

Environmental Studies Program

2021 Fall Courses for First-Year Students

ENVS 3: Environment and Society

Time Period: 12

The relationship between humans and the environment is mediated by the consumption of natural resources, the discharge of pollution and waste, and the transformation of landscapes and ecosystems. Unsustainable outcomes arise because individuals and organizations have incentives to undertake actions that degrade the environmental quality, often in the context of markets. As a result, achieving sustainability requires laws, public policies, social norms, and shared understandings that align individual action with collective well-being. This course analyzes the causes and solutions of environmental problems through the integration of concepts from a variety of social science disciplines. In addition, it explores the central role that ecology and ecosystem science play in understanding and responding to sustainability challenges.

Dist: SOC. Instructors: Howarth, Erbaugh

ENVS 17: Marine Policy

Time Period: 11

People use the oceans for transportation, recreation, food, mineral wealth, waste disposal, military defense, and many other important things. This course explores the most significant human-ocean interactions known today from two perspectives: science and policy. From the scientific literature, students will learn about issues ranging from the physical effects of sea level rise to the biological impacts of pollution to the bioeconomic repercussions of overfishing. For each of the problems that are revealed by science, we will also critically evaluate relevant policy solutions to understand how institutional design can (or can't) enhance human interactions with the oceans. This includes insights into the politics surrounding oceans issues in the US and around the world.

Dist: SOC. Instructor: Webster.

ENVS 60: Environmental Law

Time Period: 2A

Environmental law and policy deals with the ways that human societies regulate the interaction of individuals, communities, businesses, and governments with environmental systems – both natural systems, such as forests, grazing lands, and marine ecosystems, and human-created systems such as the manufacturing industry, fossil fuel production and use, agriculture, and cities. While the focus of this course is environmental law, it is for anyone interested in learning about the foundations and practice of the Law in general, both nationally and internationally. Using the regulation of pollution, waste, land (private and public), and biodiversity as our models, we will cover how laws are made by courts (judicial opinions), legislatures (statutes), administrative agencies (regulations), and Presidents (executive orders). In addition, through assignments and class projects, we will cover the fundamentals of legal research, writing, and argument that are critical for the practice of law, as well as being necessary for anyone interested in the study of environmental law and policy. Most lectures will be available for online viewing, leaving more class time for discussions, mock legal proceedings, and other activities.

[Please note: Most appropriate for first-year students who have taken AP Environmental Science and have strong writing skills.] *Dist: SOC. Instructor: Jones*