



University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

Engineers and scientists of the 21st century must be prepared to consider water resource management as an increasingly global concern. This includes understanding how water resources are managed in other parts of the world under vastly different social, political, and environmental circumstances.

College of Engineering

To introduce students to new perspectives in water management, IIHR—Hydroscience & Engineering offers a three-week study abroad program, International Perspectives in Water Resources Planning. The annual program allows students to visit a country or region of the world for in-depth exposure to historical, cultural, social, economic, ethical, environmental, and political conditions that impact water resources projects in the area. For the last five years, the traditional IIHR course was organized in cooperation with Department of Geography and UI International Programs, under the title Development of Resilient and Sustainable Agricultural Watersheds. Our hosts in India was the Sehgal Foundation.



Course Details

International Perspectives starts with preparatory lectures on the University of Iowa campus. The trip is conducted between semesters, led by one or more IIHR faculty members with academic appointments in the UI Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. During the trip, students attend seminars by local water resources experts, with special emphasis on socio-economic and environmental impacts; planning; rehabilitation programs and problems; and legal, cultural, and institutional aspects of water resources projects. The group also

visits operational water resources projects, gaining firsthand appreciation of the country's water-related problems and solutions. Following the trip, participants complete post-visit written reports.

The most recent offering of the University of Iowa Winterim Program coincided with several anniversary events at the home and host institutions:

- The sixth offering of the water resources India Winterim Course
- The 11th offering of the India Winterim Program, rewarded with the Institute of International Education's prestigious Heiskell Award
- Sixteenth year of activity for the Sehgal Foundation (our course host in India)



Last modified on November 15th, 2018

Posted on August 28th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1
 - Day 2
 - Day 3
 - Day 4
 - Day 5
 - Day 6
 - Day 7
 - Day 8
 - Day 9
 - Day 10
 - Day 11
 - Day 12

- Day 13
- Day 14
- Day 15
- Day 16
- Participants

-

• Recent Posts

- Hello world!

• Recent Comments

- A WordPress Commenter on Hello world!

• Archives

- August 2018

• Categories

- Uncategorized

• Meta

- Log in
- Entries feed
- Comments feed
- WordPress.org



University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

Pre-course activities

Diwali

(Oct. 19, 2015)

Festival thrown by the Indian Student Alliance

Orientation Meeting

(Oct. 25–26, 2017)

Discussion of pre-departure and in-country matters

First Class Meeting: Introduction of the Team and Project

(Nov. 2, 2017)

Course history

Team introduction

Course itinerary and objectives

Second Class Meeting: Pre-departure Discussions

(Nov. 30, 2017)

Health aspects

Academic aspects

Logistical aspects

Course Trip

(Dec. 27, 2017–Jan. 14, 2018)

Last modified on August 28th, 2018

Posted on August 28th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1
 - Day 2
 - Day 3
 - Day 4
 - Day 5
 - Day 6
 - Day 7
 - Day 8
 - Day 9
 - Day 10
 - Day 11
 - Day 12
 - Day 13
 - Day 14
 - Day 15
 - Day 16
 - Participants

-

• Recent Posts

- Hello world!



University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

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Last modified on August 28th, 2018

Posted on August 28th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1
 - Day 2
 - Day 3
 - Day 4
 - Day 5



