

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES (ESTD)

ESTD 101. Introduction to Environmental Thinking. 3 Units.

Environmental studies is an interdisciplinary field that explores the complex relationship between humans and the natural environment. It examines how human actions impact the environment and how environmental challenges intersect with social, economic, and political systems and values. The goal of this introductory course is to develop an understanding of how science, politics, culture, society and the individual can work to address environmental problems and promote sustainability.

ESTD 202. Global Environmental Problems. 3 Units.

Global Environmental Problems is a course designed to provide students with an understanding of, and an appreciation for, human-influenced environmental changes that are global in scope. Accordingly, much of the material will focus on the nature and structure of natural global systems, how and where in those systems human influences occur, and will delve deeply into a few particular problems and solutions of current interest, such as population growth, climate change, ozone depletion, and fisheries, from a variety of viewpoints. Offered as ESTD 202 and EEPS 202.

ESTD 207. Society and Natural Resources. 3 Units.

The relationship between humans and the natural world can be defined in large part by how societies manage natural resources. In this course, students will analyze how society-environment interactions have undergone substantial shifts over time, from John Locke's Labor Theory of Value and the rise of utilitarian conservation to more recent approaches based on sustainability that emphasize ecological integrity and stakeholder collaboration. Course readings will challenge students to think critically about how humans conceptualize and impact the environment. Class discussions and activities will focus on the evolution of effective human-ecological systems interactions and seek to connect course concepts to current real-world scenarios through weekly student reflection essays. Offered as EEPS 207 and ESTD 207. Counts as a Communication Intensive course.

ESTD 303. Environmental Law. 3 Units.

Introduction to treatment of environmental issues in legal proceedings. Sources of environmental law, legal procedure, common law remedies (toxic torts and human health, nuisance, contract law), statutes and regulations, endangered species, public lands, toxics regulation, nuclear power, coal. The course employs the case method of reading and recitation of appellate judicial opinions. We read both classic cases in environmental law as well as current controversies. Offered as ESTD 303 and EEPS 303.

ESTD 318. People and Planet. 3 Units.

By the second decade of the twenty-first century, planetary thinking decisively ruptured global thought, changing the way morality and politics could be understood. Geology became important for how we should think about living together, and all life on Earth stood out as a dutiful concern for people. What is it to be an Earth-dweller? Who is a moral person? How can politics become multi-species? How should people face their inevitable extinction in deep time? What Earth should be left for nonhuman others? This course probes fundamental issues in environmental philosophy by taking humankind's Earth-changing power as an existential, moral, and politically counterintuitive matter. Offered as PHIL 318, POSC 318 and ESTD 318. Counts as a Communication Intensive course. Counts as a Moral & Ethical Reasoning course.

ESTD 382. Art, Eco-criticism, and the Environment. 3 Units.

As issues of sustainability and environmental impact have become increasingly dominant concerns in contemporary society, eco-criticism has emerged as a vital methodological thread across the humanities. Motivated by ethical as well as scholarly concerns, eco-criticism not only enacts a fundamental examination of nature as an ideological construct, but also seeks to investigate the complex interrelationship between humanity and the environment. Concurrently, there has been a marked interest in studying the role of "green issues" in contemporary art, particularly in tracing the development of earth art or eco-art from the early 1970s to the present. The goal of this seminar is to forge a link between these two emergent strands by tracing the complex relationship between art and the environment from the nineteenth-century to the present, seeking to thereby assess the capaciousness of eco-criticism as a methodological approach to art history. Offered as ARTH 382, ARTH 482 and ESTD 382. Counts as a CAS Global & Cultural Diversity course.

ESTD 387. Environmental Justice. 3 Units.

The idea of environmental justice emerged five decades ago to bring attention to and politicize the injustices of environmental degradation. Our understanding and exploration of the idea is now global and the ways in which we theorize about and study injustices have grown in sophistication and inclusiveness. Over the course of the semester, students will explore the political theories developed about environmental justice, the experiences of actors living with and acting on environmental injustices, and more generally the scholarly literature on environmental degradation governance. These theories and cases are largely drawn from the Global South and from marginalized communities in the Global North. Topics addressed can include local commons governance, the right to development, rights of nature, indigenous rights and environmental governance, land defenders, commodities extraction, and animal and land conservation. Offered as ESTD 387, POSC 387, and POSC 487. Counts as a Disciplinary Communication course. Counts as a Moral & Ethical Reasoning course. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

ESTD 388. Global Politics of the Climate Crisis. 3 Units.

In 1992, the international community committed itself to "preventing dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system" and yet the most recent IPCC reports found we are well on our way to missing our best-case warming scenarios. Why is the global community here three decades after committing to address the problem? Do we have reasons to be hopeful that perhaps finally the tide of insufficient action is turning? This course examines and confronts the global politics at the heart of the climate crisis. Students will explore global governance surrounding the crisis by looking at the dynamics of the climate change regime and alternative and complementary systems of governance. Topics will include some combination of the Paris Agreement, market mechanisms, popular mobilization, population displacement, corporate governance, technological innovation, and more, adjusting to keep current with an ever-changing governance system. Offered as ESTD 388, POSC 388 and POSC 488. Counts as a Understanding Global Perspectives course.

ESTD 398. Seminar in Environmental Studies. 3 Units.

Small group discussion and student presentations concerning the cultural determinants of environmental attitudes and policies. Each student participates in all weekly discussions and leads at least one seminar. Prereq: ESTD 101 or previous credit for ESTD 398.

ESTD 399. Departmental Seminar in Environmental Studies. 3 Units.

Discussion and critique of recent publications in Environmental Studies. Students write weekly short essays on readings and participate in weekly group discussion. Reading list changes annually and is typically comprised of 7-9 books that center on a few unifying themes for that year (food, energy, futures, toxic torts, attitudes toward animals, consumer culture, climate crises for example). Students research, write, and defend a critical review of academic literature concerning some topic contained in the readings. Prior enrollment in ESTD 101 is recommended but not required. Students may not enroll in both ESTD 399 and ESTD 398 in the same year. Counts as a SAGES Departmental Seminar course.