

Environmental Studies

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Description of the Major. Widespread environmental problems such as biodiversity loss, resource depletion, and environmental change and degradation are among the most pressing global issues of our day. They have tremendous scientific, social, and moral dimensions that require a sophisticated, informed, and compassionate response from a range of disciplinary perspectives. The field of environmental studies provides this range, as it encompasses environmental science as well as the environmental humanities and environmental social sciences. Students in this major will develop an interdisciplinary knowledge base and set of skills to engage contemporary environmental issues.

Distinctive Features. Westmont's Environmental Studies situates stewardship of the earth in the context of Christian theology and environmental ethics. Westmont is ideally posed to attract students interested in studying environmental fields, given its natural beauty from mountain to coast, and close proximity to the Channel Islands National Park and Los Padres National Forest.

Career Choices. Santa Barbara is well known for its many vibrant and well-respected organizations, such as the Environmental Defense Center, Community Environmental Council, Santa Barbara Land Trust, Channel Islands Restoration, Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens, Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, Wilderness Youth Program and many more, all of which have a strong positive relationship with Westmont, and have already hosted Westmont students as interns and/or visited our campus as guest speakers.

Requirements for a Major: 45 units

Required Core: 17 units

ENV 001 Introduction to Environmental Studies (4)
ENV 101 Earth and Environmental Science (4)
ENV 102 Introduction to Geographic Information Systems (4)
ENV 195 Environmental Studies Capstone (1)
PHI 115 Environmental Ethics (4)

Natural Sciences: 4 units

One of the following:

BIO 104 Marine Biology (4)

- BIO 108 Animal Diversity (4)
- BIO 125 General Ecology (4)
- BIO 141 Ornithology/Herpetology (4)
- BIO 151 Plant Classification and Biodiversity (4)
- BIO 1XX Restoration Ecology (4)
- PHS 011 Introduction to Physical Sciences (4)
- Other natural science courses with a substantive environmental component, special topics courses, or senior seminars, as approved by the chair of the major.
- Other natural science environmental courses offered at Au Sable institute for Environmental Studies or other Westmont-approved off-campus programs (e.g. Biological Agriculture, Conservation Biology, Land Resources, Restoration Ecology, Environmental Chemistry).

Social Sciences: 8 units

Two of the following:

- EB 106 Environmental and Natural Resource Economics (4)
- HIS 010ENV Perspectives on World History: Environment (4)
- HIS 015 Introduction to Archaeology (4)
- HIS 045 Environmental History of the Holocaust (4)
- HIS 178 California History (4)
- KNS 140 Food Systems (4)
- POL 124 International Development (4)
- POL 127 Environmental Politics (4)
- SOC 161 Environmental Sociology
- Other social science courses with a substantive environmental component, special topics courses, or senior seminars, as approved by the chair of the major.
- Other social science environmental courses offered at Au Sable institute for Environmental Studies or other Westmont-approved off-campus programs (e.g. Environmental Law and Politics, International Development and Environmental Sustainability, Sustainable Community Development).

Humanities: 4 units

One of the following:

- ART 134 Land into Landscape: The Anthroposcenic Imagination (4)
- ART 162 Screen Printing (4)
- COM 129 Persuasion and Propaganda (4)
- COM 130 Argumentation and Advocacy (4)
- ENG 002ENV Composition: Environment (4)
- ENG 006ENV Studies in Literature: Environment (4)
- *ENG 060 Writers in Conversation: Dystopian Fiction (4)
- *ENG 104 Modern Grammar and Advanced Composition (4)
- *ENG 143 Topics in Writing: Nature Writing (4)
- RS 101 Pentateuch (4)
- RS 108 Prophetic Literature of the Old Testament (4)

RS 116 The Apocalypse (4)

RS 134 Gender in Theological Perspective (4)

Other humanities courses with a substantive environmental component, special topics courses, or senior seminars, as approved by the chair of the major.

Other social science environmental courses offered at Au Sable institute for Environmental Studies or other Westmont-approved off-campus programs.

*Requires a Major Substitution form

Electives: 8-9 units

Any of the options listed above in the natural science, social science, or humanities categories

ENV 120 Applied Sustainability: Moving from Theory to Action (4)

PEA 034A Active Gardening: Movement, Health, and Ecology (1)

PEA 067A Trail Hiking and Running (1)

Internship or Research: 3-4 units

ENV 190 Environmental Internship

Or environment-related research courses in any discipline, including major honors

Requirements for a Minor: 20 units

Required Courses:

ENV 001 Introduction to Environmental Studies (4)

Electives: 16 units

At least one course must be taken from each of the three following areas.

