

Environmental Studies (ENVS)

ENVS 101. Introductory Seminar in Environmental Studies (with lab). 4 Hours.

This foundational seminar introduces students to interdisciplinary approaches in contemporary environmental issues. The seminar considers key environmental issues, bringing cultural, scientific, historical, political, social, and economic perspectives to bear on each. The course is arranged thematically, with units on topics such as tropical deforestation, global warming, energy use, and resource depletion. This course will also investigate local environmental issues, study relevant scientific findings, explore the interactions of human communities with non-human nature, and probe the ecological, cultural, and ethical implications of these interactions.

ENVS 103. Environmental Studies: Science in Context. 3 Hours.

Students will explore the features that make science an important way of understanding the natural world. This exploration will focus on science-based topics and issues important in our contemporary world.

ENVS 150. Introduction to Earth System Science (with lab). 4 Hours.

Students will develop knowledge of Earth system components -- atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere, biosphere, and exosphere -- with emphasis on their connections and interactions. They will use and integrate approaches of disciplinary sciences and mathematics to investigate physical and behavioral properties of Earth system components, as well as considering the human and social context (anthroposphere) in which environmental problems develop as the system is stressed. Students will develop skills in observation, investigation, analysis, team interaction and communication through field and laboratory experiences.

ENVS 160. Introduction to Sustainability Science (with lab). 4 Hours.

Examination of the dynamic interactions between social and ecological systems. Students are introduced to theories, concepts, analytical frameworks, and research designs that develop their understanding of the dynamic relationships between complex social and environmental systems. Students will develop a solutions-oriented understanding of sustainability issues and be empowered to take actions toward sustainability by focusing on campus systems. The course introduces basic quantitative analysis methods and builds these skills by investigating the sustainability of campus systems (e.g., energy, food system, grounds, waste management).

ENVS 201. Introduction to Environmental Social Science. 3 Hours.

Introduction to the social systems that govern the American environment and human beings' use of it. Topics include: environmental history, politics and policy, law, and economics.

Prerequisite: ENVS 101 with a minimum grade of D or ENVS 150 with a minimum grade of D or ENVS 160 with a minimum grade of D.

ENVS 202. Introduction to Environmental Humanities. 3 Hours.

This course is an introduction to the interdisciplinary study of environmental issues in the humanities, including philosophy, art history, literature, film, history and religion. Through the study of the ways in which the environment is represented in literature, art, and film, we will attempt to understand the central role that human environmental perceptions have played and continue to play in creation of both sustainable and unsustainable relations with nature.

Prerequisite: ENVS 101 with a minimum grade of D or ENVS 150 with a minimum grade of D or ENVS 160 with a minimum grade of D.

ENVS 203. Introduction to Environmental Science (with lab). 4 Hours.

This course will be an introduction to the application of the scientific method to the study of the environment. It will focus on the interdependence of ecological systems, the sources of energy and cycles of resources in a variety of environments, and the forces affecting environmental change.

Prerequisite: ENVS 101 with a minimum grade of D or ENVS 150 with a minimum grade of D or ENVS 160 with a minimum grade of D.

ENVS 280. Selected Topics in Environmental Studies. 0 to 4 Hours.

Selected topics in Environmental Studies at the introductory or intermediate level.

ENVS 312. Problems in US Environmental Policy. 3 Hours.

Engage with the major problems of environmental politics and policy in the United States, study the approaches that have been and are being used to deal with these problems, and assess the effectiveness of these approaches. Explore public policy structures and concepts, and discuss how their application impacts environmental quality. Gain an understanding of American environmental issues, the American political and policy system, and what possibilities lie ahead in American environmental policy.

Prerequisite: ENVS 201 with a minimum grade of D or GOV 202 with a minimum grade of D.

ENVS 313. Sustainable Food Systems. 3 Hours.

