



# SUSTAINABLE CITIES

THE ZURICH PROGRAM

# PROGRAM AT GLANCE



UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM



ZURICH



INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY OF URBAN SUSTAINABILITY



ACCREDITED IN SWITZERLAND AND THE US



IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE;  
OPTIONAL CLASSES IN GERMAN



ONE SEMESTER, FULL TIME



12 TO 16 CREDITS



SMALL CLASS SIZES

# INDEX



# 01 OVERVIEW

**Did you know that Zurich is considered one of the most sustainable cities in the world?**

With a zealously protected cultural heritage, urban planning that integrates nature into the city fabric, and a city governance that values the just distribution of resources among its citizenry, Zurich serves as a laboratory for challenges and solutions to urban sustainability. Not incidentally it also regularly ranks among the world's most livable cities.

**The Sustainable Cities Program** explores different facets of urban sustainability: heritage and culture, ideas and solutions for social justice, and urban nature. It is designed for ambitious mid-level Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors who are interested in a program that offers Zurich as a classroom and the opportunity for guided undergraduate research. Its modules draw from Art History, Urban Studies, Cultural Studies, Environmental Studies Sustainability Studies and Social Justice Studies. Students can also take immersive German courses tailored to their level of competency.

# 02 PROGRAM CURRICULUM

The program includes small discussion and research seminars, city-wide field studies, and hands-on experiential learning opportunities in one of many organizations dedicated to sustainability. It offers three different modules: the Heritage City, the Ethical City, and the Green City.



Two further learning opportunities accompany the modules throughout: the **experiential learning component On-Site** allows students to study how sustainability works up close and in practice at one of the partnering organizations across town.

**A semester-long research seminar which we call In-Sight** accompanies all modules throughout the semester to help students integrate what they have learned outside the classroom into structured, well-researched projects that address individual interests, theoretical learning, and practical experience. It gives students a chance to brainstorm topics and to develop undergraduate research skills.

The program culminates in the Franklin **Sustainable Cities Forum**, a two-day student conference held at the end of the semester at Franklin University Switzerland in Lugano. The forum gives students the opportunity to present their original research in a vibrant academic setting to an audience of peers and professors; they may be invited to develop their work into an article published in Franklin's undergraduate journal for an additional credit.



Each module consists of six weeks of concentrated in-depth study in a particular topic area using an experiential, problem-based approach.

## **MODULE I** **THE HERITAGE CITY**

In Zurich, preservation of cultural and artistic heritage is of great significance. In this module, students will spend much of their time in the city visiting architectural sites, museums, archives, ateliers and organizations involved in preserving Zurich's material culture. Topics in the classroom will include the physical conservation of historical architecture, archives, monuments, and places of collective memory, as well as of art collections and the study of their provenance.

## **MODULE II** **THE ETHICAL CITY**

This module explores notions of the ethical city through theories of social and environmental justice, ethics, and urban development, offering solutions on how to tackle social problems such as marginalization, wealth inequality, and uneven access to opportunities for the less privileged. Zurich serves as an incubator for social, cultural, and political ideas that promote social participation, equitable distribution of material well-being, and livable space for all.

## **MODULE III** **THE GREEN CITY**

The majority of the world's population lives in cities, which are often considered hubs of innovation and societal change. This module will discuss how cities attempt to become more sustainable and integrate more natural space into their fabric, addressing topics such as urban nature and biodiversity, low-energy cities, open green spaces, societal transformation and social movements. Zurich is used as a real-world example in comparison with other cities around the world: students visit diverse and innovative projects and meet and talk with experts, urban designers, decision-makers, and stakeholders.



# 04

## OPTIONAL PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Students who wish to immerse themselves in **German** and a bit of Swiss German, the language spoken in Zurich, can study German, as a substitute for one of the three modules. The classes are tailored to the skill levels and needs of each individual student using a diagnostic test calibrated to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.



**STUDY  
GERMAN AND  
SWISS GERMAN**

# 05 PROGRAM STRUCTURE

## Core Modules **(Total of 5 credits)**

- In-Sight: Directed Research Seminar 2 credits
- On-Site: Sustainability in Practice 3 credits

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## Programs **(Total of 9 credits)**

- Module I: The Heritage City 3 credits
- Module II: The Ethical City 3 credits
- Module III: The Green City 3 credits

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## Capstone **(Total of 1 credit)**

Sustainable Cities Forum at  
Franklin University Lugano 1 credit

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## Optional program components **(Total of 1 to 4 credits)**

You may choose to replace one of the three elective modules above with a language course:

- German, all levels (independent study) 3 credits
- Possible publication of final research project in Franklin's student journal 1 credit

# 06 FACULTY AND EXPERTS



Throughout the program, students will have the opportunity to meet and engage with internationally experienced faculty, and practitioners in different areas of sustainability. The faculty are a team of dedicated teachers, ambitious researchers, and seasoned mentors. Together they strive to create interdisciplinary modules that give both a broad view of each topic area and allow students to focus on the study path most suited to their interests.



## **Johanna Fassi**

Art and Culture Division Co-Chair,  
Associate Professor of Art History  
and Visual Communications, Franklin  
University Switzerland



## **Anne-Laure Franchette**

Coordinator of the extra-curricular  
program



## **Gabriel Gee**

Associate Professor of Art History  
and Visual Communications, Franklin  
University Switzerland



## **Christoph Kueffer**

Professor of Urban Ecology, OST  
(Fachhochschule Ostschweiz  
Campus RJ), Affiliate Professor for  
Environmental Humanities, Franklin  
University Switzerland



## **Caroline Wiedmer**

Art and Culture Division Co-Chair,  
Professor of Comparative Literature  
and Cultural Studies, Franklin  
University Switzerland

# 07 HOUSING & SEMINAR ROOMS

Students will be accommodated in a former Jesuit mansion in the heart of the city where they can choose among furnished single rooms, double rooms, and shared apartments. The seminar rooms, which serve both as places of learning and objects of study, are located in two socially sustainable institutions in Zurich.



# 08

## EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAM

Zurich has plenty to offer in addition to sustainability and picture-perfect vistas. Anne-Laure Franchette, a doctoral student in the Arts at the University of Lucerne and long-time resident of Zurich is our coordinator of student life. She will help lead the program orientation at the beginning of the semester together with the director of the program, Caroline Wiedmer. She will be available throughout the program to lend a helping hand when necessary, and to show you a Zurich off the beaten tourist path.



# 09

## LEARNING GOAL

Students will gain an understanding of

- the targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals;
- the interplay of multidisciplinary methodologies to effectively identify the key challenges and opportunities of urban sustainability;
- how to develop critical thinking, apply theoretical concepts, and work collaboratively on projects;
- how to turn knowledge gained in the classroom, the field, and practical work into a thoughtful, well-written research article;
- how to present findings at a symposium under the tutelage of experts in the field.

# 10

## PRICING

Tuition	12.500 CHF
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Housing	5.000 CHF
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### Incentives

- Bring a buddy - 1.000 CHF off the program tuition for both parties;
- Stay on for another semester at Franklin University Switzerland in Lugano - 1.000 CHF off the Franklin University Switzerland tuition.

**ZURICH  
SUSTAINABILITY  
AND PICTURE-  
PERFECT VISTAS**

