

**URPL-GP 2612.001**

**Smart, Sustainable Planning in Amsterdam**

**Spring 2025**

# Instructor Information

* Sarah Kaufman
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* Office Address: 105 East 17th Street, 390
* Office Hours: By appointment

# Course Meeting Times

* 3/6 and 3/13, 4:55 - 6:35pm. 105 East 17th Street, Room 260
* 3/23 - 3/30. Travel to Amsterdam
* 5/1, 4:55 – 6:35pm. Final Presentations

# Course Prerequisites

* None

# Course Description

This Spring 2025 course, including one-week of travel to Amsterdam, offers an immersive journey into the heart of sustainable urbanism. The course offers a unique opportunity for students to delve deep into the city's pioneering approaches to sustainable mobility, climate adaptation, and urban tech. Through a combination of expert-led lectures, site visits, and interactive activities, students will gain invaluable insights into Amsterdam's integrated urban planning strategies, exploring how this historic city has evolved into a global leader in sustainable urban development, and relating lessons learned into our home city of New York.

# Course and Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Critically examine the transferability of Amsterdam's sustainable urban solutions to New York and other global cities
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of various sustainable mobility solutions, including cycling infrastructure, public transit, and pedestrian-friendly design
3. Comprehend the challenges and opportunities in implementing climate adaptation strategies in historic urban environments
4. Compare and contrast sustainable urban development approaches between Amsterdam and New York City
5. Apply principles of sustainable urban design to real-world scenarios
6. Synthesize observations from field studies to develop practical recommendations for urban sustainability

Students will demonstrate achievement of course objectives through:

* + Production of an in-depth comparative analysis paper examining sustainable urban solutions in Amsterdam and their potential application to NYC challenges
	+ Development of detailed field observation reports and visual documentation from site visits, showcasing critical understanding of sustainable urban systems
	+ Delivery of a final presentation synthesizing course learnings and proposing actionable recommendations for implementing specific sustainability solutions in NYC
	+ Active engagement in and meaningful contribution to expert discussions, site visits, and group problem-solving sessions, demonstrating professional and cross-cultural competency

Learning Assessment Table

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Graded Assignment** | **Course Objective Covered** |
| Engagement in Learning Activities | #1, #2, #3, #6 |
| Final Report | #1, #4, #5 |
| Final Presentation | #1, #4, #5 |

## Assessment Assignments and Evaluation

Throughout this visit, students will track developments in their areas of interest within the realms of sustainable mobility, flood mitigation, and urban technology. Following the visit, each student will write a five-page report assessing lessons learned from the course that may be applied to New York City. In an in-person class session one month following the trip, students will deliver presentations of their findings.

### Grading

Students will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

* + **Engagement in Learning Activities in Amsterdam (30%):** Demonstrating active participation and serving as positive ambassadors for NYU Wagner.
	+ **Quality of Final Projects (70% total):** This includes both the written reports (35%) and oral presentations (35%), which should effectively show critical thinking about opportunities and challenges in applying lessons learned to local needs.

### Letter Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Letter Grade** | **Points** |
| **A** | 4.0 points |
| **A-** | 3.7 points |
| **B+** | 3.3 points |
| **B** | 3.0 points |
| **B-** | 2.7 points |
| **C+** | 2.3 points |
| **C** | 2.0 points |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Letter Grade** | **Points** |
| **C-** | 1.7 points |
| **F** | 0.0 points |

Student grades will be assigned according to the following criteria:

