

# ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

The Environmental Studies program offers a vibrant and balanced program that prepares students for sustainability-related careers and leadership positions in local, national and international policy, science, law, business, non-profit organizations, consulting, and other fields – as well as excellent preparation for many different graduate and professional degree programs. Understanding the natural environment, human impacts on environmental systems, and human perspectives on these relationships is more important than ever. The environmental studies program takes an interdisciplinary approach to exploring these issues which combines cutting edge coursework in the natural sciences, policy, economics, and the humanities; an emphasis on critical thinking and problem solving skills; and plentiful opportunities for in-depth investigative research, internships, skill-development, and applied experiential activities.

Students completing the major in Environmental Studies will be able to:

- Identify and describe fundamental physical, chemical and biological processes impacting environmental issues.
- Identify and describe fundamental concepts from the social sciences and humanities impacting environmental thought and policy.
- Analyze environmental issues using tools appropriate to the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities.
- Communicate effectively about complex environmental issues for expert and general audiences.
- Critically evaluate the ramifications of human interaction with the environment from a scientific, social, and economic perspective.
- Formulate and revise solutions as part of an interdisciplinary team that may contain multiple stakeholders with divergent goals.

## Programs

- Environmental Studies Major
- Environmental Studies Minor

## Courses

### EVST 2004 Causes and Solutions of Environmental Problems: Explanations from the Social Sciences 3 Credits

**Attributes:** EVME Environmental Studies Major Elective, EVPE Environmental Studies Elective, EVSS Environmental Studies: Social Science, MSID Magis Core: Interdisciplinary

Why is it difficult to prevent or fix environmental problems? What can we do? This interdisciplinary course examines important approaches for understanding the causes of and potential solutions for environmental problems; in particular approaches from economics, political science, international relations theory, sociology, and paradigms for understanding the relationship between humans and the environment. Issues considered include why humans create or allow serious environmental problems to occur, inherent difficulties of addressing environmental problems effectively, and what types of policy and tools are available to address them.

### EVST 2005 Campus Sustainability 3 Credits

**Attributes:** EVME Environmental Studies Major Elective, EVPE Environmental Studies Elective, EVSS Environmental Studies: Social Science, MSID Magis Core: Interdisciplinary  
Sustainability has become a nearly unassailable catchphrase for the 21st century. But what does it really mean? Not in a book but in practice? This course uses the Fairfield University campus and the expanding literature on best practices to explore key sustainability issues facing colleges, corporations, small towns, cities, and private citizens. The class will include off-campus site visits, guest speakers, and free ranging discussions of cutting edge readings. Students will also conduct semester-long individual or group interdisciplinary projects that analyze specific sustainability issues. Previously EV 0303.

### EVST 2900 Special Topics (Shell) 3 Credits

#### EVST 3980 Internship 1-3 Credits

**Attributes:** EVPE Environmental Studies Elective  
**Prerequisites:** Completion of three environmental studies courses.  
Environmental studies minors gain firsthand experience working off campus in fields related to environment science, policy, economics, education, and other issues. Typically, an internship requires 8 to 12 hours per week on site and a journal or summary report for credit. An on-site supervisor and an environmental studies professor evaluate student work. Students must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Enrollment by permission only. Previously EV 0298.

#### EVST 3990 Independent Study 1-3 Credits

**Attributes:** EVPE Environmental Studies Elective  
**Prerequisites:** Three environmental studies program courses; junior or senior standing.  
A student may conduct a one-semester independent study on a defined research topic or field of study under the supervision of a professor in the Environmental Studies Program. Credit requires prior approval by the Professor which whom the student will work as well as the Director of the Environmental Studies Program. Students must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Enrollment by permission only. Previously EV 0299.

#### EVST 4001 Environment Workshop 3 Credits

**Attributes:** EVCA Environmental Studies: Capstone, EVPE Environmental Studies Elective

**Prerequisite:** Junior standing.

This course is a capstone course for students in the Environmental Studies program but is also open to all juniors and seniors. It centers on a semester-long interdisciplinary project that examines a particular environment-related issue and proposes practical solutions. Previously EV 0301.

## Faculty

### Steering Committee

Bayers (English)  
Biardi (Biology)  
Counsell (Biology)  
Downie (Politics)  
Kelley (English)  
Klug (Biology)  
Lacy (Sociology and Anthropology)  
Nazarian (Physics)  
Osier (Biology)  
Petrino (English)  
Steffen (Chemistry), *Director*  
Svoboda (Philosophy)

Walker (Biology)

## **Additional Faculty**

Gerry (Biology)

Etemad (Mechanical Engineering)

Strauss (Business Law)

Vasquez-Mazariegos (Economics)

Winn (Physics)