around - by bike, train, bus and by foot – as alternatives to the car-bound culture of the US. Bicycle commuter culture and practices that appear in US often appears first in high-population density cities of northern Europe.



Innovations in food and agriculture. In addition to their tulips and their incorporation into global markets, the Netherlands manages to produce a large amount of food on a small amount of land, much of it prone to flooding. Urban and indoor farming are ways that make this possible for the Dutch.



Climate change: sea-level rise. Past, present and future are bound to the sea in the Netherlands. Examples of how the Dutch have learned to live with the sea are visible in the everyday landscape. From residential homes to massive dikes and gates controlling the movement of water, the Netherlands is the place to go to learn about the ways we might adjust to sea level rise.



Decarbonization. Yes, there are windmills. In this unit, we will learn more about their original purpose, but more importantly, how they relate to the energy and waste management policies of the Netherlands today. How do the Dutch compare to Americans in their incorporation of renewable energy and recycling into their lifestyles? Is it just a matter of technology and planning? Or is it more about the attitudes toward sustainability?

For University of Kentucky students, GEOG 385 Society, Resources and Climate can be assigned 300-level credit as a Geography (GEO) or an Environmental and Sustainability (ENS) elective course

Tentative Course Schedule and Graded Activities

Lecture/week	Topic	Assignments
1	Alternative transportation	Students will participate in a variety of transportation modes while in the Netherlands. For one of them, students will compose an essay reflecting on their experience and observations
2	Climate change and sea-level rise in Netherlands	Students will compile a photo collection illustrating the many ways the Dutch have integrated the ocean, rivers, and flooding into their day-to-day culture.
3	Urban agriculture and food production interviews	Students will conduct interviews with individuals engaged in the cultivation, selling, or cooking of any type of agricultural product or food in order to get a better understanding of the cultural dimensions of food in the Netherlands
4	Decarbonization and the circular economy current events portfolio	Through a range of media outlets, students will assemble materials documenting the key decarbonization and recycling issues unfolding in the Netherlands or in a particular Dutch city today.