DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM

Amsterdam is a perfect place to explore the political and cultural issues related to sexual citizenship in a globalizing world. The Netherlands has a history of LGBTQ tolerance that is unparalleled in the world. Homosexual sex was decriminalized in 1811. The Netherlands was the first country in the world to legislate same-sex marriage in 2001, while simultaneously granting full adoption rights to LGBTQ citizens.

The Netherlands is not only a country with one of the longest histories of tolerance of LGBTQ rights, but it is also a place where “social tolerance” is being challenged by the arrival of Muslim immigrants, who bring with them traditions that are at odds with mainstream Dutch beliefs. Thus, unlike the U.S., the right side of the political spectrum can find itself in support of gay rights, while opposing Muslim immigration. There are several scholars at the University of Amsterdam who are exploring the differing political alignments of LGBTQ citizens, political parties, and the plight of Muslim immigrants. Working with scholars who are knowledgeable in this area, students will have the opportunity to examine the “politics of tolerance” in this particular environment and its relation to social policy, thereby allowing them to make better sense of our own “politics of tolerance” in the U.S. The Netherlands is not only tolerant in relation to homosexuality, but it has legalized sex work, engages in progressive sex education, and the government sponsors sex change surgeries for residents and refugees from other countries. Yet there are many issues confronting LGBTQ individuals in the Netherlands that either are not well served by government policies, or which fall under the radar screen of social norms of heteronormativity. Thus tolerance of LGBTQ peoples must be placed in the context of the country’s larger sexual and social ethics and will be explored through lectures, on-site visits, and readings.

Because the Netherlands is in the European Union, it also offers us the opportunity to assess the status of LGBTQ citizens among the member states and in relation to the law more broadly internationally. As we know, several member states have followed the
pattern of the Netherlands in some respects in terms of granting significant rights to LGBTQ citizens. However, there are other member states that have substantially less social tolerance of homosexuality, a topic that students could explore more fully while living on the European continent.

**COURSE GOALS**

Through participating in this study abroad, students are expected to gain:

1) A wide exposure to theories of sexuality and gender identity.
2) An understanding of the sexual politics of the Netherlands in comparison to other European Union countries and the United States, including LGBTQ issues, gender identity concerns, sex work, sexuality education, immigration, and multiculturalism.
3) A deep understanding of some of the problems that Dutch citizens confront who are non-heteronormative, gender diverse, or culturally different.
4) The development of better skills in reading difficult texts and writing and researching about complicated cultural and policy topics.
5) Immersion in Dutch culture and politics, through lectures, excursions, and explorations of the cityscape.
6) A more cosmopolitan understanding of how and why different societies produce different forms of knowledge and policies in relation to sex, gender, and multiculturalism.

As a result of studying sex and gender politics in the Netherlands, students will be forced to grapple with a country that has a very different approach to these topics than in the United States. We will read the writings of Dutch scholars, listen to speakers, explore the Amsterdam cityscape, and interact with Dutch activists in sex and gender politics. In all of our discussions, we will reflect on the different political situations of the United States, the Netherlands, and the European Union in relation to sex and gender politics. A major goal is to inspire further knowledge and questioning about why sexual politics are so differently conceived in the Netherlands and Europe than in the United States.

**CREDITS**

Students are required to enroll in a minimum of 8 credits among a range of options. All students complete the same work regardless of their enrollments; however, they will tailor the existing assignments depending on their enrollment, needs, and interests.

**MC 388: Sexual Politics (4 credits)**

The first course “Sexual Politics” will place the politics of sexuality into the context of debates about multiculturalism and citizenship in the Netherlands. The course will include
a service trip with a local Morrocan organization and an excursion to the Jewish Historical Museum for the students early in the course, in order to illuminate aspects of the history of religious pluralism in the Netherlands. All lecturers will be supplemented by readings on the topics of the day, and all students will be required to read Murder in Amsterdam: The Death of Theo Van Gogh and the Limits of Tolerance by Ian Buruma prior to visiting the country. Historian Gert Hemka and others will deliver lectures on the long history of sexual politics of the country. Other lecturers will address the unique multi-cultural politics of the Netherlands, including an emphasis on immigration and the challenges to traditional political “tolerance” of LGBTQ peoples and other social domains of Dutch life. We will also study the sexual politics of the European Union and how the policies of that body affect sexual politics in member nations.

