Environmental Studies (BA)

Director: Erin Robinson, PhD

Introduction

Environmental problems are more visible in our society than ever before. In order to address these issues, there is an ever present need to develop an understanding of the social and natural systems that foster the creation and resolution of environmental issues. Cultural, economic, and social systems provide the structure within which environmental problems are created and solved.

The Environmental Studies BA focuses on interdisciplinary connections between environmental and social systems. The program engages students to think critically about environmental issues and offers active learning experiences for students to apply their knowledge. Combining environmental science with social sciences, business and economics, and the humanities ensures an integrated perspective on environmental issues which lays a foundation for a wide range of careers. The interdisciplinary nature of the program allows students to combine ways of knowing which fully address the multiple facets and complex systems of environmental issues. Students take a series of required courses for the major and then select a specialization option to further focus their knowledge.

Major Tracks

Environmental Studies majors can select a specialization track made up of five courses. Specialization Tracks include Environmental Justice, Environmental Conservation and Administration, Sustainable Economics, Environmental Literacy and Public Health. Students can specialize in one area, or select a combination of electives from different tracks that best meet their interests. Each student will select four electives and an internship.

All Environmental Studies majors will complete an internship (EVST 498). Internship opportunities will range from local and regional opportunities to international opportunities through partnerships with well-established environmental organizations.

For a more detailed description of the program, faculty, facilities, academic and co-curricular opportunities please go to the Environmental Studies website [https://www.canisius.edu/academics/programs/environmental-studies/](https://www.canisius.edu/academics/programs/environmental-studies/).

Qualifications

Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA in their major, earn a C or higher in all required courses in the major, and earn a 2.0 overall average to graduate with a degree in Environmental Studies.

Advisement

All students should have an advisor in the major and should contact the department directly to have an advisor assigned if they do not already have one. Meetings with academic advisors are required prior to students receiving their PIN for course registration each semester. All majors should work closely with their advisor in discussing career expectations, choosing their major electives, developing their entire academic program and planning their co-curricular or supplemental academic experiences.

Students should consult with Dr. Erin Robinson, Director of Environmental Studies, for current advisement information. Students are advised to be familiar with their Griff Audit.

Double Majors

Students who wish to expand their educational opportunities may decide to declare a double major. This decision may be based on career goals, planned graduate studies, and/or other student interests. Before a student declares a double major, it is important to meet with the appropriate academic departments for advisement. In order to declare a double major, the student must complete the appropriate double major request form and get the signature of each department chairperson and the appropriate associate dean.

Per college policy, each additional major requires a minimum of 15 credits that do not apply to the student’s first or subsequent major. Some double major combinations can be completed within the minimum 120 credit hour degree requirement, but in other cases additional course work may be required. Please note that students will receive only one degree, regardless of the number of majors they complete. Both (all) majors appear on a student’s transcript.

Minors in Other Disciplines

Minors provide students the opportunity to pursue additional interests but generally do not require as many courses as a major. Minors generally range from five to eight required courses. To receive a minor, the student must complete at least 9 credit hours of coursework distinct from their other credentials (i.e., majors, other minors). The minors page [http://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/minors/](http://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/minors/) provides a complete list of minors and provides links to each minor. Some majors and minors can be completed within the minimum 120 credit hour degree requirement, but in some cases additional coursework may be required. Students must complete the appropriate minor request form.

Curriculum

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All undergraduate students must complete either the Canisius Core Curriculum [http://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/academics/core-curriculum/](http://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/academics/core-curriculum/) or the All-College Honors Curriculum [http://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/academics/all-college-honors-program/](http://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/academics/all-college-honors-program/). Many schools refer to their college-wide undergraduate requirements as “general education” requirements. We believe that the core curriculum and the honors curriculum are more than a series of required classes; they provide the basis for a Jesuit education both with content and with required knowledge and skills attributes that are central to our mission.

Free Electives

Students may graduate with a bachelor's degree with more but not less than 120 credit hours. Free electives are courses in addition to the Canisius Core Curriculum or All-College Honors Curriculum and major requirements sufficient to reach the minimum number of credits required for graduation. The number of credits required to complete a bachelor's degree may vary depending on the student's major(s) and minor(s).

