

ISS 3600 International Field Study: The Netherlands

Accommodating Difference: Culture, Race, Identity, and Migration in the Netherlands

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Course Credit: 1.0

This field course explores, over five days of three hour seminars in Guelph and twelve days in the Netherlands, the themes of culture, identity, migration and integration in Europe as they are playing out in the Netherlands; and it takes place in Amsterdam and The Hague. The Netherlands is generally considered a tolerant, progressive, open, liberal society. Perhaps best known for its early legalization of cannabis, prostitution, and euthanasia, it also has strong protections of LGBTQ+ rights, and, in the late 1990s its generous immigration policies were thought to be a model for the rest of Europe. It has also been an ardent supporter of the post-nationalist European project of the European Union. Not surprisingly then, it has been a popular destination among those migrating across Europe from war-torn African and Middle Eastern countries. However, as in many other Western democracies, nationalism and xenophobia (fear of what is perceived to be foreign) are on the rise. In 2007 the Netherlands became the only country in the world to require that residents who have relocated to the Netherlands from countries outside the European Union pass a test measuring whether they are sufficiently integrated into society within 3.5 years of their arrival. In the 2017 election, Gert Wilders' anti-Muslimism, anti-immigration, anti-European Union Freedom Party was the second most popular. His commitment to shut down asylum centres, ban the Quran, close all mosques and Islamic schools, and forbid the wearing of the hijab in public places, along with his commitment to leave the European Union, appealed to a remarkable number of Dutch voters.

This course takes as a starting point that identity is the product of unique systems of social, historical and political discourse and interpretation, and the course encourages students to identify how identity is contextual and constructed. Adopting a post-modern lens, students are encouraged to find answers to the following questions (which can be asked about any country and its identity politics): **How has “Dutch” culture and identity been constructed over time, and has it changed dramatically, evolved gradually, or stayed more or less the same?**

In answering this question, students are further encouraged to explore: **If migration is an ongoing phenomenon throughout history, how is the construction of identity in the Netherlands related to migration in the Netherlands’ “Golden Age” of the 1700s, its colonial past, role as a leader in the global slave trade, and its experience of occupation in WWII? Is this resurgence of nationalism and the overt xenophobia of the Freedom Party and its supporters a reconstruction of Dutch identity or a continuation of and/or gradual evolution of an existing sense of identity?**

In the course students consider the experience of a recent immigrant to the country, exploring how they might come to find answers to these questions through their lived experience in The Hague and Amsterdam.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Explain how identity is socially constructed and continually evolving in the Netherlands
- Define the broad strokes of history of the Netherlands in global context – from economic and artistic power house in the 1600s forward
- Identify that migration is not a new phenomenon in the Netherlands, with centuries of history
- Explain the relation between occupation in WWII and racism today.
- Explain difference between integration and multiculturalism policies.
- Place the Netherlands’ approach to integration of non-European citizens in comparative perspective, reflecting on how it is similar to or different from Canada’s.
- Describe the relationship between xenophobia, nationalism and the distribution of economic wealth

in the Netherlands.

The activities and assignments associated with this course are designed to foster students' "**critical and creative thinking**", one of the learning objectives of the University of Guelph. To this end, the engagements seek to promote: "intellectual curiosity; the ability (as in independence of thought) to ask useful kinds of questions (rather than the ability always to have answers); the ability to see far reaching implications; the ability to make connections between disparate topics." Promoting critical and creative thinking also means de-emphasizing "accumulation of facts or data and rote learning".

The engagements are designed to foster their "**global understanding**" another one of the learning objectives at the University of Guelph. To this end, the engagements are to strengthen students' sense of historical development and intercultural competence. In answering the questions above in the Dutch context, students will gain some appreciation of similar dynamics at play in other European countries. They will develop a better sense of knowledge of cultural similarities, and differences, the context (historical geographical, political and environmental) from which these arise, and how they are manifest in modern society.

