



## Environmental Justice, Advocacy, and Urban Regeneration

ENVI-EURO 3005 (3 credits / 45 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:  
Portugal: Sustainability and Environmental Justice

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus represents a recent semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

### Description

In this seminar, environmental justice is used in a broad sense to refer to the distribution and access to green spaces and green infrastructure and the social relations of production and power that shape equitable access and distribution. Variables such as race, class or territorial location impact environmental in/justice and people's access to resources including green spaces, forests, clean air, water, health, education or other resources. While the 1976 Portuguese Constitution recognized the "right to a healthy and ecologically balanced living environment" and the "duty to defend it", it is only once the "Framework Act on the Environment" was passed in 1987 that environmental public policy became an important item on the agenda of policy makers. Students will analyze the politics underlying inequitable environmental policies and the resistance movements built to fight such injustices in the areas of waste management, industry, energy, and territorial management. The focus is on environmental injustices in the areas of distribution of green spaces in urban environments and ensuing socioeconomic and health impacts. Students will also learn about major cases of environmental conflicts in Portugal and southern Spain during educational excursions. The seminar draws on theoretical and empirical frameworks from a plurality of disciplines including environmental studies, environmental science, urban planning, public health, cultural geography, and sociology to interrogate environmental policies and practices and examine their impacts on environmental degradation and the well-being of communities in low-income neighborhoods.

### Learning Outcomes

The *Environmental Justice, Advocacy, and Urban Regeneration* course comprises 45 hours of instruction (3 credits). Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Explain the concept of environmental justice and underlying forces that lead to inequitable environmental policies;
- Name adverse environmental impacts on human health and sustainability;
- Gain country-specific knowledge about cases of environmental conflicts and local efforts to uphold environmental justice;
- Conduct an Environmental Assessment Agency survey to evaluate environmental impacts on delimited neighborhood in Lisbon;

- Synthesize the debate about environmental justice, urban regeneration, and sustainability in Portugal in the form of a critical paper.

### Language of Instruction

This seminar is conducted in English, but students will be exposed to vocabulary related to seminar content through in-country expert lectures and field visits in a wide range of venues.

### Course Schedule

\*Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.

### Course Methods:

This course is delivered in five modules as described below. The methodological approach will be integrative, participatory, and experiential, and will aim to help the student develop a theoretical and empirical understanding of environmental in/justice and urban regeneration in Portugal and their impact on social sustainability, health equity, and the well-being of city-dwellers. The modules include field visits and meetings with academics, policy makers, and advocacy groups.

### Module 1: “The Right to Nature” and Neoliberalism

This module introduces key issues in the debate about environmental justice in a dominant neoliberal context. Students will investigate the power relations between policy-making, neoliberalism, and the “right to nature” movement. Since the 2008 financial crash, neoliberalism has adopted a hegemonic approach which, as summed up by Apostolopoulou and Cortes-Vazquez (2018), has featured “extensive deregulations and market-friendly re-regulations of environmental and planning legislation.”

Sessions and class discussions in this module explore:

- Neoliberal environmental in/justice and policy-making;
- Biodiversity, food security, and socio-economic development;
- Neoliberalism and responsible tourism;
- Environmental justice and gender equity;

#### Required Readings:

Apostolopoulou, E. and Cortes-Vazquez, J. (2018). Neoliberalism and environmental movements around the World after the 2008 financial crash: Defending the right to nature. In Apostolopoulou, Elia and Cortes-Vazquez, Jose A. (Eds.). *The Right to Nature: Social Movements, Environmental Justice and Neoliberal Natures*. New York: Routledge.

Bell, S. and Wulf, F. (2018). Nature is our Right: Framing a new nature protection debate in Europe. Apostolopoulou, Elia and Cortes-Vazquez, Jose A. (Eds.). *The Right to Nature: Social Movements, Environmental Justice and Neoliberal Natures*. New York: Routledge.

#### Recommended Readings:

Fuentes-George, K. (2013). Neoliberalism, Environmental Justice, and the Convention on Biological Diversity: How Problematizing the Commodification of Nature Affects Regime Effectiveness. *Global Environmental Politics*, 13:4, pp. 144-163.

Gearey, M. (2018). Gerontocracies of affect: how the "politics of austerity" have reshaped elder environmental radicalism. In Apostolopoulou, Elia and Cortes-Vazquez, Jose A. *The Right to Nature: Social Movements, Environmental Justice and Neoliberal Natures*. New York: Routledge.

## **Module 2: Environmental Conflicts and Advocacy**

This module provides a historical and analytical overview of environmental conflicts in Portugal. Environmental conflict areas include fisheries, mining, pollution, and rural-urban conflicts over natural resources management. The aim is to develop understanding of the political, social, and economic struggles that shape environmental conflicts and mechanisms (models) of environmental conflict resolutions.