Major Requirements

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<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td>ECO 101</td>
<td>Principles of Macroeconomics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVST 110</td>
<td>Science of Environmental Problems I</td>
<td>3</td>
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**Environmental Literacy and Public Health**
Focuses student attention on the role of information literacy in environmental issues. Allows for critical perspective and analysis of the role of science, risk, and communication in society today.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIO 116</td>
<td>Disease: Myth and Reality</td>
<td>3</td>
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**Roadmap**

**Recommended Sequence for Major Courses**

**Freshman**

Fall  
EVST 110  
ECO 101  
Spring  
EVST 111

**Sophomore**

Fall  
SOC 234  
HSV 303  
Spring  
SOC 342  
SOC 375

**Junior**

Fall  
Select one of the following:  
SOC 234  
SOC 342  
Spring  
Select one of the following:  
SOC 342  
SOC 375  
PHI 244 or RST 347

**Senior**

Fall  
Select one of the following:  
Track Option Elective  
Spring  
Track Option Elective  
EVST 498  
SOC 324

**Learning Goals & Objectives**

**Student Learning Goal 1**

Environmental Studies Majors will demonstrate knowledge of complex environmental systems and environmental issues in scientific, cultural, and social realms.

Students will:
- Objective A: Evaluate information on political economy of environmental issues;
- Objective B: Articulate issues of social construction of science;
- Objective C: Articulate an integration of issues of environmental and social justice.

**Student Learning Goal 2**

Environmental Studies Majors will demonstrate scientific literacy of environmental issues.

Students will:
- Objective A: Demonstrate knowledge of complex theories of environmental problems;
- Objective B: Develop relevant research questions for environmental investigation;
- Objective C: Articulate an integration of issues of environmental and social justice.
Objective C: Use methods and tools of environmental research, including statistical analysis, GIS, and other techniques, to address relevant research questions.

Student Learning Goal 3
Environmental Studies Students will Demonstrate readiness to enter post graduate career and educational opportunities. 
Students will:

- Objective A: Demonstrate skills needed to compete in green careers, for example grant writing and oral communication;
- Objective B: Complete an internship with an established environmental organization;
- Objective C: Collaborate with local, regional, national, and/or international professionals in environmental career and post graduate educational settings;

Courses

EVST 110 Science of Environmental Problems I 3 Credits
Environmental problems are defined as problems that result from interactions between humans and the natural environment. This course is designed to provide a conceptual framework for understanding and analyzing environmental problems, an introduction to the scientific basis of key environmental problems, and an introduction to scientific solutions to environmental problems.
Fulfills College Core: Field 6 (Natural Sciences)

EVST 111 Science of Environmental Problems II 3 Credits
This course is designed to provide a conceptual framework for understanding and analyzing environmental problems, to the scientific basis of key environmental problems and their solutions. An extension from EVST 110.
Fulfills College Core: Field 6 (Natural Sciences)

EVST 235 Environmental Policy 3 Credits
This course examines key issues within environmental policy. As well as exploring the history and origins of policy, we will explore some of the key debates such as eco-centrism versus anthropocentrism, animal rights, global justice and our obligations to future generations. Key concepts will include local, state, national, and international policy perspectives; views of democracy and social justice. Reference will be made to other strands of environmental policy and contemporary political theory such as liberalism, socialism, feminism, nationalism and anarchism.
Offered: Fall

EVST 250 Narratives of Nature and Culture 3 Credits
Narratives—stories—are one of the primary tools humans use to shape their understanding of themselves and their environment. Course examines non-fiction, creative non-fiction and fictional narratives to identify origins and elaborations of stories we tell about nature and culture as they impact our relationships to our environments.
Prerequisites: ENG 111 and ENG 112 or HON 101.
Fulfills College Core: Field 5 (Social Sciences)
Offered: once a year.

EVST 259 Environmental History of the United States 3 Credits
This course examines the evolving relationship between humans and the nonhuman natural world in the United States. Topics include the ecological implications of the arrival of African and European peoples in North America, westward expansion, impacts of industrialization, the industrialization of agriculture, and the development of ecological consciousness.
Fulfills College Core: Field 4 (History)

EVST 498 Internship 1-3 Credits
Students will have the opportunity to participate in the daily work of an environmental agency or organization. Students assume responsibility for daily work and, upon agreement with the instructor and site supervisor, a reflection journal, a research paper and 120 hours of work on-site.
Prerequisite: permission of chair & associate dean.

EVST 499 Independent Study 1-4 Credits
Study and work with a faculty supervisor. Project to be determined by faculty agreement. Independent studies require an application and approval by the associate dean.
Prerequisite: permission of the instructor, department chair, & associate dean.