
IB 495 Business Study Abroad
MBA 687 Special Topics in Economics
EC 308 Environmental Econ in Denmark

UAB FACULTY-LED

DENMARK: EXPLORING SUSTAINABILITY IN COPENHAGEN

Fall Semester 2023 (with travel over Fall Break)
Dr. Sarah E. Culver, Associate Professor of Economics
Collat School of Business, UAB



COURSE DESCRIPTION

This service learning course will use economic theory – and more broadly economic *thinking*—to understand why environmental problems arise and how and why to address them. Economics sheds light on individuals’ consumption choices in the face of scarce resources, the interaction between firms and consumers in a market, the extent to which individuals are likely to contribute toward the common good or ignore it in the pursuit of their own self-interest, and the ways government policies and other institutions shape incentives for action (or lack thereof).

The motivation of this course, though, goes beyond the study of environmental economics. The starting context is Copenhagen, Denmark – the first capital city to declare their intention to be carbon-neutral by 2025. The course provides an overview of the culture, history, business climate, and environmental policy of Copenhagen, Denmark, and the surrounding region. The study of Copenhagen invites students to inquire deeply into why things are the way they are and challenges them to imagine ways that things might be different in their own community.

Students will gain further understanding of these topics by working with UAB’s Sustainability program. Developed in 2013 to serve the university, hospital, and surrounding community, this program aims to holistically incorporate sustainability principles and standards in UAB’s operations, teaching and learning, research and innovation, and community outreach and education. With the goal of becoming a sustainable institution by 2025, students will work on specific projects prioritized in UAB’s *Sustainability Strategic Plan 2019-2025*.

3-credit hour UAB course that includes two main components:

Prerequisites: MBA 642/EC 210 or permission of instructor; Open to undergraduate and graduate students

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- Utilize economic principles and models to address private and public policy issues related to allocating natural resources and environmental amenities
- Demonstrate an active understanding of the following elements of economic theory as it relates to natural resources and environmental economics:
 - Welfare economics and concepts of efficiency and equity
 - The role of property, property rights, and the bundle of rights concept

- The role of externalities, common property resources, and public goods
- Concepts and measures of economic value including non-market valuation
- Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the role of market and market failure with regards to the allocation of natural resources and environmental amenities.
- Gain a basic understanding of the effects and relative merits of public environmental policy efforts, including cap-and-trade schemes, Pigovian taxes, regulation, and public ownership and/or management.
- Recognize the diversity of human cultures and how their relationships to local and global ecosystems effects practices, policies, and outcomes
- Recognize the value of being a contributing member of your community and society

COURSE FORMAT

This is a 3-credit hour UAB course that includes two main components:

- 1) Class Sessions and Course Assignments (before and after the study tour)
- 2) Study Tour of Copenhagen, Denmark: 7-day cultural and business study tour to Copenhagen. Nov 16-Nov 23, 2023; with excursion to Odense, Denmark.

The combination of class sessions and time spent on the study tour fulfills the UAB contact hours requirement for a 3-credit hour course. And while there will be much enjoyment and many deeply personal experiences on the study tour, this is a for-credit learning experience. It is therefore very important for students to recognize that the course is more than a trip and tour.

Students will read assigned material, complete online and/or in-class assignments, take an exam, participate in a service learning project, make presentations to the class, post to the travel blog and complete either a reflection workbook. Graduate students complete a research project and presentation to the class.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Most materials will be posted in Canvas, available through the UAB library or accessed from internet websites. Other source materials will be collected by students during their service learning projects.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Assignments vary depending on student status (undergraduate or graduate).

Assessment of Undergraduate Students	Weight	Assessment of Graduate Students	Weight
Service Learning Assignment	25%	Service Learning Assignment	25%
Assignments	25%	Assignments	25%
Quizzes (4, drop 1)	15%	Research Project and Presentation	20%
Exam	10%	Exam (graduate version)	10%
Attendance, Preparation, Professionalism and Participation	10%	Attendance, Preparation, Professionalism and Participation	10%

Travel Blog and Reflection Journal	15%
Total	100%

Travel Blog and Reflection Journal	10%
Total	100%

The following scale is used to determine the semester grades in the course.

Undergraduates: A = 90% and above; B = 89.995 – 80%; C = 79.99%- 70%; D = 69.99% - 60%; F = less than 60%

Graduates: A = 90% and above; B = 89.995 – 80%; C = 79.99%- 70%; F = less than 70%

Service Learning Assignment

Details regarding this assignment is detailed in the upcoming syllabus section.

