

# SOCL 395L\_SA: Study Abroad Lab

## Education, Culture, and Society: A Study of Friluftsliv in Norway Spring Break 2026

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The Trøndelag region outside of Trondheim

This course will give students that opportunity to explore the Norwegian concept of “friluftsliv” and its relevance within the Norwegian system of education. Friluftsliv, a term that translates to “open-air living” or “outdoor life”, is a distinctly Norwegian cultural ethos that emphasizes a deep connection with nature as well as achieving physical and mental wellbeing through outdoor experiences. This is a value so ingrained in Norwegian culture that its theory and practice is formally written into the nationalized curriculum of both primary and secondary schooling. Principally guided by Christopher Newport Sociologist [Drew Baird](#) and Norwegian University of Science and Technology Kinesiologist (and expatriate Virginian) [Katie Holland](#), students will experience a variety of curricular elements of Norwegian physical education through experiential learning based in outdoor activities- potentially including but not limited to hiking, snowshoeing, skiing, and touring the city of Trondheim. Students will also engage in brief coursework at the Norwegian University of Science of Technology (NTNU), in which they will hear lectures from Norwegian primary or secondary school educators, and be asked to reflect on their experiences and how they relate to the value of friluftsliv in Norwegian national curricula. After completing this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Understand the cultural origins of the concept of friluftsliv and its significance to the Norwegian way of life.

- 2) Understand how the concept of friluftsliv is codified and enacted within the a nationalized primary and secondary school curriculum of Norway.
- 3) Understand through exploring in-and-around the city of Trondheim, how the concept of friluftsliv learned in schools is facilitated through adulthood by urban design philosophies that synthesize nature into urbanized spaces.

In order to take this course, students must be enrolled, or have previously enrolled, in SOCL 314: Education, Culture, and Society for 3 credits. **SOCL 314** explores the methods and theories social scientists use to study the relationship between culture, learning, and schooling. Through reading ethnographic and sociological texts concerning both formal and informal learning in the United States and abroad and interactive course activities, students will explore the cultural differences embedded in educational systems and experiences- particularly in regard to physical education and how the two nation's curricula address student's relationships with health, nature, and physical activity.

This is a study abroad course conducted outside of the U.S., which means this course will be in a location where the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not apply. Faculty will make every effort to accommodate students with physical requirements. However, the course experience is expected to be moderately physically demanding, as students will experience many forms of outdoor recreation commonly enjoyed among Norwegian residents. Students desiring accommodations for these physical components should discuss the program with faculty prior to departure to ensure accommodations are possible. Also, note some buildings/locations may not be handicap accessible. Therefore, you will be expected to get in and out of public transportation (which usually involves navigating stairs) and carrying your own luggage.

Students will also need to purchase and bring adequate clothing and footwear for outdoor conditions in Norway in early March. This trip intends to, provided conditions are safe, live by friluftsliv-based Norwegian philosophy of “det finnes ikke dårlig vær bare dårlig klær.” Meaning, “There is no such thing as bad weather. Only bad clothing.”

## Required Reading Prior to Trip:

Backman, E. (2008). What is valued in *friluftsliv* within PE teacher education?—Swedish PE teacher educators' thoughts about *friluftsliv* analysed through the perspective of Pierre Bourdieu. *Sport, Education and Society*, 13(1), 61–76. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573320701780522>

Select Chapters from: Hofmann, A. R., Rolland, C. G., Rafoss, K., & Zoglowek, H. (2018). *Norwegian Friluftsliv: A Way of Living and Learning in Nature*. Waxmann Verlag.

Lyngstad, I., & Sæther, E. (2021). The concept of ‘friluftsliv literacy’ in relation to physical literacy in physical education pedagogies. *Sport, Education and Society*, 26(5), 514–526. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2020.1762073>

# Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation	20%
Reading Engagement	10%
Daily Journal Entries	30%
Reflective Paper	40%

## Attendance and Participation

For the purposes of this class attendance refers to attending the pre-travel meetings as well as participating in all group activities. Absence from these group activities is only permissible in the case of severe illness or injury. This is a quick, intense experience and you need to be present for all of it. In addition, students are expected to be engaged and inquisitive. The course participation grade will be based on involvement in group discussions, engagement with the cultural activities, and interactions with our hosts.

