



Course Syllabus

Field Trips Course: Environmental Issues in Israel and the Region

Instructor: Dr. Boaz Shacham

Academic year: 2024-2025
Semester: Spring
Course number: 0920.6140.01
Credit hours: 2
Schedule: Mondays (class), 14:00-15:00, Porter school, Room 106
Tuesdays (trips) according to the dates below.

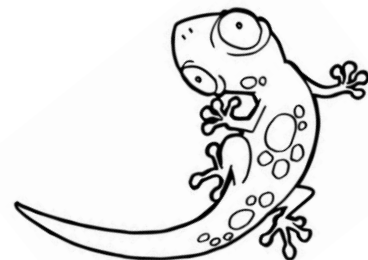
Course structure

- The course is comprised of 5 field trips during the spring semester, with one class meeting before each trip.
- On fieldtrip days students should prepare to be out for the day (approximately 8:00-15:00).
- There will be one introductory meeting at the start of the course to explain the course structure and create student groups.
- Dates and details are given below.
- This is a course of the International MA Program which is also open to students on the Hebrew MA Program (non-thesis track). All course materials & presentations are in English.

Contact information

Instructor: Dr. Boaz Shacham
Office hours: by appointment only
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Email: boazshacham@mail.huji.ac.il

Course website: moodle.tau.ac.il



General course objectives:

The objective of the course is to enable students to broaden their experience and understanding of key environmental challenges through field trips to sites of specific environmental interest in Israel.

The field trips will cover different aspects of environmental issues including physical, technological, social and policy-related topics, viewed via various lenses of locations, stakeholders & organizations.

The course will diversify the learning experience by encouraging study in the field and by requiring students to prepare background information on the topics. The course aims to stimulate discussion and exchange of views among participants and to encourage student interaction and joint academic work.

The Department of Environmental Studies

●●● Porter School of the Environment and Earth Sciences



The Raymond and Beverly Sackler
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ולמדעי כדור הארץ
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Course assignments

- Students will form five groups, one assigned to each trip. At the introductory meeting at the start of the course (see dates below) the trip topics will be presented, and the groups will be decided. As far as possible, each group will include students from each program (international and Israeli).

Group assignment:

- For their assigned trip, each group will prepare relevant material for the background meeting the day before the trip. The aim of this meeting is to introduce the whole class to the trip destinations and learn about the relevant environmental topics in advance. The material will be presented as an oral presentation of up to 30 minutes and will be uploaded to the Moodle on the day of the meeting.
- Member/s of the group will also guide the class during at least one stop on the trip, to be coordinated in advance with the course instructor.

Individual assignment:

- Prepare a summary and critique of each of the remaining trips. Each student therefore submits 4 individual summaries during the course. The summary will be up to 2 pages, font 12, 1.5 spaced. Submission is via the Moodle within two weeks of the trip.

Course policies

- Attendance is compulsory for all trips and class meetings.** Students who miss more than one trip will not be able to complete the course and obtain credit.
- All students are expected to actively participate in class discussions.
- In case of absence for any reason please notify the program staff in advance. In case of absence for a medical reason, the student should submit a doctor's letter.
- Students who miss a trip will be required to submit a paper on the topic of the missed trip, within one month of the trip. It is the student's responsibility to coordinate the topic of the paper in advance with the course instructor. The paper will be 6-8 pages in length and will include references to at least 2 relevant academic peer-reviewed articles.
- Equipment – students must come with closed shoes suitable for walking, a hat and water (and food as needed). Without these students will not be able to participate.

Grading

Individual grades will be awarded according to the following criteria:

- Group assignment: preparing background material, class presentation and guiding during the trip (60%).
- Written summaries (4 x 10%).



Course Calendar

See table below (and Moodle) for tentative schedule.

NB: Dates may be subject to change. Students will be notified by email of any changes.

Meeting type	Date	Time	Location
Introductory meeting	Monday 17.03.2025	14:00 – 15:00	Porter, Room 106
Background meeting 1	Monday 31.03.2025	14:00 – 15:00	Porter, Room 106
Trip 1 – TBA	Tuesday 01.04.2025	Full day	TBA
Background meeting 2	Monday 21.04.2025	14:00 – 15:00	Porter, Room 106
Trip 2 – TBA	Tuesday 22.04.2025	Full day	TBA
Background meeting 3	Monday 05.05.2025	14:00 – 15:00	Porter, Room 106
Trip 3 – TBA	Tuesday 06.05.2025	Full day	TBA
Background meeting 4	Monday 19.05.2025	14:00 – 15:00	Porter, Room 106
Trip 4 – TBA	Tuesday 20.05.2025	Full day	TBA
Background meeting 5	Monday 09.06.2025	14:00 – 15:00	Porter, Room 106
Trip 5 – TBA	Tuesday 10.06.2025	Full day	TBA
Wrap-up meeting	Monday 23.06.2025	14:00 – 15:00	Porter, Room 106
Back-up tour date (poor weather/unforeseen changes): 25.05.2025; 15.06.2025			

Potential field trip topics that may be covered (subject to change with accordance to security guidelines, limitations and site availability): Urban sustainability; Coastal development; Waste and consumption; Water and wastewater; Sustainable agriculture; Biodiversity and nature conservation.

Plagiarism

The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Plagiarism is the use of someone else's work, words, or ideas as if they were your own. Here are three reasons not to do it:

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1. By far the deepest consequence to plagiarizing is the detriment to your intellectual and moral development: you won't learn anything, and your ethics will be corrupted.
2. Giving credit where it's due but adding your own reflection will get you higher grades than putting your name on someone else's work. In an academic context, it counts more to show your ideas in conversation than to try to present them as sui generis.
3. Finally, Tel Aviv University punishes academic dishonesty severely. The most common penalty is suspension from the university, but students caught plagiarizing are also subject to lowered or failing grades as well as the possibility of expulsion.