Assignments

Assignments will involve viewing materials (reports, cases, internet sites, cases and videos) and completing exercises to build a “traveler’s” level of Danish history, economy and culture; grasp basic concepts of sustainability and economic analysis; and learn material related to the sustainability efforts of Copenhagen.

Quizzes

Undergraduate students take 4 quizzes related to materials in the modules. One quiz is dropped from your grade. Quizzes contain multiple choice questions to assess your knowledge and understanding of the assigned materials prior to a class session. Quizzes are to be completed individually on your own device before the due date and time. See the calendar for Quiz dates. Any communication with another student about the contents of the quizzes is a violation of the Student Conduct Code.

Attendance, Preparation, Professionalism and Participation

Attendance is expect at all 7 class sessions and at all activities during the business and cultural tour of Copenhagen.

Students are expected to come to class prepared and participate in class discussions. Quizzes are used as a pre-work requirement but are not a substitute for preparation and participation.

Students on the study tour are representing UAB and the Collat School of Business. To provide a favorable impression and to get the most benefit from the study tour, students will be assessed daily during the study tour on professionalism and participation. A detailed rubric will be provided. The criteria include time management (attendance, promptness), respect (social behaviors and etiquette based on both US and Italian norms), preparedness (motivation, contribution) and appearance (well-rested, dressed appropriately in business casual as required). Students are expected to be back at the hotel by 12 midnight on each study tour day. Additional guidelines will be provided.

Travel Blog and Reflection Journal

Students will be required to post to the class travel blog while on the study tour. You will be assigned two days on which you must post original content and two other days when you must comment on other students’ posts. Guidelines and practice posts will be made prior to travel. Students will be responsible for the technology tools (device and internet access) needed to post on the assigned days. Grading will be based on a rubric that includes criteria such as timeliness, content, reflection, voice, text layout, use of graphics/multimedia and quality of writing. Training materials on how to blog and additional guidelines will be provided.

Students are required to answer questions and complete a set of reflection exercises during class sessions and meetings while on tour and then complete a final reflection journal after the study tour. Questions focus on specific activities on the study tour and more general questions about the impact of the study tour on the student's perceptions and beliefs. The reflection journal is due at the last class session after the study tour. See Canvas for more details.

Research Project and Presentation

Graduate students are required to complete a significant research project and to present the result to the class. Students will be provided with a detailed outline and grading rubric. The project and presentations are due at the last class session before the study tour.

SERVICE LEARNING

This is a designated service learning course. As such, a component of the learning in this course occurs outside the formal classroom through working with, and learning from, a community partner. Students will be working with the director of UAB's Sustainability Program and UAB's Sustainability Strategic Plan (<https://www.uab.edu/sustainability/about/strategic-plan>).

What *isn't* service learning?

- volunteering
- community service
- internship
- a waste of time

Why do service learning?

- safe place to try new skills
- building skills for your resume
- increase content retention
- "real world" assignments and projects
- opportunity to connect to local community efforts

Assessments of Service Learning

1. As this course is designated, students are **expected to spend about 10 hours of service learning**. The class will collaborate around one service learning project, which will be described on the first day of class.

2. Service Learning Structured Reflections

To evaluate service learning, students are required to write 1 short paper that should include insights that you have gained related to the course learning objectives, how your expectations may have been challenged, and thoughts about the project you undertook. The assignment will be submitted prior to the study tour departure and will be evaluated for quality of reflective thought, relatedness to course objectives, and impact on personal values.

3. Service Learning Presentation

Presentations about your team service learning projects will be given at the end of the semester in lieu of a final. Presentations should include a summary of activities, application of the materials covered in class. Presentations will vary according to the service learning project undertaken and the community within UAB impacted. Each presentation should include two parts. One is a focus on the service learning topic as it impacts UAB and the local community. The second is a comparative analysis of that topic as it relates to Copenhagen and Denmark. Both should use concepts from the readings and data gathered from a wide range of sources. Students will be provided with a detailed outline and a grading rubric.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The course schedule includes 7 sessions (6 before and 1 after fall break) and a 7-day study tour to Copenhagen, Denmark over fall break. Note that assignments may be due during weeks when there is no class session. All class sessions are on Thursdays from 5- 7:30 pm CST in CSB 101 on the dates noted below.

Class Meeting	Date	Content Covered
1	Aug 24	Overview, Service Learning Project, Readings
2	Sep 07	Commercial Composting as a Case Study: Field Culture Compost Guest Lectures
3	Sep 21	Denmark Economy, Culture, History
4	Oct 5	Environmental Economics
5	Oct 19	TBA
6	Nov 02	Study Tour Preparation
7	Nov 30	Presentations/Course Wrap Up

The course ends on Nov 30, so it does not include exam week.

