Program Scope

The School of Public Affairs Environmental Studies Program offers a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies and a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies with a concentration in Natural Resource Management and Conservation. Students in the B.A. program have three emphases from which to choose: Environmental Sustainability and Social Justice, Humanities and the Environment, and The Urban Environment.

The objective of the program is to produce exceptional graduates who are grounded in the study of contemporary environmental problems and solutions. The program provides students with the knowledge and skills required for understanding relationships between humans and the physical world. It examines how the environment is being used, abused, and perceived, and what individuals and organizations are doing and can do to protect it for themselves, future generations, and other living beings and ecosystems. Students participate in an internship and take a senior seminar. Both requirements emphasize community engagement and preparation for future environmental careers.

Career Outlook

Environmental Studies is a diverse field and includes opportunities for employment at many different venues. Private industry opportunities include solid waste management, resource recovery and recycling, hazardous waste management, water treatment and delivery, and air pollution control. Major local corporations have employment opportunities in environmental health and safety and environmental management. Environmental consultants who specialize in creating or reviewing environmental impact reports and statements and environmental regulations are needed at the federal and state agency level as well as in the private sector. Other employment opportunities include government agency level resource scientists, natural resource managers, and planners. In addition, local nonprofit activist groups provide a small number of full-time positions in the environmental field.

Major Requirements

- Environmental Studies majors who successfully complete ENVS 450GW in fall 2009 or thereafter will have satisfied the University Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR).
- Environmental Studies majors must complete ENVS 300 and ENVS 450GW with a grade of C or better to continue in the major.

ENVS 224 Research Methods for Environmental Studies (Units: 4)
Prerequisite: Restricted to Environmental Studies majors or consent of instructor.
Introduction to quantitative and qualitative research methods in environmental studies. The Scientific method, field methods in natural and social sciences, and data analysis including descriptive statistics, and hypothesis testing. Lecture, 3 units; activity, 1 unit.

ENVS 300 Environmental Studies (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Upper division standing or consent of instructor; priority enrollment for Environmental Studies majors.
Introduction to environmental studies; an examination of the history of the environmental movement, exploration of strategies to effect constructive change, analysis of environmental fields, and the need for their integration.

Course Attributes:
- Environmental Sustainability

ENVS 306 Economics and the Environment (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Upper division standing or consent of instructor.
How economic systems impact the natural environment and how the natural environment underlies the economy. Includes neoclassical and ecological economics perspectives.
(This course is offered as ENVS 306 and ECON 306. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)
ENVS 331 Global Environmental Crisis (Units: 4)
Prerequisites: Upper division standing; ENG 214.

Describes the impact of a growing world economy and population on biological and physical earth systems, and the potential consequences of environmental destruction for human well-being. Explores the historical and economic reasons for the political divide between developed and less-developed countries with respect to environmental issues and negotiations.
(This course is offered as I R 331 and ENVS 331. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)
Course Attributes:
- Environmental Sustainability
- Global Perspectives
- Social Justice

ENVS 450GW Environmental Law and Policy - GWAR (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: ENG 214 or equivalent with a grade of C- or better, ENVS 300; or consent of instructor.

Introduction and overview of environmental policies and the legal system at the national and international level through directed readings, class discussion, and research in the field of environmental law and policy.
(ABC/NC grading only)
Course Attributes:
- Graduation Writing Assessment

ENVS 460 Energy Justice and Sustainability (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Upper-division standing or consent of the instructor.

Interdisciplinary social scientific exploration of energy focusing on environmental justice, sustainability, and political-economic perspectives. Topics include environmental impacts of energy systems and resources, social movements for sustainable energy transitions, and intersections of energy systems with inequalities in race, class, and gender. [CSL may be available]

ENVS 470 Climate Politics and Policy (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENVS 300 or consent of instructor.

Domestic and international politics surrounding both climate change and the requirements of climate policy in the context of a global society dedicated to economic growth and characterized by sharp divisions between rich and poor.
Course Attributes:
- Environmental Sustainability
- Global Perspectives

ENVS 530 Environmental Leadership and Organizing (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENVS 300 or consent of instructor.

Theoretical and applied study of leadership and organizing for the environment and environmental justice. Multidisciplinary exploration of social change and democratic action. Topics include gender and race sensitive leadership, alternative approaches for civic engagement, organizing strategy and tactics, advocacy ethics and current challenges facing the environmental movement.

ENVS 570 Applied Local Sustainability (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENVS 300 or consent of instructor.

Examination of current sustainability issues and efforts at San Francisco State University, local cities and other institutions across the country. Includes hands-on sustainability research on campus.
Course Attributes:
- Environmental Sustainability

ENVS 600 Environmental Problems and Solutions (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 214 or equivalent.

Ecological approach to nature and the landscape. Human populations, natural resources, and environmental quality in California with particular reference to the San Francisco Bay Area.
(This course is offered as GEOG 600 and ENVS 600. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)
Course Attributes:
- UD-D: Social Sciences
- Environmental Sustainability
- Global Perspectives

ENVS 640 Recreational Use of National Parks and Protected Areas (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Upper division standing or consent of instructor.

Introduction to concepts of conservation and preservation of national parks and other ecosystem units, and managing visitor use. Emphasis on history, management principles, and current issues. National parks will be the primary focus, selected international protected areas will be included.
[CSL may be available]
(This course is offered as RPT 640 and ENVS 640. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

ENVS 657 Natural Resource Management: Biotic Resources (Units: 4)
Prerequisites: GEOG 101, GEOG 205 or ENVS 224, or consent of instructor.

Basic theories and methodologies of managing forest, wildlife and rangeland resources. Agencies, laws, and policies that govern natural resource management. Emphasis on the urban-wildland interface.
Lecture, 3 units; activity, 1 unit.
(This course is offered as GEOG 657 and ENVS 657. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

ENVS 680 Environmental Studies Internship (Units: 1-3)
Prerequisites: Upper division standing; ENVS 300; consent of instructor.

Fieldwork in approved public, private, non-profit, environmental organizations, government and non-government agency or local corporation under supervision of organization and faculty coordinator.
May be repeated for credit on advisement. [CSL may be available]

ENVS 690 Senior Seminar in Environmental Studies (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Restricted to Environmental Studies majors with senior standing, completion of core courses.

Integration and application of major concentration in Environmental Studies. Trends in Environmental Studies. Group projects working with the community to assist in problem solving or activism; job evaluation.
(Plus-minus letter grade only)
ENVS 699 Independent Study (Units: 1-3)
Prerequisites: Upper division standing, consent of instructor, major advisor, and department chair.

Supervised study of a particular issue selected by the student. May be repeated for a total of 6 units.