University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

December 27th – 28th – Travel to India

December 29th – Orientation

December 30th – South Delhi Guided tour

December 31st – Gandhi-Akshardham

January 1st – Tiered Shopping

January 2nd – Group Mewat Tour

January 3rd – Sehgal Foundation Office Day 1

January 4th – Field Day 1

January 5th – Field Day 2

January 6th – Old Delhi Guided Tour

January 7th – Delhi Sightseeing

January 8th – Field Day 3

January 9th – Sehgal Foundation Office Day 2

January 10th – Final Projects

January 11th – Travel to Jaipur

January 12th – Jaipur

January 13th – Agra

January 14th – Travel Home Day

IIHR India Winterim Course 2017-2018: Water Poverty in Rural India						
Monday 25-Dec	Tuesday 26-Dec	Wednesday 27-Dec	Thursday 28-Dec	Friday 29-Dec	Saturday 30-Dec	Sunday 31-Dec
		Report Iowa City for Chicago Airport (early morning)	Arrive Delhi (Evening)	Sahgal Orientation (PM)	Sightseeing Delhi (Guided Tour)	Sightseeing Delhi (Guided Tour)
Monday 1-Jan	Tuesday 2-Jan	Wednesday 3-Jan	Thursday 4-Jan	Friday 5-Jan	Saturday 6-Jan	Sunday 7-Jan
Sightseeing Delhi (Self-guided Tour) (Project planning)	Group Site Visit to Meerut	Office Day -1-	Field Day -1-	Field Day -2-	Sightseeing Delhi (Guided Tour)	Sightseeing Delhi (Self-guided Tour)
Monday 8-Jan	Tuesday 9-Jan	Wednesday 10-Jan	Thursday 11-Jan	Friday 12-Jan	Saturday 13-Jan	Sunday 14-Jan
Field Day -3-	Office Day -2-	Final Project Presentations at Sahgal (PM)	Travel to Jaipur Amber Fort	Jaipur Sightseeing Travel to Agra	Agra Fort Taj Mahal Return to Gurgaon	Project closure Depart for Delhi Airport (Evening)
Monday 15-Jan						
Arrive Chicago Return Iowa City						

IIHR India Winterim Course: Water Poverty
in Rural India

Last modified on August 29th, 2018

Posted on August 28th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1
 - Day 2
 - Day 3
 - Day 4
 - Day 5
 - Day 6
 - Day 7
 - Day 8
 - Day 9
 - Day 10
 - Day 11
 - Day 12
 - Day 13
 - Day 14
 - Day 15
 - Day 16

◦ Participants

Search

Recent Posts

◦ Hello world!

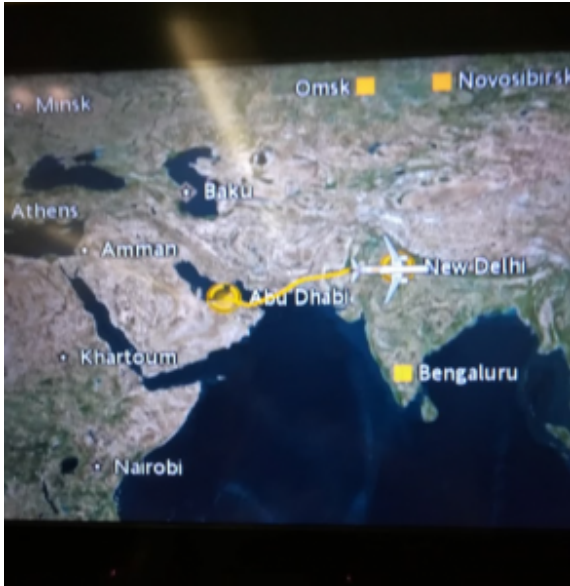
Recent Comments



University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

On Wednesday, December 27th we got off to a cold start at -6 deg F at 4am in Iowa City. All the India Winterim classes loaded onto two buses and headed out towards Chicago, very eager to leave Iowa for the balmy Indian climate. Unfortunately, the cold wasn't just inconvenient, but also meant that one of the buses had issues with their biodiesel fuel freezing.



After having to drive 20 mph on the shoulder of I-88 for miles, struggling to keep the fuel warmed up, and finally transferring to a new bus at the DeKalb Oasis, we made it to the airport 2 hours behind schedule. We originally planned to arrive at the airport 4 hours early, leaving us 2 hours to get to our terminal, but that's not very much time for O'Hare International Airport two days after Christmas. After fretfully waiting in many lines, however, everyone made it right as they were beginning to board the plane. But our journey was just beginning!! Next we sat on our airplane. For a long time, 13 hours to be precise. The food was really good for plane food! We arrived at the Abu Dhabi airport where we enjoyed a two hour layover, getting the opportunity to stretch our legs and get refreshed. The 3.5 hour flight from Abu Dhabi to Delhi seemed very short compared to our first flight that day.