Finally, the assignments that accompany the engagements are designed to enhance your "**literacy**", another one of the learning objectives at the University of Guelph. They "afford a means of communicating, of shaping ideas and concepts, of selecting between different or competing formulations."

Course Requirements:

The Course will be divided into six themes. Students will complete two group assignments relating to one or more of the six themes. The first of those assignments is detailed at the end of this course outline. The second will be provided at the beginning of the course. The individual assignment (Reflection on each Engagement in the Netherlands (Again, see below)) is worth 50% (due May 31st) while the other two are each worth 10% of your final grade and completed as group projects during your time in the Netherlands. The other 30% of your grade is based on meaningful participation in the group activities and in the seminars proceeding the field course.

PLEASE NOTE: These activities are subject to change, depending on their availability after final student numbers are known for the field school.

Activities:

The course (1.0 credits) is divided into six themes that explore different aspects of the construction of identity in the Netherlands, and current identity politics. Students are encouraged to experience these five aspects as though they are a recent immigrant or refugee to the Netherlands. The assignments involve a combination of group assignments (primarily involving the practical lived experience of refugees in the Netherlands), individual reflection assignments and a final paper assessing academic research on the themes of the course.

1) Dutch identity through Stereotype

We explore stereotypically Dutch identity markers: windmills, cheese, tulips and wooden shoes, and "Delft Blue" china, relating them to our theme of migration. Did you know, for example, that the first tulips in the Netherlands were imported from Turkey? Patterns for Delftware were intercepted from Chinese china patterns stolen during the Golden Age of international exploration.

Activities:

- _Day Trip: Gouda – Gouda cheese factory and stroopwafle making; Sint Pieter's Kerk
- _Day Trip: Volendam, Zaanse Schans Windmills
- _Day Trip: Royal Delft Factory, Nieuwe Kerk and Tower, Delft

2) Migration and the Netherlands in the “Golden Age” and colonization

During the 1600s the Netherlands was an economic world leader, and important cultural and artistic centre. However, now this title is hotly contested, given that the Dutch were leaders in the slave trade of this period. What was the role of migration during this important time in Dutch history? How is slavery reflected in art from the so-called Golden Age? How does this period of the slave trade inform contemporary identity in the Netherlands?

Activities:

- _Historical Walking Tour of Amsterdam (When did the city come to exist, and what was its role in the global economy?)
- _Gouda Walking Tour, St. Pieter’s Kerk lecture and study of stained glass windows (the original city states of the “golden age”).
- _Black Heritage Amsterdam Canal Tour (Slave Trade was integral to the Dutch Golden Age)
- _National Maritime Museum* (World Trade Leadership led to International Political and Economic Power; Slaves were a major currency Dutch West India Company)
- _Mauritshuis (Dutch and Flemish Art from the Golden Age – How are Slaves, economic power, and cultural wealth depicted in art?)

3) Racism, WWII Occupation and its Legacy

During WWII Germany occupied the Netherlands. The Dutch either adapted, collaborated or resisted. Threads of these approaches to Occupation are apparent in contemporary debates about migration, immigration and integration in the Netherlands.

Activities:

- _Walking Tour of the Jewish Quarter of Amsterdam
- _Jewish Historical Museum
- _Anne Frank House
- _National Holocaust Museum
- _Resistance Museum*
- _Canal and Bunker tour/Atlantic Wall Museum in The Hague
- _Visit to Canadian War Cemetery in Holten

Discussion with representatives from the Canadian Legion in The Netherlands in Lochem

- _Bike and Bunker exploration along the German “Atlantic Wall” Defense from Scheveningen to Wassenaar incl. the Canadian Ambassador’s Residence

4) Dutch Identity through Art History and Contemporary Art

Some of the world’s most famous artists are from the Netherlands, and their works reflect and refract the social and cultural history of the Netherlands, (including the slave trade).

