Environmental Studies Program

Environmental Studies is a multidisciplinary program that introduces students to the societal determinants and implications of environmental problems. The program emphasizes the moral, cultural, and political dimensions of environmental problems and solutions as well as scientific understanding of the environment, bringing to bear the issues and methods of the humanities and social sciences as well as those of the sciences and the professions. The program is designed to serve the needs of students seeking a liberal education or a broad intellectual base for more technical training in environmental sciences. Students can pursue a major or a minor in environmental studies.

Program Faculty

Peter L. McCall, JD, PhD
Professor, Department of Earth, Environmental, and Planetary Sciences; Director, Environmental Studies Program

Timothy Beal, PhD
Florence Harkness Professor of Religion; Department of Religious Studies

Jeremy Bendik-Keymer, PhD
Elmer G. Beamer-Hubert H. Schneider Professor in Ethics; Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy

John Ruhl, PhD
Connecticut Professor, Department of Physics

Peter Shulman, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of History

Theodore Steinberg, PhD
Adeline Barry Daviee Distinguished Professor of History, Department of History

Undergraduate Programs

Major

The Environmental Studies Program offers a major (30 credit hours) leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree. However, it may be elected only as a second or secondary major. The double major is required so that the program's multidisciplinary perspective will be complemented by a concentrated disciplinary major. Students may apply up to six credits from required and elective courses in their first major to the Environmental Studies major. None of the required courses may be taken pass/no pass.

The required courses are:

Required Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESTD 101</td>
<td>Introduction to Environmental Thinking</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESTD 398 or ESTD 399</td>
<td>Seminar in Environmental Studies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One course from each of the following disciplinary groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disciplinary Group</th>
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<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>RLGN 206</td>
<td>Religion and Ecology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ESTD 318</td>
<td>People and Planet</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HSTY 378</td>
<td>North American Environmental History</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td>ESTD 303</td>
<td>Environmental Law</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ECON 368</td>
<td>Environmental Economics</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PHIL 384</td>
<td>Ethics and Public Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ESTD 388</td>
<td>Politics, Policy, and the Global Environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science and Engineering</td>
<td>ESTD 202</td>
<td>Global Environmental Problems</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ECSE 342</td>
<td>Introduction to Global Issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIOL 351</td>
<td>Principles of Ecology</td>
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Fifteen additional hours chosen in consultation with the departmental advisor. An approved Washington Study internship or summer field course may be used to satisfy part or all of the elective requirement. Courses taken to satisfy General Education Requirements of a school might also qualify as ESTD electives. All programs of study must be approved by the director.

Total Units 30

If a required course is not offered, substitution of a course to fulfill the distribution requirement is possible only with permission of the program director.

Minor

The minor in Environmental Studies (15 credit hours) consists of:

Required course:

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<td>Introduction to Environmental Thinking</td>
<td>3</td>
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One course each from two of the following disciplinary groups:

<table>
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<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
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<td>Humanities</td>
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Courses from the disciplinary groups may also be selected as electives.
Environmental Studies Program

Six additional hours chosen in consultation with the departmental advisor. Courses taken to satisfy General Education Requirements of a school might also qualify as ESTD electives.

Total Units 15

Courses

ESTD 101. Introduction to Environmental Thinking. 3 Units.
Critical comparison of scientific, historical, religious, and literary conceptions of nature. Theories of environmental ethics, legal, and economic conceptions of environmental goods. Current controversies concerning human population growth, energy use, the consumer society, and attitudes towards animals.

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 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.
In this course, we study the way in which the environment is a matter of politics. Our approach is philosophical, examining the concept of politics in light of how societies shape their environment on Earth. This elucidation’s aim is practical. We want to know not only what environmental politics is, but what we should do about it. Students from any major are welcome, without prerequisite. Offered as PHIL 318, POSC 318 and ESTD 318.

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 for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

ESTD 388. Politics, Policy, and the Global Environment. 3 Units.
This course examines the law, politics and policy surrounding global environmental challenges such as climate change. The course aims to provide a broad overview of the key concepts, actors, debates, and issues in global environmental politics. It aims to illustrate the complexities of addressing environmental problems-from the proliferation of global institutions and international actors, to the absence of central enforcement mechanisms. We examine the causes of environmental degradation and competing views on the gravity of the problem. Using concepts from political science and economics, we investigate the challenges in getting states to act jointly to address environmental problems. We examine the actors and institutions of global environmental politics, to understand how conditions are defined as problems and responses are chosen and implemented. The course concludes by applying the tools and concepts to the case of climate change. Offered as ESTD 388, POSC 388 and POSC 488.

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 SAGES Departmental Seminar.