## Reading Engagement

For each of the assigned readings, a mini-lesson will be posted on Scholar to aid in reviewing and contextualizing the material, along with a short (5-10 question) quiz. The purpose of these readings is to provide students with the necessary tools to understand the experiences and observations relevant to the course. The readings will not be discussed while in-country due to time constraints. However, students are expected to demonstrate engagement with the material by 1) completing and passing all quizzes and 2) using the readings as a resource when writing the final paper.

All lessons and quizzes will be made available on Scholar at least two weeks before departure. Students may complete them prior to traveling. Completing the readings and quizzes in advance is strongly encouraged to minimize workload during the trip. Additionally, completing them beforehand would eliminate the need to bring or purchase the book. A copy of the book will be placed on reserve in the library, and a short-term loan of an instructor's copy may also be arranged.

## Final Paper

As the summative assignment for this experience, students will write a final reflective paper due at the end of the spring term. The paper should explore one significant takeaway from the experience. The thesis of the paper should articulate a key insight about the implementation of friluftsliv in Nordic physical education, supported by personal experiences, the assigned book, and theories and concepts discussed in SOCL 314.

While the paper is expected to be written in the first person and reflect personal experiences, it must also meet a high standard of academic rigor. This means that the paper should not only detail observations and reflections but also demonstrate an application of the knowledge gained. For students preparing for a career in teaching, this paper could serve as an opportunity to reflect on how the experience might inform future professional practices or classroom strategies.

A well-supported and properly cited reflection should be no less than five double-spaced pages in length.

## **Journal Entries**

To support the development of a strong final paper, students are encouraged to maintain a journal documenting their experiences. These journals serve primarily as a tool for recording, reflecting upon, and remembering key insights. At a minimum, journal entries should include: 1) an overview of the day's activities, 2) reflections on what was learned or surprising observations, 3) general thoughts or feelings about the experience, and 4) connections between the experiences and concepts from the readings or SOCL 314, with an emphasis on how these ideas provide deeper understanding. Journal entries may be typed or legibly handwritten. Handwritten entries should be scanned if necessary.

## **Course Policies**

### **Attendance**

This is an intensive abroad experience. Absences, unless in the case of an emergency, are unacceptable. You are expected to be on time and present for all excursions.

### **Scholar**

Some assignments will be submitted via Scholar, and the discussion board function will also be utilized. There should be no issues with accessing Scholar while abroad. However, it is important to note that the platform operates on Eastern Standard Time (EST). For instance, if an assignment is noted as being due at the end of the day (11:59 PM EST), Scholar will reflect this as 6:00 PM in the local time of the destination.

## **In Class Experience**

Part of the course experience will take place in a university classroom at NTNU, but also the class will take place in what is a living laboratory off NTNU's campus. Every excursion is designed to be a learning experience and I expect you to approach it as such. Students are expected to be engaged and respectful to our hosts.

## **Communication**

Students will be given multiple ways to get in contact with the instructor while in the country in case of emergencies. This will be covered in pre-departure meetings.

# University Mandated Statements

**Learning Accommodations:** In order for a student to receive an accommodation for a disability, that disability must be on record in the Dean of Students' Office, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, David Student Union (DSU). If you believe that you have a disability, please contact Jacquelyn Barnes, Student Disability Support Specialist in Student Affairs (594-7160) to discuss your needs.

Students with documented disabilities are required to notify the instructor at least seven days prior to the point at which they require an accommodation (the first day of class is recommended), in private, if accommodation is needed. The instructor will provide students with disabilities with all reasonable accommodations, but students are not exempted from fulfilling the normal requirements of the course. Work completed before the student notifies the instructor of their disability may be counted toward the final grade at the sole discretion of the instructor.

*(Dis)abilities are most often not visible or easily accommodated. If you need accommodations not explicitly covered through our services, please let me know, and I will do what I can to meet your needs.*

**Success:** I want you to succeed in this course and at Christopher Newport. I encourage you to come see me during office hours or to schedule an appointment to discuss course content or to answer questions you have. If I become concerned about your course performance, attendance, engagement, or well-being, I will speak with you first. I also may submit a referral through our Captains Care Program. The referral will be received by the Center for Academic Success as well as other departments when appropriate (Counseling Services, Office of Student Engagement). If you are an athlete, the Athletic Academic Support Coordinator will be notified. Someone will contact you to help determine what will help you succeed. Please remember that this is a means for me to support you and help foster your success at CNU.