- Van Gogh Museum*
- _Gemeentemuseum* (Mondriaan, Klee and other Hague School Artists)
- _Mauritshuis* (best of Dutch and Flemish Art from the Golden Age)
- _Rijksmuseum* (Home of Rembrandt’s “The Night Watch”)
- _Museum Voorlinden (Contemporary Art)

5) The Contradiction between Dutch Cosmopolitanism and Openness and Dutch Nationalism and fear of the other

Building on the themes explored in the seminars in Guelph before coming to the Netherlands we explore the juxtaposition between the official “openness” of the Hague, known as the International City of Peace and Justice and narratives of the 2017 national election and the 2019 provincial elections.

- _International Peace Palace International Court of Justice
- _International Criminal Court
- _Red Light District
- _Binnenhof and the Ridderzaal (Hall of Knights) – the site of government decision-making

6) From Multiculturalism to Integration

Building on the themes explored in the seminars in Guelph before coming to the Netherlands, we consider the ease (or difficulty) with which the refugees to the Netherlands might experience integration. would pass the mandatory integration test, and how they might make ends meet.

- _The Hague Market – clothe and feed a refugee family
- _Humanity House – live the experience of a refugee
- _Council for Refugees in The Netherlands
- _Black Heritage Canal Tour

Through working with Humanity House in Den Haag and the Refugee Council in the Netherlands, we meet refugees and explore the kinds of services available to them; what government supports and programs they would have access to; how difficult or easy it would be to make ends meet (What’s the cost of living? Where would they shop? Where would they live?); and what it would take (in terms of finances, time and knowledge) to pass the integration test. But, through engagement with refugees and stories from those that work with them, we also explore the ease or difficulty with which refugees adopt or challenge the dominant construction of Dutch identity.

Seminars in Guelph:

Day 1 Introduction

- Welcome and Introductions
- Review of Logistics
- Dutch identity through Stereotype
- Is there a national identity in The Netherlands?

Introduction to the Netherlands

<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/netherlands/information-researchers/daily-life/netherlands-introduction>

“Who can vote and for whom? How the Dutch electoral system works” Dutch News.nl, Jan 30, 2017.

<https://www.dutchnews.nl/features/2017/01/who-can-vote-and-for-whom-how-the-dutch-electoral-system-works/>

Day 2 The Dutch Golden Age/Slavery

- Reformation and roots of equality
- Economics
- Colonization of Indonesia and Suranam, Slave Trade
- Art, Science and Religion

Foldvari, P., Leeuwen, B. V., & Zanden, J. L. (2012). The Contribution of Migration to Economic Development in Holland 1570–1800. *The Economist*, 161(1), 1-18.

How the Mauritshuis row put the spotlight on the Dutch colonial past. (2018, January 29). *Dutch News* <https://www.dutchnews.nl/features/2018/01/not-black-or-white-deep-divisions-in-dutch-colonial-past-debate/>

Cook, G. (2016, January 15). Were Those Black ‘Servants’ in Dutch Old Master Paintings Actually Slaves? <https://www.wbur.org/artery/2016/01/15/black-servants-old-master-art-slavery>

Is Amsterdam an Immigrant Haven? (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://archive.tedx.amsterdam/2015/08/is-amsterdam-an-immigrant-haven/>

Karabell, S. (n.d.). Lessons From The Dutch Golden Age: What Really Makes A Nation Great? *Forbes*. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/shelliekarabell/2017/12/25/lessons-from-the-dutch-golden-age-what-really-makes-a-nation-great/#4698d1237e28>

Day 3 Racism, WWII Occupation and its Legacy

- Nazi Occupation: What did people know about the holocaust, and what thought processes informed their decisions to protect/hand over Jewish friends and neighbours
- What was it like to live in occupied Holland?
- Narratives of Enablers and Resisters then and now
- Liberation Day – The Canadian Connection
- Relation to Germany then and now

Woolf, L. M. (1999, April 6). Survival and Resistance: The Netherlands Under Nazi Occupation. Retrieved July 3, 2018, from <http://faculty.webster.edu/woolflm/netherlands.html>

Mertens, B. (2013). ‘An Explosion of Vitality and Creativity’? Memory and Historiography of the Second World War in Belgium and the Netherlands. *Dutch Crossing*, 37(1), 41-56.