We thought we were home free when we reached the airport in Delhi, but unfortunately our endurance and travel-wits were tested again when two pieces of luggage were found to be missing! Marian tried for several hours to locate the luggage and figure out at what point it was lost, but with no success. After some struggle locating our bus, we finally headed out towards our final destination at the Sehgal Foundation, soaking in the sights of India for the first time slightly deliriously due to sleep deprivation. After around 33 hours total of travel time, it is safe to say that no one had any trouble falling right asleep as soon as we arrived to our temporary home.

Last modified on September 18th, 2018

Posted on September 18th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1
 - Day 2
 - Day 3
 - Day 4
 - Day 5
 - Day 6
 - Day 7
 - Day 8
 - Day 9
 - Day 10
 - Day 11
 - Day 12
 - Day 13
 - Day 14
 - Day 15
 - Day 16
 - Participants

•

• Recent Posts



University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

The day of December 29th was the group's first full day in India. After the previous day's travel mishaps, the group woke after a glorious night's sleep. Breakfast was scheduled for 9:00 AM, where our hosts, the Sehgal Foundation, served omelettes, toast, and tea. This was the first opportunity for us to mingle without the stress of travel.



After breakfast, we were introduced to the Sehgal Foundation working room. The working room would be the base of operation for academic work. The room was equipped with a single central wooden table, with enough chairs to accommodate the entire group. The walls were adorned with colorful posters describing the Sehgal foundation's vision; water security, empowering farmers, and promoting the development of rural communities are some of the organization's top priorities.

After listening to a few presentations from the Sehgal foundation, we left for the Galaxy Mall to buy clothing and groceries. Traffic was chaotic as usual and teeming with motorized rickshaws. Many of the busy streets were lined with street food salespeople.



After the mall, we left for an Indian restaurant named Raj's Food. The venue was outdoors, allowing us to savor the sights and sounds of Delhi. We ordered Butter Chicken, Algori Tikka Chicken (which was awfully spicy), Garlic Naan, and other traditional Indian dishes. We wasted no time getting acclimated with India's finest cuisine!

-Mac

Last modified on September 18th, 2018

Posted on September 18th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1
 - Day 2
 - Day 3
 - Day 4
 - Day 5
 - Day 6
 - Day 7
 - Day 8
 - Day 9
 - Day 10
 - Day 11
 - Day 12
 - Day 13
 - Day 14
 - Day 15
 - Day 16
 - Participants

•

Search



University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

On December 30th, we began by bussing to Qutab Minar. This was established in 1192 by the first ruler of Delhi's Sultanate. Along with the 73 meter tower the campus also consisted of other arches and an incomplete tower.



This was the first sighting of parakeets not seen in the wild by most before this time. The Tomb of Iltutmish was also at this sight and consisted of a nine square meter central tomb chamber.

Upon leaving Qutab Minar we traveled to the Mehrauli Archaeological Park. As we pulled in the wild monkeys were all over the property. To get to these multiple buildings we hiked through a small city and woods that were full of wild pigs. Then on the way back through the city we stopped at a mosque. This was the first time that we needed to cover our heads, women in scarves and men in little hats. These scarves will be a staple for the rest of the trip.



The final stop was Humayun's tomb. This tomb was constructed by Haji Begam for her late husband and the grounds also hold a couple other Mughal rulers. We finished the day by going for a dinner at cybercity, a mall area.

-Andrew

Last modified on September 18th, 2018

Posted on September 18th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1
 - Day 2
 - Day 3
 - Day 4
 - Day 5
 - Day 6
 - Day 7
 - Day 8
 - Day 9
 - Day 10
 - Day 11
 - Day 12
 - Day 13
 - Day 14
 - Day 15
 - Day 16
 - Participants

-

• Recent Posts

- Hello world!

• Recent Comments

- A WordPress Commenter on Hello world!

• Archives

- August 2018



University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

Waking up, we were all greeted a thick morning fog allowing you to only see about 5 feet in front of you. If it weren't for cars' blinking lights and constant horns, crossing the intersection on the morning walk to breakfast at Hotel F66 may have been a different story.