An overview of the US food system while focusing on interrelationships with the environment, society, public health, and equity, this course will examine the major driving forces shaping our modern US food system and possible alternatives. Through a semester-long project, students will contribute to a community-wide effort by collecting original data for the Spartanburg Food Policy Council Food System Assessment and Plan.

Prerequisite: ENVS 150 with a minimum grade of D or ENVS 160 with a minimum grade of D or ENVS 203 with a minimum grade of D.

ENVS 317. US Environmental History. 3 Hours.

An overview of environmental history, focusing on the United States analyzing how Americans have shaped nature and been shaped by nature and how has this relationship changed over time. Students will engage with key historical themes and perspectives, their roles in various eras of American history, and how they have shaped the world in which we now live. Required readings will support the understanding of different interpretations of historic events and environmental problems.

Prerequisite: ENVS 201 with a minimum grade of D.

ENVS 320. Field Experience: Environmental Humanities & Social Sciences. 1 Hour.

Conjoining two focus courses in Environmental Studies into a learning community, this course engages students with central issues in American environmental history and literature. The learning community will embrace multiple perspectives on literature and the environment and examine how themes have changed and endured over time. It includes a weekly day-long field experience through various locales in the Carolinas.
Prerequisite: ENVS 201 with a minimum grade of D and ENVS 202 with a minimum grade of D.

Corequisite: ENVS 317 AND ENVS 327.

ENVS 326. Introduction to Environmental and Nature Writing. 3 Hours.

Serves as an introduction to the canon of American environmental/nature writing and will also develop in beginning students the practice of reflective writing. The course will introduce a familiarity with common themes, motifs, and characteristics of the genre. Readings will include short excerpts and a detailed study of a book-length work of environmental/nature writing.

Prerequisite: ENVS 101 with a minimum grade of D.

ENVS 327. Major Themes in Environmental Writing. 3 Hours.

This course examines major themes/metaphors (such as ecology, holiness, food chains etc.) in full texts from the important texts in the tradition of environmental writing.

Prerequisite: ENVS 202 with a minimum grade of D.

ENVS 330. Art & Earth: Materials, Processes, and Perceptions (with lab). 4 Hours.

Students will learn about geological and botanical origins of art materials through lecture, experimentation, and field experiences. Perceptions of nature will be addressed through review of artistic works. Students will present an artistic work of their own in a public forum.

Prerequisite: ENVS 203 with a minimum grade of D.

ENVS 332. Hydrology & Water Resources (with lab). 4 Hours.

A survey of water resource sciences including introductions to surface water (hydrology), ground water (hydrogeology), aquatic chemistry, and fresh water ecology. Use of quantitative models to describe and predict surface and ground water flow. Field and laboratory investigation of water distribution and quality.

Prerequisite: ENVS 203 with a minimum grade of D.

ENVS 333. Environmental Geology (with lab). 4 Hours.

The application of geological principles to understanding and solving problems associated with environment. Major environmental problems are associated with humankind's relationships with mineral and energy resources, water resources and geologic hazards. Laboratories will focus on small-scale research projects and field investigations.

Prerequisite: ENVS 203 with a minimum grade of D.

ENVS 334. Theory & Practice of Sustainable Agriculture (with lab). 4 Hours.

This course is dedicated to understanding the structure and function of agroecosystems including the use of land, water, energy, and biological resources in agriculture. We will learn how to assess the sustainability of agroecosystems, examine the relationship between a sustainable agroecosystem and a sustainable food system and consider the barriers and opportunities for developing a sustainable world food system.

Prerequisite: ENVS 150 with a minimum grade of D or ENVS 160 with a minimum grade of D or ENVS 203 with a minimum grade of D.

ENVS 335. Climate Change. 3 Hours.

Climate change examines the past, present, and future from an earth systems perspective. The scientific evidence of climate change will be examined along with dynamic models of climate systems. Scientific predictions of climate change will also be examined in addition to social, political, and economic perspectives on global warming.