Mund, H. (2018, April 6). Auschwitz: Evolution of a death camp and Holocaust memorial. *DW.com*. <http://www.dw.com/en/auschwitz-evolution-of-a-death-camp-and-holocaust-memorial/a-43973137>

Marchand, L., & Steuter-Martin, M. (2018, May 21). Montreal WW II hero, largely unknown at home, honoured as Dutch town's saviour. *CBC News*. Retrieved from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/leo-major-montreal-zwolle-nazis-1.4660487>

Velde, W. O., Frey-Wouters, E., & Pelsler, H. E. (1994). The Price of Heroism: Veterans of the Dutch Resistance to the Nazi Occupation and the Holocaust in World War II. *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 8(3), 335-348.

Day 4 From Dutch Cosmopolitan and Openness to the resurgence of Dutch Nationalism

- Dutch approach to “the body” and other manifestations of pragmatism
- Same sex partnerships and marriage
- Cannabis/ Drug addiction
- Legal sex work
- Global leadership in peace movement
- Rise of Dutch Neo-Nationalism

Comiteau, L. (n.d.). Is This the Death of Dutch Multiculturalism? *Times*. <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2080256,00.html>

Wilders equates muslim movement with Nazism Fletcher, M. (2017, March 6). White Riot. Retrieved from <https://www.newstatesman.com/world/2017/03/geert-wilders-far-right-dutch-election-netherlands-white-riot>

Vasta, E. (2007). From Ethnic Minorities to Ethnic Majority Policy: Multiculturalism and the Shift to Assimilationism in the Netherlands. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 30(5), 713-740. Retrieved July 1, 2018, from https://journals-scholarsportal-info.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/details/01419870/v30i0005/713_femtemstaitn.xml

Van Bruggen, A. (2012, February). The Rise of Dutch Neo-Nationalism: Three Explanations for the Recent Upsurge in Nationalist Mobilization. <http://yris.yira.org/essays/311>

Witteveen, D. (2017). The Rise of Mainstream Nationalism and Xenophobia in Dutch Politics. *Journal of Labour and Society*, 20(3). <https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/doi/full/10.1111/wusa.12290>

Batteau, J. (2017). Lessons from the past? Cultural Memory in Dutch Integration Policy. *European Journal of Political Research*, 57(3), 740-758. <https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/doi/full/10.1111/1475-6765.12249>

Day 5 From Dutch Multiculturalism to Integration

Lorasdağı, B. K. (2009). The headscarf and 'resistance identity-building': A case study on headscarf-wearing in Amsterdam. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 32(6), 453-462.

McGinnity, F., & Gijsberts, M. (2018). The Experience of Discrimination Among Newly Arrived Poles in Ireland and the Netherlands. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 41(5), 919-93 <https://www-tandfonline-com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/doi/full/10.1080/01419870.2017.1332376?scroll=top&needAccess=true>.

Vasta, E. (2007). From ethnic minorities to ethnic majority policy: Multiculturalism and the shift to assimilationism in the Netherlands. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 30(5), 713-740.

Weiner, M. F. (2014). The Ideologically Colonized Metropole: Dutch Racism and Racist Denial. *Sociology Compass*, 8(6).

Zonneveld, R., Brand, S. B., & Adams, B. G. (2017). Identity Experiences of Black People in the Netherlands. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 27(2), 141-149.