Today was also many of the students' first experiences with transportation in Delhi. We first boarded a metro train inbound towards Old Delhi. From there we all split up into 6 tuk-tuks (the local three-wheeled taxis) to take a short ride to Gandhi Smriti, where Mahatma Gandhi spent the last 144 days of his life before being assassinated. Gandhi was a great activist who aided the push for Indian independence and was a firm believer in peace and unity among religions. On the grounds they laid out Gandhi's final path, in footsteps, on his way to evening prayer before he was shot. The grounds also had exhibit panels describing both his early and activist life, powerful quotes of his scattered throughout, and an interactive multimedia exhibit on the influences of Gandhi.

– David

Last modified on September 18th, 2018

Posted on September 18th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary



University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

Today was day 4 and it was a pretty casual day. We started the day off by eating breakfast at 11:00 am since we were up past midnight celebrating the new year.



Breakfast was served at the F66 Hotel which is across the street from the Sehgal Foundation. After, we walked to the metro station to head over to Janpath Market where everyone did some shopping. This Market exposed some of us to bargaining; which some of us did pretty well at and some not so well. For more shopping we headed to Dillihaat Market via metro, which was full to the brim and caused some of us to split into groups. The Dillihaat Market was appealing and less chaotic than Janpath Market. Most products that were sold there were: scarves/saris, paintings, and souvenirs (for tourists). After everyone was done shopping, we ate dinner at the food court in the Dillihaat Market and later headed back to Sehgal for the night.

-Elhadi

Last modified on September 18th, 2018

Posted on September 18th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1



University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

Today was our first day out in the Mewat District. We traveled by car in what should have been a 1.5-hour drive, but took us a bit longer because our drivers had no idea where they were going, even though they said they did (this became a theme throughout our trip). Our first stop was at Untka School, where we were greeted by a large crowd of men and boys from the village.



This was a very different experience for me. There were no women or girls standing there watching us. Since it is winter break from school, all the school-aged girls were working with their mothers in the fields and homes, and gathering wood from the foothills to use for cooking. This dynamic is so different from what I am used to, and it was a bit of a culture shock.

Untka School is home to a rainwater harvesting system for the local community. This system allows for rainwater to be collected and filtered during the monsoon season, and stored for later use throughout the rest of the year. This is the source provides fresh drinking water for all the children who attend the school.



After visiting Untka and learning about the technology implemented there, we traveled through the district to visit the major check dams in the area. The check dams, situated in the valleys below the foothills, are extremely important structures that increase groundwater recharge during the monsoon season, and help freshwater supplies last longer in the dry season.

We ate lunch and spent our afternoon at Sehgal's Ghagas Center in the Mewat District. This location is home to a community-run radio station, called "Rural Voices of Mewat" (check out Sehgal's website for more information about their radio station and its goals: <http://www.smsfoundation.org/communications>). It is also home to a large garden that utilizes drip irrigation and semi-saline water to grow fresh produce.

Today was an eye-opening experience, and one that I will never forget. Water poverty is an extremely critical reality — one that we often ignore and don't experience in the United States. I am extremely grateful to have been a part of this day, and I will never forget the things I learned or the people I met.

-Emmy

Last modified on September 18th, 2018

Posted on September 18th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1
 - Day 2
 - Day 3
 - Day 4
 - Day 5
 - Day 6
 - Day 7
 - Day 8
 - Day 9
 - Day 10
 - Day 11

University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

Today was our first day at work in the office at Sehgal. Yesterday we went to the field which allowed us to have an idea of the work that has already been done. It was nice to have a full day in the office to learn more about our projects and get to work!!



Each student was assigned a task and a group to work with. Our tasks included designing a first flush system for rainwater harvesting, testing the water and soil samples from the various wells and analyzing rainfall data over the past 100 years. In the end, we will present our findings in a final presentation to many of the members here at Sehgal. We hope to discuss questions and concerns with our designs and conclusions.

For lunch, many of us walked to the nearby metro station food court where we enjoyed some american and indian fast food.