In addition to these larger political questions, we will also study sexuality education, reproductive health, and sex work in the Netherlands. As part of this process, we will host a lecturer from the International Sex Worker Association who will speak on the regulation of sex work in the Netherlands, and other representatives from ngo’s, which focus on reproductive health, trafficking, and HIV prevention. In addition, we will go on a site visit to Utrecht, to visit the World Population Fund, specifically the program, which is focused on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights internationally.

**WS 204: Introduction to LGBT Studies (3 credits)**

This course is meant to expose students to the theories, politics, and cultures of LGBTQ communities. The course will begin with a trip through the red light district, with the help of a local faculty member who specializes in issues of sexual citizenship. There will be numerous lectures and excursions that examine LGBT issues in the Netherlands and in Europe, particularly the European Union. For the transgender portion of the course, we will not only read and write about policies in the Netherlands but have the opportunity to meet with representatives from one of the oldest sex-change clinics in the world. On another excursion we will have the opportunity to visit Brussels to visit with representatives from the European Parliament who are working on LGBT issues. We will also enjoy a presentation by a local Brussels organization called Rainbow House, which provides social services and support to various identity groups in the country. Another of our speakers will address the situation of LGBT refugees and the response of Amsterdam and the EU countries to their plight.

In terms of course content, we will focus on the unique politics of the LGBT movement in the Netherlands and how it has been accommodated into mainstream politics. Many of our speakers believe that this accommodation has actually weakened the movement by softening its edges and calls for more radical challenges to heteronormativity. At the same time, we will have the opportunity to explore the social and cultural contexts of LGBT movements in the Netherlands, featuring speakers on same-sex parenting, HIV prevention, and LGBT youth. Finally, students will experience the exciting cultural spectacle of the LGBT Pride Parade in Amsterdam, and all of the activities leading up to it. The parade,
which takes place along the canals of Amsterdam, is a world-class event that draws thousands of spectators.

MC 299: Independent Study (1 credit)

Individual guided research.

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**COURSE ETIQUETTE**

Take note of cultural differences and be prepared to deal with some cultural adjustment issues. Learn to say “hello,” “thank you,” and other basic Dutch phrases. In general, the Dutch speak English, but there are situations where it may be appropriate or necessary to show your respect for their culture by attempting to use their language. Please also be aware of the needs and sensitivities of your fellow students. If there are conflicts that are resulting in dissension among students, please ask for assistance in resolving the conflicts from the program coordinators.

Attendance for all academic sessions and activities is mandatory. Students are expected to arrive on time and prepared for each day’s activities, including having appropriate dress and academic materials. Calling home for non-emergencies, buying supplies, eating, getting money and other personal responsibilities are not appropriate reasons for missing class or being late. **Students must use their time wisely while abroad.** Students must contact one of the program leaders for all student absences. Also, illness that results from an individual’s poor decision-making (e.g., being hung over) may not be excused, depending on the circumstances.

Because we are representatives of Michigan State University [and the United States – let’s not be stereotypical] abroad, we expect all students to manifest the utmost in courtesy and respect. **There is a no cell phone policy while in class or program activities.** Texting or checking your email can only be construed as rude while someone is delivering a formal presentation. Of course, there are always exceptions for emergencies, which may be discussed with one of the program leaders. At the very least, you must turn off or silence your cell phone while in class. **Similarly, sleeping or putting your head down in class is inexcusable.** It is your responsible to make sure that you are ready and eager to come to class. Ask someone to be your “buddy” if you know that you have a propensity to oversleep.