*I also recognize that your success in the classroom is dependent on being secure and taking care of your needs. If you are experiencing any emotional, economic, or health trauma that could affect your performance in the class, I encourage you to contact the Dean of Students, Kevin Hughes, the Office of Health and Counseling Services (<https://interweb.cnu.edu/counseling>), or, if you are comfortable doing so, talk to me so that I can work with you to get the resources you need. Please note, that if you have experienced sexual assault or violence, you should contact counseling or file a report with the Title IX coordinator (<http://cnu.edu/save/help/>).*

**Academic Support:** The Center for Academic Success offers free tutoring assistance for Christopher Newport students in several academic areas. The center also offers individual assistance and/or workshops on various study strategies that can assist you at performing your best in your courses. The center also houses the Alice F. Randall Writing Center. Writing consultants can help you at any stage of the writing process, from invention, to development of ideas, to polishing a final draft. The Center is not a proofreading service, but consultants can help you to recognize and find grammar and punctuation errors

in your work as well as provide assistance with global tasks. Go as early in the writing process as you can, and go often!

You may drop by the Center for Academic Success to request a tutor, meet with a writing consultant, pick up a schedule of workshops, or make an appointment to talk one-on-one with a University Fellow for Student Success. The Center is located in Christopher Newport Hall, first floor, room 123.

### Course Schedule and Sample Itinerary

Date	Activity	Assignment
TBA	Pre-Departure Meeting – Overview of Norwegian culture and education	
TBA	Pre-Departure Meeting – Travel and Language basics	
Friday, February 27 <sup>th</sup>	AM: Depart Washington Dulles	
Saturday, February 28 <sup>th</sup>	AM: Arrive Trondheim Airport  PM: Orientation and walking tour of the city/Scavenger Hunt (120 contact minutes)  Dinner together at Trondheim eatery	Journal Entry #1
Sunday, March 1 <sup>st</sup>	AM: Classroom time at NTNU with Dr. Baird, Dr. Holland, and/or local educator (60 contact minutes)  Approximately 30 Minutes: Transport from Trondheim to Bymarka Park  PM: Lake Hike (180 contact minutes) Dinner together at camp fire (weather permitted)	Journal Entry #2
Monday, March 2 <sup>nd</sup>	AM: Classroom time at NTNU with Dr. Baird, Dr. Holland, and/or local educator (60 contact minutes)  PM: Navigation Exercise at Kristiansten Fortress (120 contact minutes)  Physical Education Class at Public School (120 contact minutes)	Journal Entry #3
Tuesday, March 3 <sup>rd</sup>	AM: Classroom time at NTNU with Dr. Baird, Dr. Holland, and/or local educator (60 contact minutes)  PM: Hiking Trondheim's Midtbyrunden Trail, which provides a mix of urban and natural environments that loops around the city in approximately 3.5 miles. (180 contact minutes)	Journal Entry #4
Wednesday, March 4 <sup>th</sup>	AM: Classroom time at NTNU with Dr. Baird, Dr. Holland, and/or local educator (60 contact minutes)  Approximately 20 Minutes: Transport from Trondheim to Bymarka  PM: Cross country skiing or hiking at Bymarka (180 contact minutes) [Weather Dependent; Trondheim Ski Club]	Journal Entry #5
Thursday, March 5 <sup>th</sup>	AM: Classroom time at NTNU with Dr. Baird, Dr. Holland, and/or local educator (60 contact minutes)  PM: Physical Education Class at Public School	Journal Entry #6

Friday, March 6 <sup>th</sup>	<p>AM: Classroom time at NTNU with Dr. Baird, Dr. Holland, and/or local educator (60 contact minutes)</p> <p>Approximately 10 Minutes: Transport from Trondheim to Tempe Hovedbane Park</p> <p>PM: Kayaking the Nidelva River through a mix of urban and natural environments through the cityscape of Trondheim (180 contact minutes) followed by optional sauna time</p>	Journal Entry #7
Saturday, March 7 <sup>th</sup>	<p>AM: Free morning</p> <p>Approximately 15 Minutes: Transport from Trondheim to Theisendammen Park</p> <p>PM: Various outdoor activities Bymarka</p>	
Sunday, March 8 <sup>th</sup>	<p>Departure to airport via shuttle</p> <p>Return to Newport News</p>	
TBA	Group Wrap Up and Discussion	
Friday April 24th	Final Paper and Journal Entry	Final Paper and Journal Entry Submission
<b>Aggregate Contact Minutes</b>	1,700 minutes	

*\*\* Agenda is preliminary. A more finalized schedule will be given prior to departure.*