After lunch we got back to work and finished our day in the office around 7 pm. To end the night we ordered pizza from a place called Fat Lulu's. The pizza was extremely thin but fulfilled our craving!!

-Emily

Last modified on September 18th, 2018

Posted on September 18th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts



University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

Today was our group's first trip to the field to gather data, after Tuesday was kind of an introduction at the sites we would be surveying. Because people are working on different projects, we sent 11 students with Professor Bradley to the field and 5 stayed behind to work on drying the soil, perform tests, and complete any more research they needed for their part of the project.



The 11 students who went departed Sehgal around 9:15 to head for the Sehgal center at Ghagas. When we arrived at the location, we met up with Jafar who began leading us to different wells to take measurements. Our goal was to measure TDS, depth, temperature, and collect water samples. Unfortunately the day became frustrated as many of the wells were too small to send our equipment down and take readings. Other wells were dry or too deep for the probe to reach. We successfully gathered a few water samples and recorded readings from multiple wells near the Sehgal center.



For lunch, Mobina (not sure on the spelling) cooked some lovely rice, beans, and potato dishes that were served with the fried bread and carrots. It was delicious!

Marian spent the day at the airport trying to recover some of our equipment that was being held by customs. Thankfully his mission was successful and we have the kits we need for more in-depth testing of water samples.

Because of our hectic day, we decided to move field day #2 to Monday and stay on campus tomorrow to organize plans and recuperate before the busy weekend ahead.

-Abby

Last modified on September 18th, 2018

Posted on September 18th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1
 - Day 2
 - Day 3
 - Day 4
 - Day 5
 - Day 6
 - Day 7
 - Day 8
 - Day 9
 - Day 10
 - Day 11
 - Day 12
 - Day 13
 - Day 14
 - Day 15
 - Day 16
 - Participants

-

• Recent Posts

- Hello world!

• Recent Comments

- A WordPress Commenter on Hello world!



University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

Since the field experience yesterday did not go well, the entire group stayed at the foundation and worked on their projects.



The soils group was especially busy since they had received their first samples. For lunch everyone just ate their food that had from the grocery store since we were going out to eat that evening.

For dinner we went to a South Indian restaurant to see the differences in foods. Overall the food was delicious and some of the plates people got were hilarious. Carly got a huge platter that had so many different dishes in cups and the food just kept on coming.



We went to the galleria mall after dinner. We arrived around 8:30 and unfortunately some of the stores closed at 9 and did not have enough time to explore. Many picked up groceries there and they had imported foods which we found out we could not find at other groceries.

-Kelly

Last modified on September 18th, 2018

Posted on September 18th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1
 - Day 2
 - Day 3
 - Day 4
 - Day 5
 - Day 6
 - Day 7
 - Day 8
 - Day 9
 - Day 10
 - Day 11
 - Day 12
 - Day 13
 - Day 14
 - Day 15
 - Day 16
 - Participants

-

• Recent Posts

- Hello world!

• Recent Comments

- A WordPress Commenter on Hello world!

• Archives

- August 2018



University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

The second weekend in Delhi started with another morning of piling onto a bus to head north from Gurgaon into Delhi to see Old Delhi.



The day got off to a slow start with directions needed on a couple of occasions and then the first semblance of traffic rules beyond “try and drive on the left side”, we’ve seen so far in India. The connecting road through the administrative center of Delhi, Rajpath Marg, beginning at the President’s home and ending at India Gate is one of the most orderly, and as we found out, well-policed. Our driver unfortunately happened to squeak through a red light and found himself being politely waved to pull over by a police officer standing on the side of the road. After attempts to persuade the officer to let the ticket go failed, we spent 15 minutes being cited and then finally continued on our way.

Our tour guide, Vicas, then met us at India Gate. We drove around the area to see the Presidential Residence, Rashtrapati Bhavan, along with the Vice Presidential Residence and other buildings housing the federal government.