Students may choose to bring their laptops to class in order to have access to the readings for the day. In fact, you should either print off a hard copy or have a web version of the reading while in class discussion sections. **Close your laptop and take handwritten notes during the presentation in order to discipline yourself from distracting laptop use.**
REQUIREMENTS

Both courses will require ample reading and writing as you are receiving 8 credits for this program! Students must be prepared to participate actively in every class session or they will receive a warning from one of the program leaders. At this point, all of the readings for each week are currently on Angel. Students will also be given readings on a flash drive, upon arrival in Amsterdam.

The following are the required assignments for both courses:

Pre-Departure

1. Packing for Your Study Abroad 2.5%

Every student will be required to write about what they hope to get out of the program, the challenges they will face, and their learning objectives.

Due: In ANGEL mailbox prior to leaving the country.

2. Angel Forum Postings 2.5%

Students must post a commentary on each of the pre-departure readings on the Angel forum.

Due: In ANGEL mailbox prior to leaving the country.

In-Country

3. Participation and Engagement 25%

By participation and engagement, we mean that students will attend classes in a timely fashion and show clear demonstration of having completed the reading, being prepared for class, and ready to participate in the activities we have designed for you. For each reading assigned, you are required to bring one question for each reading [so three if there are three readings] to class advance to help you prepare for the day. We expect that you will move out of your comfort zone to ask difficult questions and to assist other students in doing their academic work and in adjusting to this new setting. Every week you will meet with one of the program leaders to discuss your level of participation and engagement. In addition, we will have writing labs and collaborative work during discussion sections.

4. Discussion Leader 5%

Every student will be the “lead discussant” once during the trip. This student will prepare a set of discussion questions and will ask the first question of the speaker of
the day. After the speaker has left, they may be asked to play a special role in the discussion to follow. They will also be required to write a hand-written thank you note [cards provided] to the speaker and present it to them at the end of our session with them and thank them publicly for their contribution to the program.

5. Blog Postings 12.5%

Every student will be responsible for posting a blog for one day of the study trip. They should also upload one to three photographs for the day, if not from the class or speaker itself [although it could be], from a chosen spot in Amsterdam. The format of the blog should be the following:

- 1-2 paragraph overview of the day or weekend
- 2-3 paragraphs on the readings/speakers and observations in general [questions are welcome]
- A “message for the day” for the group to contemplate

All students must also comment on AT LEAST one blog a week. These comments should be substantial not just – “you are so right!” – but should be a minimum of three sentences of feedback relating to the blog entry and your own impressions of that day. You may also raise questions for other students. In this case, more is better.

6. Academic Journal 25%

Students will type five reflective/analytical journal entries for each week [minimum of four-five pages per week], which may be submitted via dropbox [preferably] or sent via email if necessary. There should be an entry for each day that discusses the reading and the presentations, as well as an overall assessment of your experience of the week. Included in the academic journal may be insights about the readings, responses, and questions in relation to the speakers and excursions we participate in. You may also contribute reflections on other parts of your experience that lie outside of the academic program, but these should not substitute for your academic work. The academic journal should be well written with care, attention to grammar and style, and not a hasty jumble of immediate impressions. Students will be graded on the seriousness, quantity, and quality of their efforts, as well as on their degree of insight and engagement with the reading. You will not be penalized for going over the page limit!

Due: Journal #1: Thursday, July 12 in drop box by 7:00 p.m.
Journal #2: Friday, July 20 in drop box by 5:00 p.m.
Journal #3: Friday, July 27 in drop box by 5:00 p.m.
Journal #4: Friday, August 2 in drop box by 5:00 p.m.

7. Research Presentation 5%
Students will discuss the initial findings of their research project to the class.

**Due:** Thursday, August 2 in class

### 8. Unpacking Your Study Abroad 2.5%

Before departure, students will complete and discuss an “unpacking your study abroad form.”

**Due:** Thursday, August 2 in class

### Post-Trip

### 8. Final Paper 20%

Upon return, students will submit a 13-15 page research paper to the instructor on their chosen research project. Do not go below this page limit. All papers must be properly documented and researched. The final project will include interviews with local individuals, which may include Amsterdam residents, ngo workers, representatives from local support groups, or government officials. We will work on the paper throughout the semester, and students will be expected to produce outlines and plans for their research paper. During our time together, students will work on putting together a plan, collecting resources, and constructing an outline for their final paper. Upon return, students will have 2 weeks to complete the assignment.