* + (A) Excellent: Exceptional work for a graduate student. Work at this level is unusually thorough, well-reasoned, creative, methodologically sophisticated, and well written. Work is of exceptional, professional quality.
	+ (A-) Very good: Very strong work for a graduate student. Work at this level shows signs of creativity, is thorough and well-reasoned, indicates strong understanding of appropriate methodological or analytical approaches, and meets professional standards.
	+ (B+) Good: Sound work for a graduate student; well-reasoned and thorough, methodologically sound. This is the graduate student grade that indicates the student has fully accomplished the basic objectives of the course.
	+ (B) Adequate: Competent work for a graduate student even though some weaknesses are evident. Demonstrates competency in the key course objectives but shows some indication that understanding of some important issues is less than complete. Methodological or analytical approaches used are adequate, but the student has not been thorough or has shown other weaknesses or limitations.
	+ (B-) Borderline: Weak work for a graduate student; meets the minimal expectations for a graduate student in the course. Understanding of salient issues is somewhat incomplete. Methodological or analytical work performed in the course is minimally adequate. Overall performance, if consistent in graduate courses, would not suffice to sustain graduate status in “good standing.”
	+ (C/-/+) Deficient: Inadequate work for a graduate student; does not meet the minimal expectations for a graduate student in the course. Work is inadequately developed or flawed by numerous errors and misunderstanding of important issues. Methodological or analytical work performed is weak and fails to demonstrate knowledge or technical competence expected of graduate students.
	+ (F) Fail: Work fails to meet even minimal expectations for course credit for a graduate student. Performance has been consistently weak in methodology and understanding, with serious limits in many areas. Weaknesses or limits are pervasive.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| A | > 93.0 | 4.0 |
| A- | > 90.0 | 3.7 |
| B+ | > 87.0 | 3.3 |
| B | > 83.0 | 3.0 |
| B- | > 80.0 | 2.7 |
| C+ | > 77.0 | 2.3 |
| C | > 73.0 | 2.0 |
| C- | > 70.0 | 1.7 |
| F | < 70.0 | 0.0 |

### Late Submission Policy for Assignments

I accept late work (that is, having a timestamp later than the time and date on which assignments are due) after the due date only by prior arrangement or with proof of emergency, out of respect to those who abide by deadlines despite equally hectic schedules. You must submit any grade appeals with supplemental information as appropriate.

Late submissions without extensions will be penalized 20% per 24-hour period.

Students must present their final works on May 1, the class presentation day; final reports are also due during that class session (4:55pm). Presentation no-shows will not receive any credit except in extreme circumstances, such as serious medical emergencies.

### Use of Generative AI Tools

Generative AI tools are permitted for specific uses within this course. They may be employed for tasks such as: outlining report and presentation content, and text editing or proofreading.

However, the use of AI for generating drafts of text is strictly forbidden and will be verified using AI detection tools.

**Detailed Course Overview Thursday, March 6th, 4:55 - 6:35pm** Meet in 105 East 17th Street, Room 260

Meeting to discuss course themes and expectations.

Preceding this class meeting, students are expected to have read/watched/listened to these works:

* + Amsterdam Context:
		- Podcast: Amsterdam: Miracles, Money and Mud: https://open.spotify.com/episode/01vBtGLQaymloH974V7RfP?si=de542d2628fa 4835
	+ Sustainable, Resilient and Adaptive Planning:
		- Podcast: Building Resilience through Plan Integration: https://open.spotify.com/episode/02h2UBobUuZuZGWoGvQLi8?si=014dfb7d8ba 8422e
		- Read: Woonerf: Inclusive and Livable Dutch Street: https://[www.humankind.city/post/woonerf-inclusive-and-livable-dutch-street](http://www.humankind.city/post/woonerf-inclusive-and-livable-dutch-street)
		- Read: Nico Larco (2015): Sustainable urban design – a (draft) framework, Journal of Urban Design, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13574809.2015.1071649>

## Thursday, March 13th, 4:55 - 6:35pm

Meet in 105 East 17th Street, Room 260

Meet with NYC Officials for presentation and discussion about New York’s challenges and opportunities

Preceding this class meeting, students are expected to have read/watched/listened to these works:

* + PlaNYC: Getting Sustainability Done - NYC Mayor's Office of Climate and Environmental Justice
	+ ‘I panic when I hear rain’: New York’s deadly basement apartments face growing flooding risk
	+ Time for New York City to Act on Extreme Heat
	+ NYC Thrives as an Unlikely Silicon Valley of Climate Technology