Next was the main destination of the day, Shah Jahan's Red Fort. The impressive fort's walls loom over Old Delhi and is a bold reminder of the Mughal history of India. Abutting the Red Fort complex is the market of Chadni Chowk. The streets of Chadni Chowk are overflowing with goods of all kinds: sarees, lehengas, men's suits, jewellery of endless styles, and enough food that one doesn't have to go more than a few steps to find the next offering. After getting our fill of the market the group began the short walk to Jama Masjid, the largest Indian mosque. We walked around the impressive space for a short while before the call to prayer signaled our time to leave.

To quicken our trip home the decision was made to grab tuk tuks back to the bus. With our large group there was a small fleet of tuk tuks heading out together. Several of them were bicycle rickshaws and had aggressive drivers who slalomed between the traffic causing some mild terror among us. Everyone made it back safe and endured a long, long two hour trip (that should have been thirty minutes) through Delhi rush hour to get back home.

-Greg

Last modified on September 18th, 2018

Posted on September 18th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1
 - Day 2
 - Day 3
 - Day 4
 - Day 5
 - Day 6
 - Day 7
 - Day 8
 - Day 9



University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India



Today was the first day of the trip where we had no pre-planned activities as a large group. Most of us were interested in visiting the same three sites, but we decided it would be easiest to split into smaller groups for ease of travel. A quick metro ride took us to the first stop, Lodi Gardens.

Exiting the metro station it was obvious we had entered a nice quiet neighborhood with large homes and beautiful landscaping. The walk from the metro station to the park was one of the most pleasant walks we had experienced yet. Lodi Gardens is exceptionally beautiful and clean, peppered with large historic dome structures open to the public. Couples taking engagement photos and families picnicking were present at every turn. Several teenagers celebrating their dogs birthday tried to convince me to eat dog food, but I declined.

Shortly after the dog food incident my illness sent me on a sharp decline. Thinking I could tough out my stomach issues, we headed to Khan Market from Lodi Gardens for lunch and some quick shopping. They ate a small bistro with a very pleasant atmosphere and a pretty nice bathroom. The longer we sat for lunch the more apparent it became to me that I needed to head back to Sehgal ASAP.



Andrew being the selfless caring human he is, accompanied me back to Sehgal in a taxi while the rest of the group headed to Lotus Temple. Word on the street is there was an exceptionally long single file line prior to entering the temple. Lotus Temple is a place of worship open to all faiths.

While I was sound asleep trying to get over my illness, two of the groups made it to their final destination. The final group walked around for two hours attempting to find the market and ultimately called it quits. Hauz Khas, highly recommended by Parth, is a park area near to a market. The market was the final stop for two of the groups. From what I hear, one of the groups made it to a Himalayan and Tibetan restaurant that they very much enjoyed.

-Jess

Last modified on September 18th, 2018

Posted on September 18th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1
 - Day 2
 - Day 3
 - Day 4
 - Day 5
 - Day 6
 - Day 7
 - Day 8
 - Day 9
 - Day 10
 - Day 11
 - Day 12
 - Day 13
 - Day 14
 - Day 15
 - Day 16

University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

Today I was with a team of 8 other people (9 total) in the field, while the rest of the group stayed at the Sehgal Foundation. The group the went into to the field consisted of Marian, Megan K., Abby, Amina, Nicole, Elhadi, Greg, Andrew, and myself (Megan H.). After a hectic drive, we arrived at the Sehgal Center in Ghagas.



There we waited for Sadiq, Kuldeep, and Zafar, who lead us to various wells throughout the day. Due to time constraints we could not use the Hydrolab so we used the solinst and hach sensor to test water quality. We ran into trouble at the government well where we could not get into the well.



To solve this problem a government employee (possibly?) came out to the well and allowed us the us tools to try and open it. After hammering metal coverings enough space was made to get Sadiq's tool down the well. By the

end of this battle of wits and wells the well won in the end by taking Sadiq's tool and leaving us with a depth measurement that we could not double check. We then moved on to another well, which with too cluttered to get the solinst sensor down, not for lack of trying. By the time we finished trying to make a path to the bottom of the well it was 2:00 pm. We made the trek back to Gurghas to eat Muubinas now famous lunch of potatoes, lentils, fried bread, and carrots. After scarfing down our food in about 15 minutes, we waited an hour for Marian and members to the Sehgal Foundation to finish making the plan for the afternoon.