**Due:** Thursday, August 23 in dropbox or by email – before new classes start!
ITINERARY

Arrival

Friday, 06 July 2012
Before 16h30  
Arrive at Airport
Early arrivals can stop by Julia Grant’s flat at Oudezijds Voorburgwal 131
16h30 – 18h30  
Pick up keys and welcome packet at apartment location
Prinsengracht 219
18h30 – 20h30  
Dinner
The Pancake Bakery, Prinsengracht 191

Saturday, 07 July 2012
13h00-16h00  
Walking Tour of Amsterdam
Meet at Dam Square-National Monument

Sunday, 08 July 2012
12h30 – 19h30  
Service Activity

Week 1: Sexual Politics in the Netherlands

Monday, 09 July 2012
09h30  
Casey will meet students at Prinsengracht 219 and walk with them to UvA
10h00 – 12h00  
ORIENTATION
General program introduction and orientation; receive student ID, museum card, etc.; welcome to the program by staff of the Graduate School of Social Sciences of the UVA
12h00 – 13h00  
Lunch
13h00 – 15h30  
Gert Hekma—
History of Sexuality in the Netherlands

READING:
15h45 – 17h15  
Walking Tour—Mattias Duyves
18h00 – 20h00  
Welcome Dinner
Kantijl de Tijger, Spuistraat 291-293

**Tuesday, 10 July 2012**
09h30 – 12h00  
**Robby Davidson**—
The Sexualization of Citizenship: Homosexuality and Dutch Politics Since Pillarization

READING:

12h00 – 13h00  
**Lunch**

13h00 – 15h00  
**Additional Discussion and Workshop Time**

**Wednesday, 11 July 2012**
09h30 – 12h00  
**Marie Louise Janssen**—
The Politics of Tolerance: why Amsterdam turned off its red lights, Part 1

READING:

12h00 – 13h00  
**Lunch**

13h00 – 15h00  
**Additional Discussion and Workshop Time**

**Thursday, 12 July 2012**
09h30 – 12h00  
**Marie Louise Janssen**—
The Politics of Tolerance: why Amsterdam turned off its red lights, Part 2

- Julian Marlowe. “Thinking Outside the Box: Men in the Sex Industry”

12h00 – 13h00 Lunch
13h00 – 15h00 Additional Discussion and Workshop Time
19h00 *Academic Journal Due*

**Brussels and Bruges**

**Friday, 13 July 2012**
07h30 – 10h30 Depart for Brussels
11h30 – 13h00 European Parliament Visit

READING:

16h00 – 17h30 Visit Rainbow House
*an Information Center and Café for LGBT Individuals*
19h00 Dinner
Le Grande Cafe
**Exploring Brussels**
Rainbow House Bar and Return to Lodging
LaLagende on the Grand Plaza

**Saturday, 14 July 2012**
Before 11h30 Morning in Brussels
11h30 – 13h00 Travel to Brugges
13h00 – 17h00 Free time in Brugges (4 hours)
17h00 – 20h00 Travel back to Amsterdam

**Week 2: Sexual Politics**
Monday, 16 July 2012
09h30 – 12h00

**Paul Mepschen—**
From Accommodation to Nationalism: Dutch sexual politics

**READING:**

12h00 – 13h00 **Lunch**
13h00 – 15h00 **Additional Discussion and Workshop Time**

Tuesday, 17 July 2012
09h30 – 12h00

**Paul Mepschen—**
The House of Difference: Multicultural Sexual Politics

**READING:**

12h00 – 13h00 **Lunch**
13h00 – 15h00 **Additional Discussion and Workshop Time**

Wednesday, 18 July 2012
09h30 – 12h00  Laurens Buijs—
Antigay Violence and Discourses of Multiculturalism

READING:

12h00 – 13h00  Lunch
13h00 – 15h00  Additional Discussion and Workshop Time

Thursday, 19 July 2012
09h30 – 12h00  Laurens Buijs—
Sexuality, Gender, and Urban Politics