Natural Sciences

BIO 104 Marine Biology (4)

BIO 108 Animal Diversity (4)

BIO 125 General Ecology (4)

BIO 141 Ornithology/Herpetology (4)

BIO 151 Plant Classification (4)

CHM 004 Chemistry, Culture, and the Environment (4)

ENV 101 Earth and Environmental Science (4)

ENV 102 Introduction to Geographic Information Systems (4)

Other natural science special topics courses with a substantive environmental emphasis (e.g. BIO 1XX Restoration Ecology, CS 1XX Computing for Community Action)

Other natural science environmental courses offered at Au Sable Institute for Environmental Studies or other Westmont-approved off-campus programs (e.g., Environmental Applications in GIS, Biological Agriculture, Conservation Biology, Land Resources, Restoration Ecology, Environmental Chemistry)

Social Sciences

EB 106 Environmental and Natural Resource Economics (4)
 HIS 010ENV Perspectives on World History: Environment (4)
 HIS 015 Introduction to Archaeology (4)
 HIS 045 Environmental History of the Holocaust (4)
 HIS 178 California History (4)
 KNS 140 Food Systems (4)
 POL 124 International Development (4)
 POL 127 Environmental Politics (4)
 SOC 161 Environmental Sociology (4)
 Other social science environment courses offered at Au Sable Institute for Environmental Studies or other Westmont-approved off-campus programs (e.g., Environmental Law and Politics, International Development and Environmental Sustainability, Sustainable Community Development)

Humanities

ART 134 Land into Landscape: The Anthropogenic Imagination (4)
 COM 129 Persuasion and Propaganda (4)
 COM 130 Argumentation and Advocacy (4)
 *ENG 002ENV Composition: Environment (4)
 *ENG 006ENV Studies in Literature: Environment (4)
 *ENG 044ENV Studies in World Literature: Environment (4)
 *ENG 060 Writers in Conversation: Dystopian Fiction (4)
 *ENG 104 Modern Grammar and Advanced Composition: Environment (4)
 PHI 115 Environmental Ethics (4)
 Other humanities courses with a substantive environmental emphasis (e.g. RS 108 Prophetic Literature, RS 116 The Apocalypse, RS 134 Gender in Theological Perspective, RS 101 The Pentateuch)
 *Requires a Major Substitution form

Other Elective

ENV 120 Applied Sustainability: Moving from Theory to Action (4)
 ENV 190 Environmental Studies Internship (1-4) (may be distributed into three areas above, as appropriate)
 ENV 195 Environmental Studies Capstone (1)
 PEA 034A Active Gardening: Movement, Health, and Ecology (1)
 PEA 067A Trail Hiking and Running (1)

Other natural science, social science, or humanities courses with a substantive environmental emphasis, special topics courses, or senior seminars may be approved by the minor advisor.

At least two courses must be upper-division. Courses may have prerequisites. For courses where environmental issues are not the sole focus, students should choose an environment-related issue for any independent project assigned, as approved by the minor advisor.

Course Descriptions

ENV 001 Introduction to Environmental Studies (4) This course is an introduction to the main features of the environment and global environmental issues. It uses an interdisciplinary approach that includes environmental science, ethics, literature, history, politics, sociology, and economics. It cultivates a deep understanding of individual and corporate connections to the natural world in all its diversity, and helps students develop an interdisciplinary knowledge base and set of skills to engage contemporary environmental issues from local to global scales. It also situates stewardship of the earth in the context of Christian theology and social environmental ethics, fosters an ability to analyze and debate complex environmental problems, and devise constructive, imaginative strategies to address them.

ENV 101 Earth and Environmental Science (4) Prerequisites: ENV 001 preferred for Environmental Studies majors and minors. This course is designed as a survey of Earth Science and Environmental Science topics to explore Earth's natural processes, how humans have impacted these processes, and our potential responses.

ENV 102 Introduction to Geographic Information Systems (4) Prerequisites: Sophomore standing; ENV 001 preferred for Environmental Studies majors and minors. This introductory course provides students with foundational knowledge and practical skills in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) using QGIS, an open-source mapping platform. Students will learn to work with spatial data to create maps, analyze spatial data, and communicate environmental stories using geo-located information. The course emphasizes hands-on learning through weekly skill-building exercises and lab projects that integrate GIS techniques with themes or environmental justice, creation care, and stewardship.

ENV 120 Applied Sustainability: Moving from Theory to Action (4) Prerequisite: ENV 001. Sustainability is an ever-evolving field that requires leaders with technical skills, interpersonal aptitudes, and an up-to-date knowledge of the latest sustainability practices. This survey-style course seeks to move students from an awareness of environmental issues to understanding the practical solutions being implemented by institutions in the real world. As a conceptual base, we'll explore literature on systems-thinking, change-management, and how to use human psychology for positive change. We'll then use Westmont as a living lab to understand a full slate of sustainability issues – from waste, to water, to energy, to food, and beyond – and learn key practices in sustainability reporting and change-management.

ENV 150 Topics (1-4) Special courses offered on selected topics in Environmental Studies. Content as announced.

ENV 190 Environmental Studies Internship (1-4) Prerequisite: ENV 001. Internship experience in environment-related fields such as environmental advocacy, communication, art, or writing; resource management, wildlife management, habitat restoration, sustainable agriculture, green business, wilderness therapy, or nature literacy. Internships will preferably be performed in Santa Barbara or in conjunction with the Westmont in San Francisco program.

ENV 195 Environmental Studies Capstone (1) Prerequisite: ENV 001. A capstone seminar that integrates and applies diverse knowledge and experience gained from the completion of an interdisciplinary Environmental Studies major or minor. Students will design and take leadership on a mature, formational campus-based project that will bring key aspects of what they have learned to a broader audience.

ENV 198 Research (1-4) Prerequisite: Faculty Consent Required. Upper Division laboratory and/or field research with a faculty member. Students will conduct experiments, will typically connect data, analyze the data, and present written and/or oral presentations based on their work.