### Preceding Travel to Amsterdam

Students are expected to have read/watched/listened to these works:

* + Review: The Playbook by ams-institute - Issuu
	+ Recommended: Onaran, K. (2022). Urbanism for a Difficult Future: Practical Responses to the Climate Crisis (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003182627

#### By area of specialty:

* + Sustainable Mobility:
		- Pucher, J., & Buehler, R. (2008). Making Cycling Irresistible: Lessons from The Netherlands, Denmark and Germany. Transport Reviews, 28(4), 495–528. https://doi.org/10.1080/01441640701806612
		- How the Bicycle Conquered Amsterdam - Bloomberg
		- Video: En Route to Success: Smart mobility Amsterdam | Intertraffic
	+ Climate Adaptation:
		- Cities Around the Globe Are Eagerly Importing a Dutch Speciality—Flood Prevention | Smithsonian
		- How the Netherlands is Avoiding River Flooding - The New York Times
		- Video: How Rotterdam's Flood Defenses Could Help Save Us All
	+ Urban Technology:
		- The rise of urban tech: how innovations for cities come from cities
		- Video: Rohit 'Rit' Aggarwala // AI for Climate and Nature Spring Convening

### Travel Itinerary (subject to change):

#### Sunday, March 23

* + - Welcome dinner

#### Monday, March 24: Acclimating to Amsterdam

* + - Morning: Class meeting, initiate individual project work
		- Afternoon: Guided walking tour of Amsterdam

#### Tuesday, March 25: Sustainable Mobility

* + - Morning: Meet with Amsterdam City Planners
		- Afternoon: Bike tour and discussion

#### Wednesday, March 26: Climate Adaptation

* + - Full day visit to Rotterdam:
			* Delta Works
			* Maeslantkering storm surge barrier
			* Keilehaven Estuary Park

#### Thursday, March 27: Urban Technology

* + - Morning: Class Meeting/Activities
		- Afternoon: AMS Institute

#### Friday, March 28: Sustainable, Resilient Planning

* + - Morning: Meet with Amsterdam City Planners
		- Afternoon: Sustainable Neighborhood Walking tour

#### Saturday, March 29: Self-Directed Study

* + - Morning: Reflection in small groups
		- Afternoon: Self-directed study
		- Evening: Farewell dinner
	+ **Sunday, March 30: Depart**

## Thursday, May 1st, 4:55 - 6:35pm

Meet in 105 East 17th Street, Room 302

Students will submit a five-page report and make seven-minute presentations relating to their area of study, assessing lessons learned from the course that may be applied to New York City. Guest observers and respondents will be invited to participate.

# Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a vital component of Wagner and NYU. All students enrolled in this class are required to read and abide by Wagner’s Academic Code. All Wagner students have already read and signed the Wagner Academic Oath. Plagiarism of any form will not be tolerated and students in this class are expected to report violations to me. If any student in this class is unsure about what is expected of you and how to abide by the academic code, you should consult with me.

# Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Student Accessibility

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please visit the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) website and click the “Get Started” button. You can also call or email CSD (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are strongly advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

# NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays

NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays states that members of any religious group may, without penalty, absent themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. You must notify me in advance of religious holidays or observances that might coincide with exams, assignments, or class times to schedule mutually acceptable alternatives. Students may also contact religiousaccommodations@nyu.edu for assistance.

# NYU’s Wellness Exchange

NYU’s Wellness Exchange has extensive student health and mental health resources. A private hotline (212-443-9999) is available 24/7 that connects students with a professional who can help them address day-to-day challenges as well as other health-related concerns.

# Class Policies

Preceding travel to Amsterdam, students must attend an orientation session that will discuss logistics and norms during travel. Students are expected to serve as strong ambassadors for NYU Wagner during our trip and will be expected to behave appropriately.

Inappropriate behavior, such as misconduct among other students, will result in disciplinary action.