READING:

12h00 – 13h00  Lunch
13h00 – 15h00  Additional Discussion and Workshop Time

Friday, 20 July 2012
17h00  Academic Journal Due

Saturday, 21 July 2012
09h00 – 18h00  Kroller Muller Museum
Optional excursion for all summer students

Week 3: NGOs

Monday, 23 July 2012
09h30 – 12h00  Louis Middelkoop —
Fleeing Homophobia: LGBTQ Refugees
READING:
• Jansen, Sabine; Spijkerboer, Thomas. “Fleeing Homophobia: Asylum Claims Related To Sexual Orientation And Gender Identity In Europe.” Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2011.

12h00 – 13h00 Lunch
13h00 – 15h00 Additional Discussion and Workshop Time

Tuesday, 24 July 2012
09h30 – 12h00 Movisie—Hanneke Felten
Suicidal Behavior and Prevention Among LGBT Youth

READING:
• Review organization website at http://www.movisie.nl/eCache/ENG/1/15/032.html

12h00 – 13h00 Lunch
13h00 – 15h30 Petra Timmermans—
Prostitution Policies in the Netherlands – a Sex Workers’ Rights Perspective

READING:
• Visser, Jan. “Prostitution policy under construction” (December 2008)

Wednesday, 25 July 2012
09h30 – 12h00 Additional Discussion and Workshop Time
12h00 – 13h00 Lunch
13h30 – 16h30 Veilige Haven, Isjed Hussein—
LGBTQ of Non-Western background

READING:
• Muhsin Hendricks, “Islamic Texts: A Source for Acceptance of Queer Individuals Into Mainstream Muslim Society.”
• Watch a few parts of documentary “A Jihad for Love”: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wRX2Q8GYvcw

Thursday, 26 July 2012
09h30 – 12h00 Additional Discussion and Workshop Time
12h00 – 13h00 Lunch
13h00 – 15h30 Rutgers WPF (Utrecht)—
Sex Education (Yuri Ohlrichs/Laura van Lee)

READING:
• Review organization website at http://www.rutgerswpf.org/

After 15h30

Exploring Utrecht

Friday, 20 July 2012
17h00

Academic Journal Due

Week 4: Gender Identity

Monday, 30 July 2012
09h30 – 12h00

Saskia Wieringa—
Gender and Sexual Diversity in Asia
READING:
• Wieringa, Saskia. “Postcolonial Amnesia In Indonesia And Southern Africa.”
• Wieringa, Saskia. “Gender Variance in Asia: Discursive Contestations and Legal Implications” Gender, Technology and Development 14. (2010)

12h00 – 13h00
Lunch
13h00 – 15h30
Additional Discussion and Workshop Time

Tuesday, 31 July 2012
09h30 – 12h00

Marieke van Eijk—
Alleviating or perpetuating ambiguity between body and mind? Transgender care practices in the Netherlands and the United States

READING:

12h00 – 13h00
Lunch
13h00 – 15h00
Additional Discussion and Workshop Time

Wednesday, 01 August 2012
09h30 – 12h00  Gender Clinic, Vrije University—
The Medical Discourse around Sex Reassignment

READING:

12h00 – 13h00  Lunch
13h00 – 15h30  IHLIA Conference Visit on Intersex

Thursday, 02 August 2012
09h30 – 12h00  Wrap-Up Lecture – Unpacking your Study Abroad Sheet Due
12h00 – 13h00  Lunch
13h00 – 15h30  Student Presentations and Evaluations
   “Unpacking Your Study Abroad” Due

15h30 – 17h30  End of Program Borrel (Drinks and Snacks)

Friday, 03 August 2012
All Day  Amsterdam Pride
17h00  Academic Journal Due

Saturday, 04 August 2012
TIME TBD  Amsterdam Pride & CANAL PARADE

Departure

Sunday, 05 August 2012
All Day  Packing

Monday, 06 August 2012
Before 09h00  Check out & Depart

Wrap-Up

Thursday, 23 August 2012
Before 17h00  Final Paper Due