In the afternoon split into two groups one of Zafar and the Sona Boys (Greg, Andrew, and Marian) and the next group of Sadiq, Kuldeep, Elhadi and the girls (Megan K., Megan H., Amina, Nicole, and Abby). The Sona Boys went to try to tackle the well we were at before lunch, while Elhadi and the girls went to sample five final wells before the end of the day. We met at Kahera school, where we picked up soil samples and the two groups met together for the the car ride home.

-Megan Heath

Last modified on September 18th, 2018

Posted on September 18th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1
 - Day 2
 - Day 3
 - Day 4
 - Day 5
 - Day 6
 - Day 7
 - Day 8
 - Day 9
 - Day 10
 - Day 11
 - Day 12
 - Day 13
 - Day 14
 - Day 15
 - Day 16
 - Participants

•

• Recent Posts

- Hello world!



University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

Today was a day in which some people went out in the field and some of us stayed behind. Those who went out into the field worked all day to finish up all of the sampling that needed to be completed, considering this was the last opportunity.



This included Megan K, Carli, Emily, Kelly, Amina, David, Mac, and both Marian and Allen. The rest of us spent the day working on data analysis and soil sampling. Half way through the day Marian called and asked that some of us go run some errands because the team out in the field wouldn't be returning until late. A driver had been left for us to use for the day. After lunch at the Huda City Center, which included some momos and an unusually good falafel wrap from Pita Pit, a couple of us headed out to Ambience mall.



Ambience mall provided us with a store that had an SD card as well as a store where Andrew could try on a \$20,000 watch. After that, we still needed to buy groceries. We asked the driver to take us to City Market but on the way we spotted a different Needs Market so we quickly pulled over and went there instead. After we got home, we ordered Thai food for delivery from Big Wongs and played some Uno with friends in the dining hall. It was an early night.

-Nicole

Last modified on September 18th, 2018

Posted on September 18th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1
 - Day 2
 - Day 3
 - Day 4
 - Day 5
 - Day 6
 - Day 7
 - Day 8
 - Day 9
 - Day 10
 - Day 11
 - Day 12
 - Day 13
 - Day 14
 - Day 15
 - Day 16
 - Participants



University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

Due to unforeseen changes and challenges, the class did not give a final presentation. However, everyone was still very busy at work. Most people spent the day working in the conference room to finish analyzing and organizing their data. The soil group, along with people who had finished their own work, was attempting to finish collecting from the soil samples from Karhera, a local school while also archiving those samples.

During the afternoon, the group in the conference room took a small break from our work to meet with another group of students. These students were volunteering in India for a class through their university and were from the United States as well. After meeting with the students, the entire class was thanked for working towards such an important cause and encouraged to continue this kind of work by the Sehgal Foundation. We thanked the foundation for the opportunity to come to India and for what we had learned while we were there. After the meeting, everyone continued their previous tasks.



Around six o'clock that evening, we headed out to dinner to Barbeque Nation, a restaurant the entire group had been hearing about all of the trip. Everyone was excited to eat there. The first course of the meal included various meats with varying levels of spices and special sides like fried corn. After we were finished with the various meats offered, we were allowed to eat as much of the buffet as we wanted which included traditional dishes and beautiful desserts. During the meal, people were pulled away from the table to go and visit the kitchen to see the workers at work. Later on during the meal, we found out that there would be dancing soon so everyone left the table to see the dancers. Megan even jumped in to dance, as you will see in the attached video.

After everyone had had their fill on food, we all ventured back to foundation or hotel to get ready for the long trip to Jaipur in the morning!

-Elizabeth

Last modified on September 18th, 2018

Posted on September 18th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1
 - Day 2
 - Day 3
 - Day 4
 - Day 5
 - Day 6
 - Day 7
 - Day 8
 - Day 9
 - Day 10
 - Day 11
 - Day 12
 - Day 13
 - Day 14
 - Day 15
 - Day 16
 - Participants

•

• Recent Posts

- Hello world!

