ISCI 361/461
ICELAND (ONLINE)

INFORMATION BOOKLET

STUDY ICELAND
Learn about the Icelandic system and its sustainability

TRAVEL VIRTUALLY
Tour a number of national parks, academic centres and energy facilities

ACTIVITIES
Engage with specialists from the University of Iceland and representatives from local communities
VIRTUAL ICELAND FIELD COURSE: SYSTEMS APPROACHES TO REGIONAL SUSTAINABILITY
INDEX

COURSE DESCRIPTION PAGE 2
COURSE OUTLINE PAGE 3
COURSE GOALS PAGE 3
ACTIVITIES PAGE 4
ELIGIBILITY PAGE 5
HOW TO APPLY PAGE 6
FEES AND AWARDS PAGE 6
WHAT TO EXPECT PAGE 7
CONTACT GO GLOBAL PAGE 8
Contemporary scientists agree that solutions to complex global challenges such as environmental sustainability calls for “systems thinking”, the process of understanding how things influence one another within a whole. Systems thinking as an approach to problem-solving argues that the component parts of a system can best be understood in the context of relationships with each other and with other systems, rather than in isolation.

A scientific approach to examining the world that embraces systems thinking therefore demands that we consider landscapes, regions, or whole continents as systems. In these systems, elements such as land, air, water, human societies, plants, and animals interact in ways that influence the likelihood that the system will survive or perish.

This 3-credit Summer Term 1 course (program runs between May 10 to June 17, 2021) builds on ISCI 360, in which students examine the complex interconnecting components that contribute to the nature and status of the present-day system of a country, a region, or a city. We intend to begin with a study of Iceland—as a completely self-contained nation-state ‘system’, Iceland offers a particularly valuable case study.

This course is led by UBC faculty members Dr. Lee Groat and Dr. Denise Gabriel.
COURSE OUTLINE

For 2021, we have re-envisioned the ISCI 361 field course and are bringing Iceland to you virtually! Through our long-standing relationship with Icelandic experts and our on-site travel guides, we will take you through an incredible Icelandic experience.

Students will hear and interact directly with Icelandic specialists, and explore real-world applied topics ranging from human settlement to the role of geothermal energy in the Icelandic economy, from ecological to glaciological interests, and from water systems to agriculture. There is the possibility we will also meet virtually with the President of Iceland!

COURSE GOALS

APPLICATION OF SYSTEMS THINKING

Gain practical experience in applying principles of systems thinking to scientific investigation of a selected region of the world.

GAIN RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Gain research experience through investigation of a local sustainability challenge as a team research project and present your findings to the group.

STUDY YOUR PASSION

Pursue selected Icelandic sustainability topics of your own choice.

CREATE CONNECTIONS

Build friendships and connections with your peers!
POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

- Westman Islands and Golden Circle (here we will learn about geology, hydrology, geothermal energy)
- Skaftafell (home to glaciers and a natural birch forest). Our guide will take us to the glacier and then to kulsárlón – a glacial river lagoon with calving glaciers
- We will engage in presentations by Icelandic specialists at the University of Iceland’s Research Centre in Höfn, and then visit a glacial tongue with a local expert
- Reyðarfjörður: We will visit the highly controversial Fjarðaál Smelter
- Forestry in Hallormsstaðaskógar
- Húsavík: We will learn about whaling
- Dettifoss, Mývatn, Akureyri: We will visit a number of sites of ecological and geological interest in this unique region.
- Blönduós hydropower plant
- Stykkishólmur: We will meet with local representatives who will speak about their community’s efforts to achieve ‘EarthCheck Certification’
- Breiðafjörður Bay: We will take a tour around one of the richest ecosystem areas in Iceland
I AM INTERESTED IN SIGNING UP! WHAT ARE MY NEXT STEPS?

CHECK YOUR ELIGIBILITY AND PRE-REQUISITES

This course is open to students with third-year or higher standing in the Faculty of Sciences. It is recommended that students have completed ISCI 360, Systems Approaches to Regional Sustainability (offered in Term 2 of each academic year).

While the course is suitable for third-to fourth-year students from a variety of majors and science disciplines, preference will be given to students registered in Integrated Sciences.

CHECK THE GLOBAL SEMINAR REQUIREMENTS

- You must have at least a 70% average in your most recent Winter Session of full-time studies prior to application, and must maintain 70% average prior to your Global Seminar departure.
- You need to be a UBC student in good standing (e.g., not be under academic or non-academic discipline) to participate in a Global Seminar.
- You should have full-time student status (as defined by your faculty) in the year prior to your Global Seminar.
- You must have completed or intend to complete the necessary (or equivalent) pre-requisite courses prior to Global Seminar start date.

HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COURSE OR PRE-REQUISITES?

EMAIL: INTSCI@SCIENCE.UBC.CA
I AM ELIGIBLE!
HOW DO I APPLY?

APPLICATION

To apply:
- Log in to the Gateway online application program.
- Select “Search Experiences” and type "VGS" to explore Global Seminars programs.
- Upload the application form for your selected Global Seminar

Students are limited to apply for one Virtual Global Seminar. Interest in a second Virtual Global Seminar will be assessed on a case by case basis and students should contact Go Global directly for more information.

FEES

Go Global is committed to making high quality global education experiences accessible to all students. For this reason, Virtual Global Seminars will be kept at no or low cost for the Summer 2021 season.

The Go Global Fee ($415) will be covered in full by the Go Global Award ($500) and Program Fees will be covered in full by the Global Service Learning Award.

You will pay UBC tuition for the number of credits you enroll in for this program.

VISIT THE GO GLOBAL WEBPAGE FOR THE APPLICATION AND MORE INFORMATION:
HTTPS://STUDENTS.UBC.CA/CAREER/INTERNATIONAL-EXPERIENCES/GLOBAL-SEMINARS/ICELAND-SCIENCE-SYSTEMS-SUSTAINABILITY
WHAT TO EXPECT

A typical day includes a virtual tour around specific sites (Þingvellir, Jökulsárlón). In some cases the virtual tour will be live, while in others it will be pre-recorded due to the time difference. Our expert guide will take us to the centre of the action and course instructors will provide detailed and interactive commentary on sustainability issues related to that site. Students will have the opportunity to interact with course instructors, Icelandic experts, the Icelandic community, as well as other classmates on daily topics.
WANT TO KNOW MORE?

VISIT GO GLOBAL:
HTTPS://STUDENTS.UBC.CA/ABOUT-STUDENT-SERVICES/GO-GLOBAL

CONTACT GO GLOBAL:
EMAIL: GO.GLOBAL@UBC.CA
PHONE: 604 822 0942