ENVS 336. Climate Change (with lab). 4 Hours.

Identical to ENVS 335, but with a laboratory component.

ENVS 338. Terrestrial Ecology (with lab). 4 Hours.

Examination of the range of the world's terrestrial ecosystems and practical field experience with major terrestrial ecosystems in the southeastern US. An analytical field-based approach to understanding basic ecological principles including population dynamics, interspecific interactions, and biodiversity. Exploration of global change issues in the context of landscape-level dynamics in space and time. Utilization of the R programming language to model ecological interactions and investigate how ecological states are altered by direct and indirect anthropogenic interactions.

ENVS 340. Quantitative Environmental Methods & Models (with lab). 1 to 3 Hours.

Develop quantitative and environmental literacy by analyzing real-world environmental situations and problems with the use of mathematics and statistics. Students will learn how to use dynamic systems models and geographical information systems to gain insight into natural and social processes relevant to environmental issues and policy decisions.

Prerequisite: MATH 140 with a minimum grade of D or MATH 181 with a minimum grade of D.

ENVS 341. Health & the Environment. 3 Hours.

Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the relationship between the environment and humans along with the impact each has on the health of the other. Human health as impacted by the environment will be the main focus. This focus will include primarily physical health but will also address psychological, emotional and spiritual health. Human activities that result in environmental factors that in turn affect human health will be addressed. Junior or senior class standing required.

ENVS 347. Environmental Storytelling. 3 Hours.

Examination of narrative storytelling tools and techniques in Environmental Humanities context. Content includes creative writers, films, visual and physical artists, as well as music. Students will develop an extended project of humanistic inquiry into environmental issues.

Prerequisite: ENVS 202 with a minimum grade of D.

ENVS 349. Developing the Capstone Proposal. 3 Hours.

A seminar course required for all Environmental Studies majors in either the fall or spring semester of their junior year. Class meetings will guide students through a survey of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research methods as well as the process of research design and capstone proposal development. By the end of the seminar, each student will have a finished proposal for the capstone project that they will execute in ENVS 449.

ENVS 350. Research Methods. 1 to 3 Hours.

Introduces students to research and critical reading of original research by participating in an existing departmental research project, either in preparation for completing the senior capstone or in collaboration with faculty-led research. This course is variable credit. Students may earn a maximum of three credit hours.

ENVS 400. Regional Environmental Problems (with lab). 4 Hours.

An interdisciplinary elective in which advanced students blend knowledge and interest from their major fields with the methodology and perspectives of earth science to understand regional environmental systems and problems. The course is designed as a bridge between the cultures of the scientist and the humanist.

ENVS 449. Senior Capstone Project. 3 Hours.

This course will require students to complete a substantial project in Environmental Studies.

Prerequisite: ENVS 349 with a minimum grade of C.

ENVS 450. Environmental Studies Senior Seminar. 3 Hours.

The final course required for majors and minors will focus on a particular environmental problem or topic. Guest speakers will address facets of the assigned problem or topic over the course of the semester. The seminar will meet for discussion on days when speakers are not scheduled.

Prerequisite: ENVS 201 with a minimum grade of D and ENVS 202 with a minimum grade of D and ENVS 203 with a minimum grade of D.

ENVS 470. Independent Study. 1 to 3 Hours.

Study of a specific topic in environmental studies under the direction of a departmental faculty member. The readings, program of research, and written work to be undertaken by the student will be determined in consultation with the instructor.

ENVS 480. Advanced Topics in Environmental Studies. 0 to 4 Hours.

Selected topics in Environmental Studies at an advanced level.

ENVS 500. Honors Course. 3 Hours.

At the discretion of the faculty, students may undertake a six-hour independent course of study in the senior year in order to broaden their educational experience within their major area of study. Students must meet specific GPA standards and arrange a faculty sponsor. The honors course criteria are outlined in the Academic Honors portion of the catalog.