• Recent Comments

- A WordPress Commenter on Hello world!

• Archives

- August 2018

• Categories



University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

Our first day in Jaipur started with a long bus ride from the Sehgal Foundation compound.



We left early in the morning on huge tourist-y bus, spotting elephants, camels, and Hanuman (the Monkey God) representations on the way. Jaipur is trying different ways to clean up and “green up” its city, such as planting trees and using wet and dry recycling bins

First, we visited Amer Fort. Amer Fort was constructed on Hindu-style elements with sandstone, limestone, and marble. A lot of the painted art was painted on limestone because the paints can absorb into the porous material and last for very long periods of time. Art was painted with colors made from fruits, for example, green from mango leaves. Inside the fort was a Hindu temple where you can ring the bell, get blessed, and offer prayers to the gods.



Next, we visited the Water Palace, Jal Mahal. Many people come the area to photograph the palace and look at the street vendors lined up. After the palace, the group went and did a little shopping! Some of us were on a mission to find the elusive blue pottery, but could not find it in the end. So, we settled for elephant-patterned pants, saris, scarves, and more. Being out so late, we saw the city palace lit up at night!

After shopping, we went to a fancy restaurant, Niros, which served Chinese and Indian dishes. Their food was really good!

Stay Desi,

-Amina

Last modified on September 18th, 2018

Posted on September 18th, 2018

- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1
 - Day 2
 - Day 3
 - Day 4
 - Day 5
 - Day 6
 - Day 7
 - Day 8
 - Day 9
 - Day 10
 - Day 11
 - Day 12
 - Day 13
 - Day 14
 - Day 15
 - Day 16
 - Participants

-

• Recent Posts

- Hello world!

• Recent Comments



University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018

Water Poverty in Rural India

On our second day in Jaipur we visited the City Palace and the astrological collection. During our visit to the astrological park we saw the largest sundial in the country. It was so tall and precisely set up that the time shown on it is within 2 seconds of accuracy!



The smaller ones in the park showed time to within 40 seconds of accuracy. Most of us marveled that such old instruments can operate with such precision. In a group of engineers the desire to understand how the people of an earlier time had solved this problem of measuring time. Along with the sundials there were several other instruments that were used in conjunction to determine the horoscope of new babies being born. From that horoscope babies lives we're quite planned out from that point.

After exploring this amazing group of astrological instruments we made our way to City Palace, the residing place of the prince of Jaipur, who, at this time is 19 years of age and plays Polo. The palace was beautiful and extravagant.



The throne room was dripping in beautiful carpets and fabrics. And was lined with images of each of the rulers through the years. After exploring the City Palace, we made our way back to the bus where some members of our crew got henna done on their hands. It was at this point that we headed for some lunch. Lunch consisted of a fast food location similar to Haldiram's. There was a complete sweets counter inside which we took advantage of perusing. By the time we were done we were running out of time to head on our way to Agra. Sadly this meant we would not be able to shop for the illusive blue pottery of Jaipur. On our way out of town Marian spotted a shop and we gladly went to inspect the beautiful works. Unfortunately we did not fare so well with bargaining this time. Nonetheless it was an eventful and beautiful day.

-Megan

Last modified on September 18th, 2018

Posted on September 18th, 2018




- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1
 - Day 2
 - Day 3
 - Day 4
 - Day 5
 - Day 6
 - Day 7
 - Day 8
 - Day 9
 - Day 10
 - Day 11
 - Day 12
 - Day 13
 - Day 14
 - Day 15
 - Day 16
 - Participants




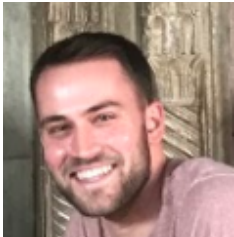










University of Iowa's Winterim Program 2017-2018


Water Poverty in Rural India

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Showing 1 to 19 of 19 entries

◀ Previous Next ▶

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- Home
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Itinerary
 - Day 1
 - Day 2
 - Day 3
 - Day 4
 - Day 5
 - Day 6
 - Day 7
 - Day 8
 - Day 9
 - Day 10