**Holy Ecology**—**Environmental Aspects of Contemporary Jerusalem**

Lecturer: Dr. Benny Furst

**Course Description**

Jerusalem, Israel’s historic capital, is a very complicated city to plan and regulate with regard to environmental aspects such as air quality, preserving natural and cultural values, designing urban landscape, and much more. As the largest Israeli city in both territory and population, Jerusalem has made some impressive steps toward becoming a more sustainable city in the last two decades; however, there are still many challenges to contend with. The main theme of the course will deal with development processes in Jerusalem, with emphasis on the causes of achievements and limitations of major urban and metropolitan projects.

In practice, the course will focus on the contemporary environmental aspects of planning, developing, and regulating the world’s most interesting city. The leading discourse of this class will follow the social, religious, and political context of Jerusalem (Israeli and Palestinian) and how these sensitive issues relate to the environmental space of the city. In order to directly understand these issues, the lectures will be followed by short field tours in Jerusalem and its environment, including meetings with

local activists and other actors.

**Course Content**

Lectures (12):

1. Historical background: the development of Jerusalem from ancient periods until today
2. Urban planning of the city: from Roman times to a Post-1967 metropolis
3. Conservation of cultural heritage sites—the case of Mamilla Compound
4. Open green spaces—Planning versus implementation
5. Open green spaces—Some case studies: Train Track Park and Gazelle Valley
6. Environmental activism: the case of the cable car to the Old City
7. Community gardens—a local grassroots project
8. Waste management infrastructure
9. Public transportation network
10. Environmental education projects among Jewish and Muslim communities
11. Urban renewal: from neighborhoods to compounds
12. Jerusalem in 2048—a few scenarios for the open city

Field classes (4):

1. Planning within a sensitive history: the Old City and Mount Zion—the cable car project conflict
2. Mediation of environmental conflicts: Mamilla and City Hall Visitor Center—the model house
3. Connecting different cultures: Train Track Park
4. Garbage time: Managing “holy” waste—the GreenNet plant in Atarot