Sessions and class discussions in this module explore:

- Austerity measures and environmental conflicts;
- Environmental advocacy and conflict resolution;
- Mega development projects and environmental conflicts;
- Resource management and environmental conflicts in rural Portugal;
- Environmental awareness and advocacy in Portuguese media.

### *Required Readings:*

Margarida Santos-Reis, M., et al. (2013). Reconciliation of the Conflict between Otters and Fish Farmers: Lessons Learned from Sado Estuary in Portugal. In Klenke, Reinhard A. et al. (Eds.). *Human-Wildlife Conflicts in Europe: Fisheries and Fish-eating Vertebrates as a Model Case*. Berlin: Springer.

Boavida-Portugal, I., Almeida, D., Sampaio, A., and Cardoso Ferreira, C. (2013). Environmental Conflicts in Portuguese Coastal Urban Areas: an Assessment (Chapter 4). Environmental Conflicts in Mining, Quarrying, and Metallurgical Industries in the Iberian Peninsula (19th and 20th Century): Pollution and Popular Protest. Guimarães, Paulo E. and Pérez Cebada, J. D. Available:

<https://dspace.uevora.pt/rdpc/bitstream/10174/12463/3/Guimaraes-Cebada-sesion-02.pdf>

### *Recommended Reading:*

Figueiredo, E. (2004). Struggling for Rural Environment: Conflicts between desires and needs in Portuguese rural areas. WORKSHOP 3—Natural Resources Management and Farm Functions in Landscape Construction Available:

[http://ifsa.boku.ac.at/cms/fileadmin/Proceeding2004/2004\\_WS3\\_04\\_Figueiredo.pdf](http://ifsa.boku.ac.at/cms/fileadmin/Proceeding2004/2004_WS3_04_Figueiredo.pdf)

## **Module 3: Environmental Performance Assessment (EPA) in Lisbon**

This module takes Lisbon as a case study for environmental performance assessment. Students will learn about EPA methodology and will conduct environmental performance assessment through interviews and mapping of delimited neighborhoods in Lisbon.

Sessions and class discussions in this module explore:

- Environmental Performance Assessment methodology
- Degraded neighborhoods and urban regeneration;
- Designing an EPA rubric;
- Land use and management in Lisbon.

### *Required Readings:*

- Ramos, Tomás B., Caeiro, Sandra, Douglas, Calbert H. and Ochieng, Cocker. (2009). Environmental and sustainability impact assessment in small islands: the case of Azores and Madeira. *International Journal of Environmental Technology and Management*, 10: 2, 2009
- Ramos, Tomás B., Alvesb, Ines, Subtilb, Rui and Melo, João Joanaz de. (2009). The state of environmental performance evaluation in the public sector: the case of the Portuguese defence sector. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 17: 36–52. Retrieved: [https://run.unl.pt/bitstream/10362/5579/1/Melo\\_2009.pdf](https://run.unl.pt/bitstream/10362/5579/1/Melo_2009.pdf)

*Recommended Reading:*

Mangen, S. P. (2004). *Social Exclusion and Inner-City Europe: Regulating Urban Regeneration*. New York: Palgrave.

**Module 4: Urban Regeneration, Development, and Displacement**

This module explores the development, displacement, and environmental enhancement nexus. The focus is on “forced environmental migration” and displacement due to urban planning policies. With its long coastline, Portugal is at risk of an increase in sea-level due to climate change. At the same time, aggressive gentrification in metropolitan cities such as Lisbon has led to the displacement of population from many neighborhoods. The module reviews impacts from a number of urban planning projects and initiatives such PROCOM, URBCOM programs, and PER (Plano Especial de Realojamento) (Special Re-housing Plan)]

Sessions and class discussions in this module explore:

- Urban planning and impact on economic development
- Climate change and forced environmental migration;
- Social citizenship and sustainable cities;
- Impact of refugees on urban regeneration;

*Required Readings:*

- Vieira, Inês. (2012). The Portuguese Press Portrait of ‘Environmental Refugees.’ *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 6:4.
- Ramos M..C.P., Ramos N., Moreira A.I..R. (2016). Climate Change and Forced Environmental Migration Vulnerability of the Portuguese Coastline. In: Leal Filho W., Azeiteiro U., Alves F. (eds.) *Climate Change and Health: Climate Change Management*. Cham: Springer
- Seixas, J., Tulumello, S., Corvelo, S. and Drago, A. (2015). Potentials and restrictions on the changing dynamics of the political spaces in Lisbon. In J. Knieling and F. Othengrafen (eds.). *Cities in Crisis – Socio-spatial Impacts of the Economic Crisis in Southern European Cities*, Routledge, London.