TRAVEL ITINERARY (TENTATIVE)

Day 1 *Thursday, November 16*

- Flight to Copenhagen, Denmark

Day 2 *Friday, November 17* Copenhagen

- Arrival at Copenhagen Kastrup Airport (CPH)
- Transportation to your hotel in Copenhagen on your own
- 6 nights in twin rooms with private bathrooms incl. breakfast at the 3-star **Hotel Bethel** in Copenhagen
- Public transportation pass for the duration of the entire stay in Copenhagen
- **Welcome session** by your on-site coordinator at the hotel
- **Welcome dinner** at a restaurant in Copenhagen to kick off the program

Day 3 *Saturday, November 18* Copenhagen

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Public transportation during the day
- **Guided walking tour of Copenhagen** in the morning, to learn about the city's history, while walking down the small cobble-stoned streets of medieval Copenhagen
- Guided tour of the **Christiansborg Palace**, which is the seat of the Danish Parliament (Folketinget), the Danish Prime Minister's Office, was well as the Supreme Court of Denmark. Also, several parts of the palace are used by the Danish monarchy, including the Royal Reception Rooms, the Palace Chapel and the Royal Stables.

Day 4 Sunday, November 19 Odense

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Public transportation to and from the train station in Copenhagen
- Round-trip train tickets to Odense (travel time: approx. 2 hours one way)
- Public transportation pass for Odense for today
- **Guided walking tour of Odense** as a sustainable city. Sustainability is an integral part of the Danish mindset and Odense, located on the island of Fyn, is often referred to as Fyn's green garden. During the tour, hear about the city's green spaces and the plans on how the city will become even greener in the future.
- Free afternoon for you to explore this cultural and historical city further on your own. Hans Christian Andersen, for example, was born in Odense and his lively imagination can still be felt in the city today. Take some time to participate in the local life while for example enjoying the vibrant local food scene.

Day 5 Monday November 20 Copenhagen

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Public transportation during the day
- Bike rental in the morning (6 hours maximum), e.g. from Copenhagen Bicycles located at Nyhavn
- **Scavenger hunt** in Copenhagen by bike, during which you will explore the city's suburbs in groups and find the six wooden giants (<https://www.visitdenmark.com/denmark/explore/forgotten-giants-gdk1091362>)
- Visit to the **wind farm Middelgrunden** to learn about the project, which was initiated by the Copenhagen Environment and Energy Office after Middelgrunden had been listed as a potential site in the Danish Action Plan for Offshore Wind

Day 6 Tuesday, November 21 Copenhagen

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Public transportation during the day
- Visit to the **Amager Resource Center**, including a guided tour of the premises. Learn more about how the ARC actively participates in the green transformation of Denmark. For example, it takes the city's waste and in return provides electricity, district heating, and recyclable materials to Copenhagen's residents.
- Visit to **Copenhagenize Design Company**, a company which is offering a range of services - all related to the bicycle as means of transportation

Day 7 Wednesday, November 22 Copenhagen

- Breakfast at the hotel

- Public transportation during the day
- Visit the **Department of Municipal Development of the City of Copenhagen** for a presentation on “Copenhagen: Carbon-neutral Capital by 2025”. During your visit, learn more about their vision called “Co-Create Copenhagen” and the work that is done at the Technical and Environmental Administration, including details on their 2025 Climate Plan.
- Free afternoon to discover Copenhagen further on your own and for final discussions
- Farewell dinner at a restaurant in Copenhagen to wrap up the program

Day 8 Thursday, Thanksgiving, November 23 Copenhagen

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Transportation to Copenhagen Kastrup Airport on your own
- Departure from Copenhagen Kastrup Airport to the USA (airfare not included)

COURSE POLICIES

Students must apply, be accepted and pay program fees for the Education Abroad Faculty-Led Program AND register and pay tuition for the course (either EC 308, IB495 or MBA687). No other students or student companions are permitted on the study tour unless he or she is a student at UAB and has met both requirements.

The same policies that are in effect for “regular” courses are apply to this course. This includes the following:

COLLAT SCHOOL OF BUSINESS CODES OF CONDUCT

Because this course will be partially online and some online-only students will be enrolled in the course, the codes of conduct for both the online and classroom types of courses are relevant. View the [Collat School of Business Code of Professional Classroom Conduct](#) to learn about policies regarding conduct online and in the classroom.

UAB POLICIES

While on campus for class sessions or while traveling, students are under the ethical and professional standards and policies of the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

For details and more information, read the [Policies](#) section of the [Student Handbook](#).

The UAB Education Abroad office provides additional policies for the conduct of students while traveling abroad. These are provided when students apply for and register for the course.