



India

Sustainability in Practice in Auroville

Fall/Spring Semesters

Build ecological and sustainable living skills and learn about Indian and community culture in Auroville, “a city the earth needs” on the tropical coast of Tamil Nadu. Examine and build field experience in habitat regeneration, women’s empowerment, and ecological literacy in one of the world’s largest and most diverse intentional communities. Design and complete an internship in organic farming, renewable energy systems, organic farming, women’s empowerment, teaching, medicinal use of indigenous plants, or another topic of interest, and take part in holistic living practices, such as yoga, and consensus decision-making.



Academic/experiential courses take place in outdoor classrooms.



Internship opportunities include organic gardening, sustainable development, teaching, green building, and women’s empowerment.

Program Highlights

- ☀ Explore Auroville, home to one of the world’s largest solar dishes, the Center for Renewable Energy, and an extremely productive tropical habitat restored from complete ecological disaster
- ☀ Engage in service learning that benefits local communities: perform habitat restoration, intern in over 13 types of organic farms, teach in village schools, and work with village action groups to build understanding of global sustainability issues
- ☀ Overnight at Sri Ramanamaharshi’s Ashram and climb Arunchala Mountain, locally believed to be the body of the Hindu God Shiva
- ☀ Experience a guided sacred solo at Hampi, the ancient capital of the Vijayanagar Empire, site of thousands of temples, ruins, species preservation projects, and a UNESCO World Heritage site

Academic Credit and Program Dates

Earn 16 transferable credits through University of Massachusetts—Amherst

Spring January 23 - May 2 (subject to change)

Fall September 13 - December 19 (subject to change)



Living Routes is an independent, non-profit educational organization whose academic programs are accredited by Living Routes.

Auroville as “Ecovillage”

Founded in 1968, with the intention of realizing human unity, Auroville is now home to approximately 2,000 individuals from over 40 nations around the world. Inspired by the vision of Mira Alfassa (a.k.a. the “Mother”), and the great Indian activist/mystic, Sri Aurobindo, Auroville is an international township which aims to sustainably support 50,000 people. The community is a pioneer in many emerging fields such as reforestation and habitat restoration, appropriate technology, alternative building, organic farming, educational projects, and more. Auroville offers an integrated model of sustainable and spiritual living for the 21st century that unites ecological, socio-cultural, and contemplative practices.



Mindfulness practices help cultivate personal sustainability.

Application Deadlines

(Rolling admissions, contact us for late availability)

Fall March 31
 Spring October 31

Cost (subject to change)

Tuition, program costs, room and board, in-country travel. \$13,400
~~Living Routes~~ credit included

Faculty

Tanya Elder, Ph.D., Technology and Social Change, University of Linköping, Sweden

After teaching communication and social science at The American University of Paris, Elder is looking forward to returning to Auroville, where she spent much of her childhood. She has worked in development and social services in Senegal, and also conducted ethnographic research in Mali, Ghana, and Burkina Faso. Her research interests include comparative analysis of civil society and NGOs, media and communication for development, sustainability studies and human unity, and identity and culture.

Jake Pollack, M.A., Integrative Health Studies, California Institute of Integral Studies; B.A., Grinnell College

Pollack has lectured in Fundamentals of Integrative Medicine, Global Health Systems, and Ethics of Healing in the Integrative Health Studies program at the California Institute of Integral Studies. His research includes the 20th century transformations of South Asian traditions of yoga and healing, especially the professionalization of yoga therapy, and the globalization of Siddha medicine and Ayurveda. He has also taught yoga and worked as a yoga therapist for over six years in various clinical settings.

Kundan Singh, Ph.d Cand., Humanities, California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS); M.A., Applied Psychology, University of Delhi
 Singh divides his time as faculty for both Living Routes and CIIS, where he is completing his dissertation entitled, “The Evolution of Integral Yoga.” His academic interests include adaptation and secularization of spiritual practice for inner and outer transformation and building a new consciousness for global and local social change. Author of several book chapters and journal articles, his areas of research include integral yoga, spirituality and social action, globalization, personal responsibility and social change.

Tlaloc Tokuda, M.A., Environmental Education, University of Hawai‘i Manoa

Tokuda has spent his life working for social justice and environmental change. His work in diverse regions of the world includes research on reforestation in Auroville for his master’s degree and working as solar technician in Micronesia, and he has studied solar energy and globalization at the University of Hawai‘i. Tokuda has taught ecological sustainable development and worked for Oxfam in Australia. He returned to Auroville in 2005 where he has been active in ongoing tsunami relief efforts.

Courses

Group Dynamics (Comm 352). 4 CR
 Learn to recognize and analyze the physical, social, economic, political, ethical, and spiritual elements that make up sustainable communities. Students build strong conceptual frameworks and have opportunities for real-world experience by developing a learning community and engaging with established host communities.

Global and Local Sustainable Living (Env. Design 592A). 4 CR
 Study the role of human history, language, education, physical landscape, society, and world view on shaping human-place relations. Explore ways of strengthening these connections through use of ecological footprint analysis, ecological literacy, mindful awareness, community/societal action, and systems thinking.

Applications and Practices of Sustainable Living (Honors 397I). 4 CR
 This field-based experience, combined with readings, dialogue, reflection and a project paper, introduces you to the history, methods, and meanings of sustainable development. Students select, implement, record, and evaluate an internship project in sustainable development.

Body, Mind, and Spirit: Cultivating Personal Sustainability (Int’l Ed 292C) 4 CR
 Study the importance of world views and how they affect human behavior and the earth, and gain an appreciation for the historical role of religions and spirituality in creating culture. In addition to seminars, readings, reflective journaling, and discussion on philosophical and spiritual movements that link inner transformation with political and environmental action, this course explores how practices such as yoga and meditation, holistic health, and rituals expand perceptions about who we are and how we live.