*Recommended Readings:*

- Fernandes, José Alberto Rio and Seixas, João. (2018). Cities and urbanisation in democratic Portugal. *Méditerranée*, 130. Accessed: <http://journals.openedition.org/mediterranee/10698>
- Macaísta Malheiros, J. and Vala, F. (2004). Immigration and city change: The Lisbon metropolis at the turn of the twentieth century. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 30:6, pp. 1065-1086.
- De Sousa Silva, C., Viegas, I., Panagopoulos, T., and Bell, S. (2018). Environmental Justice in Accessibility to Green Infrastructure in Two European Cities. *Land*, 7:134. Available: [doi:10.3390/land7040134](https://doi.org/10.3390/land7040134)

## Module 5: Environmental In/Justice and Health Equity

This module aims to accomplish two main objectives. First, students will learn about the Portuguese health system and innovation initiatives in the field of healthcare, in particular “Healthcare City,” a project born out of a partnership between NOVA Medical School and healthcare providers (<http://healthcarecity.pt/about-us/>). The second aim is to analyze impacts of environmental in/justice on health equity.

Sessions and class discussions in this module explore:

- Innovation in healthcare in Portugal;
- Environmental justice and health disparities;
- Healthcare in low-income neighborhoods;
- Assessing physical environmental deprivation in Lisbon;
- Environmental justice mental well-being.

### *Required Readings:*

- Abrantes, A. and Simões, J. (2018). Thinking Ahead: Portugal’s Health in 2017. *Portuguese Journal of Public Health*. Available: <https://www.karger.com/Article/Pdf/488336>
- Ribeiro, A., De Fátima de Pina, M., and Mitchell, R. (2015). Development of a measure of multiple physical environmental deprivation. After United Kingdom and New Zealand, Portugal. *European Journal of Public Health*, 25:4, pp. 610–617. Available: <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/cku242>
- Signoretta, Paola E., Buffel, Veerle and Piet Bracke, Piet. (2016). Mental Well-Being and the Eco-State: A Classification of Regions and Countries of the European Union. In Leal Filho W., Azeiteiro U., Alves F. (eds.) *Climate Change and Health: Climate Change Management*. Cham: Springer

### *Recommended Readings:*

- Crisp, N. (2015). The future for health in Portugal—everyone has a role to play. *Health Systems and Reform*, 1:2, pp. 98–106.

## Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Timely completion of all assignments is expected. Late hand-ins will be penalized. All assignments are evaluated according to organization, analytical quality, depth of understanding, argumentation, and presentation of evidence.

### Description of Assignments:

#### Text Analysis (30%)

Students choose two texts from the list of their course required readings and engage with the main argument in each text. The text analysis should demonstrate the student’s capacity to synthesize arguments, integrate data collected through class lectures and field visits, and provide critical insights into how issues dealt with in the two texts could be approached from a sustainability, advocacy, or urban regeneration perspective. The paper should be 3-5 pages long and should also demonstrate the student’s familiarity with sustainability, environmental in/justice an urban regeneration discourse or methods of environmental assessment.

#### Oral Presentation (20%)

Students will be required to present orally and creatively at the end of the thematic seminar highlighting the most relevant and important issues discussed in class and on the different excursions. Students choose one sustainability or environmental in/justice issue and elaborate

on how course lectures, readings, and field visits have helped (or not) map viable approaches to the issue at hand. Students are also encouraged to provide their own insights and recommendations for how the issue could better be resolved.

#### Environmental Performance Assessment (EPA) (40%)

Students design an EPA rubric, use observation, and conduct interviews with local population and policy/city planners to map environment impacts on delimited neighborhoods in the city.

#### Attendance and Participation (10%)

All students are expected to prepare for classes, attend and participate in all lectures, class discussions, field activities, and carry out all assignments and other activities prepared in the context of the Environmental In/Justice, Advocacy, and Urban Regeneration course.

#### Assessment

Text Analysis	30%
Oral Presentation	20%
Environmental Performance Assessment	40%
Attendance and Participation	10%

#### Grading Scale:

The grading scale for all classes is as follows:

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+
84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
67-69%	D+
64-66%	D
below 64%	F

#### Grading Criteria

An “A” grade for an assignment entails superior (not just “very good”) performance in terms of structure and organization of assignments, analysis, logical argumentation and consistency, and the provision of factual, numerical, and/or historical evidence.

#### **Expectations and Policies**

- Show up prepared. Be on time. Have your reading completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done according to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (those of classmates, lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits, etc.). You are not expected to agree with everything you

hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

**Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook** for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment, and the academic appeals process.

**Disability Services:** Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services at [disabilityservices@sit.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@sit.edu) for information and support in facilitating an accessible educational experience. Additional information regarding SIT Disability Services, including a link to the online request form, can be found on the Disability Services website at <http://studyabroad.sit.edu/disabilityservices>.