Rainey, V. (n.d.). First- and second-generation Dutch wonder whether they'll ever be considered locals. PRI.org <https://www.pri.org/stories/2017-05-16/first-and-second-generation-dutch-wonder-whether-theyll-ever-be-considered-locals>

Roggeband, C., & Verloo, M. (2007). Dutch Women are Liberated, Migrant Women are a Problem: The Evolution of Policy Frames on Gender and Migration in the Netherlands, 1995-2005. *Social Policy & Administration*, 41(3), 271-288.

Group Assignment 1 – to be completed in groups of 4 While in Den Haag

HELP! You've just come to the Netherlands, and need to determine how you'll live on a basic income. What is your basic income? Where will you live, and what will you eat, and how will you clothe your family?

You need to create a budget:

First step:

Go to the city hall (Atrium) and find out how much you are entitled to, in terms of government income.

Second step:

Find housing (on Funda.nl. Take a screen shot of your choice) (“te huur” means “for rent”; “te koop” means “to buy”)

You shouldn't spend more than 40% of your income on housing, if possible.

Third step:

Go “shopping” in the Hague Market – find clothes for your family; toiletries etc. Take pictures of all of your “purchases” from toothpaste to cucumbers so you have a record of the cost. ☺

Fourth Step:

Now set a budget for food for a week, assuming there are four weeks in the month. Keep in mind that your family of 4 (two kids) needs to consume 5 fruits and/or vegetables a day, and have at least one serving of protein. Your children need three snacks a day. Add in dairy (milk, yoghurt) and anything else you need (bread?) by costing it at Albert Heijn or Jumbo.

Fifth Step:

Public transportation: Don't forget you'll need an OV chipcard for your family and \$ to get your kids to school/and you to job interviews and Dutch classes.

Then complete your detailed budget for the month; and menu for an entire week. Can you live? In a paragraph or two explain what were the most challenging aspects of “getting settled”; what assumptions you had going into this exercise; whether they were true; what surprised you; what frustrated you etc, and any other observations you'd like to share, relating it to the theme(s) of the course.

NL Field School: Guiding Questions for Reflection on Each Engagement (themes 2-6)

1) Describe an Experiential Learning Related Experience

- a) For this experience, what were my goals as described at the end of the previous reflection under this theme?
- b) What specific conclusions did I want to reach?
- c) In what specific ways is my understanding of those conclusions changing yet again?

2) Examine Experience from a Personal Perspective

- a) How did this experience make me feel (positively and/or negatively etc.)?
- b) Do I believe I should have felt differently than I did?
- c) What assumptions or expectations did I bring to the situation and how did they affect my learning?
- d) To what extent did my assumptions prove to be true?
- e) If they did not prove true, why was there a discrepancy?
- f) How have past experiences influenced the manner in which I responded to this engagement?
- g) How did this situation reveal my own attitudes or biases, toward other people, toward the country we're in etc.?

3) Articulate Learning

- a) "I learned that": Express an important "learning", not just a statement of fact
- b) Explain your enhanced understanding of the theme, as a result of reflection on the experience
- c) Express in general terms, not just in the context of the experience in order to apply this learning more broadly to other experiences "I learned this when..."
- d) Connect the learning to specific activities making it clear what happened in the context of that experience so that someone who wasn't there could easily understand it (here's where having photos of piece(s) of artwork or artifact(s) will help!)
- e) "This learning matters because..." Consider how the learning has value.
- f) "In light of this learning..." Set specific goals for the next engagement under the same theme.
- g) Tie your learning back to your original ideas about the theme
- h) In what ways will I use this learning: what goals will I set in accordance with what I have learned in order to improve myself and/or the quality of my learning at the next engagement under the same theme.

At the end of your reflections for each theme, please add two peer reviewed sources and two other sources (newspaper article, think tank publication, government document etc) that you think is important to understanding each of the themes (themes 2-6 only), and explain why you chose each one. This means that you will have a list of 20 resources and under each resource you will explain why you chose it in several sentences.