ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Program Description
Many of the greatest challenges currently facing human society concern the strained relation between a resources-intensive global civilization and the ecological systems of the world on which it relies. Environmental Studies is an interdisciplinary field that has emerged in response to these challenges, bringing together natural science, social science, the humanities, and the professions to understand and solve complex environmental problems and conceptualize the workings of communities that are truly environmentally sustainable.

The Environmental Studies Department offers students formal academic programs through which they can engage with environmental issues effectively by integrating skills and knowledge from many different disciplines. The major in Environmental Studies consists of a core sequence of required interdisciplinary courses coupled to one of four concentrations, allowing each student to pursue the aspect of environmental studies of most interest to her. The concentration areas are:

- Environmental STEM;
- Global Environmental Policy;
- Nature, Culture, Arts; and
- Spirituality, Justice, Ethics.

The minor in Environmental Studies is a flexible program that offers students the opportunity to integrate their environmental interests with work in another major field through independent, hands-on projects as well as through regular coursework.

Study Abroad
Saint Mary’s has a long history of providing quality international programs as an essential part of our educational mission—forming women leaders who will make a difference in the world. As this world becomes increasingly interdependent, the College offers an expanding range of semester, year, semester break, and summer study and service programs in a wide variety of countries, and encourages students to take advantage of them. Learn more about the various Study Abroad opportunities (https://catalog.saintmarys.edu/undergraduate/academic-life/international-programs/).

Programs

- Environmental STEM Concentration, Environmental Studies, Bachelor of Arts - ESES (https://catalog.saintmarys.edu/undergraduate/programs/environmental-studies/environmental-stem-concentration-bachelor-arts/)
- Environmental Studies, Bachelor of Arts - ENVS (https://catalog.saintmarys.edu/undergraduate/programs/environmental-studies/environmental-studies-bachelor-arts/)
- Environmental Studies, Minor - ENVS (https://catalog.saintmarys.edu/undergraduate/programs/environmental-studies/environmental-studies-minor/)
- Global Environmental Policy Concentration, Environmental Studies, Bachelor of Arts - ESGE (https://catalog.saintmarys.edu/undergraduate/programs/environmental-studies/global-environmental-policy-concentration-bachelor-arts/)
- Nature Culture Arts Concentration, Environmental Studies, Bachelor of Arts - ESNC (https://catalog.saintmarys.edu/undergraduate/programs/environmental-studies/nature-culture-concentration-bachelor-arts/)
- Spirituality Justice Ethics Concentration, Environmental Studies, Bachelor of Arts - ESSJ (https://catalog.saintmarys.edu/undergraduate/programs/environmental-studies/spirituality-justice-ethics-concentration-bachelor-arts/)

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Student Learning Outcomes
A student majoring in Environmental Studies will:

- Understand and analyze the processes and principles of natural phenomena and the human actions underlying environmental challenges.
- Identify and analyze connections between the natural environment and social justice concerns due to the unequal impact of environmental challenges on groups, for example, as distinguished by genus, race, ethnicity, gender, class, culture, sexuality, or geography.
- Articulate the historical forces shaping cultural conceptions of nature.
- Understand the interplay between local and global scales of sustainability within natural and human systems.
- Integrate knowledge and skills from multiple disciplines to evaluate environmental challenges and potential solutions.
- Develop community, management, and leadership skills necessary for advocacy on environmental challenges.

A student minoring in Environmental Studies will:

- Understand and analyze the processes and principles of natural phenomena and the human actions underlying environmental challenges.
- Identify and analyze connections between the natural environment and social justice concerns due to the unequal impact of environmental challenges on groups, for example, as distinguished by genus, race, ethnicity, gender, class, culture, sexuality, or geography.
- Articulate the historical forces shaping cultural conceptions of nature.
- Understand the interplay between local and global scales of sustainability within natural and human systems.

Environmental Studies Courses

ENVS 101 Sustainable Living (1)
A practical course that offers an introduction to making sustainable life choices. Topics considered may include food, gardening, electronics, recycling, transportation, renewable energy, home energy efficiency, community-building, spirituality, and more.

ENVS 161 Introduction to Environmental Studies (3)
An interdisciplinary course on the systemic interaction of human beings with their environments. It identifies interests informing environmental decisions and introduces practices of environmental advocacy.
ENVS 171 Introduction to Environmental Science (3)
An interdisciplinary course that investigates the study of our environment from a scientific perspective. We will focus on principles of the nature of science, matter, energy, water, and life in terms of biology, chemistry, and geology.

ENVS 203 Sustainability at Saint Mary's College and in the Holy Cross Charism (2)
This course will address sustainability in the context of the local academic community and its institutions. In light of the recent papal encyclical, Laudato si, On Care for Our Common Home, this course will provide students an opportunity to explore in an interdisciplinary way the challenges of sustainability and develop collaborative strategies for making our common campus homes more sustainable. This course will be offered concurrently at ND, SMC, and HCC, and will be co-taught by faculty from all three campuses. It will meet in rotation on each of the three campuses once per week for two hours. Students will be invited to examine the course materials in conversation with the mission of the Congregation of Holy Cross through immersion at each of the campuses and encounters with the sisters, brothers, and priests of Holy Cross and with sustainability professionals.

ENVS 217 Environmental Policy (3)
This course introduces the processes by which policy is made at local, state, national, and international levels of government with attention to the special challenges of creating sound environmental policy. It examines the strengths and weaknesses of policies currently in place and prepares students to intervene constructively in the formation of environmental policy.

ENVS 290 Special Topics (3)
May be repeated with a different topic.

ENVS 331 Human Ecology and Spirituality (3)
An examination of the relationship of spirituality and ecology within several religious traditions. Particular attention is given to Christianity so that we may study at least one tradition in some depth. The course considers both how human spiritual experience is shaped by its context within particular ecosystems and how religious traditions shape humans’ relation to the biosphere. Prerequisite: RLST 101. ENVS 161 or ENVS 171 highly recommended.

ENVS 385 Interdisciplinary Environmental Research (3)
This course provides an introduction to a suite of important methods of analysis in environmental studies. Within a framework of interdisciplinary problem solving, students will learn to define questions for investigation, and they will gain experience using quantitative, qualitative, and textual research tools to address environmental issues. We will discuss the ethics and politics of research and strategies for using environmental research to support environmental advocacy and action. Prerequisite: ENVS 161, ENVS 171.

ENVS 386 Current Issues in Environmental Studies (1)
This reading seminar surveys recent articles in the scholarly and popular presses on significant current environmental issues. Weekly readings for discussion are selected by faculty and by students. Discussions will analyze the methods and the rhetoric used in the articles in addition to examining the implications of the issues addressed and how interdisciplinary problem solving could be applied to each issue. Prerequisite: ENVS 161, ENVS 171.

ENVS 395 Environmental Studies Capstone Seminar (1)
This capstone experience allows students to develop projects centered on a particular environmental issue of interest to the group. Prerequisite: Junior standing, ENVS 161, ENVS 171, and an additional course approved for the ENVS minor (may be taken concurrently).

ENVS 399 Internship (1-3)
ENVS 495 Comprehensive Project Seminar (3)
A collaborative research seminar that provides structure for students’ work on their comprehensive projects for Environmental Studies. Prerequisite: ENVS 385 and ENVS 386.

ENVS 497 Independent Study (1-3)
May be repeated.

ENVS 499 Internship (1-3)
May be repeated.