

Environmental Studies

Contact Information

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Office Location: MS PAC 350

- Bachelor of Arts
- Minors (2)

Accelerated B.A./M.S. Program

To be eligible for the Accelerated BA/MS program, applicants must have completed the UIS BA in Environmental Studies with a minimum GPA of 3.5 in ENS course work and a minimum 3.5 cumulative GPA. The ENS Director of Graduate Admissions will determine whether a student is eligible for the accelerated program when the student applies to the ENS MS program. Eligible students will be given the option to pursue the Accelerated BA/MS Program when they are offered admission to the ENS MS program. Students offered admission to the Accelerated BA/MS Program can choose not to pursue this option; in this case, they will complete the standard MS curriculum. If an eligible student is accepted into the Accelerated BA/MS Program and chooses to pursue this option, eight credits of ENS electives will be waived, resulting in the student needing 32 (rather than 40) post-baccalaureate credit hours to complete the MS degree. A Student Petition approved by the ENS Program Lead, College Dean, and campus Associate Vice Chancellor for Graduate Education is required to make these adjustments to the degree requirements before the student graduates.

Goals & Mission

Environmental Studies is an interdisciplinary program that provides a framework for studying the relationship between humans and their environment. Society looks to environmental professionals to lead the way in protecting air, water, and soil quality and developing better solutions for the management, conservation, and restoration of our resources. The mission of the Environmental Studies Program at UIS is to provide students with the advanced interdisciplinary training necessary for addressing environmental problems. Graduates will be prepared for diverse careers in environmental fields.

We offer an interdisciplinary Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Environmental Studies and two minors: one in Environmental Studies and one in Geographic Information Systems (GIS). The ENS major and minor are flexible; students can choose electives that fit their interests and career goals.

Honors in Environmental Studies

Students interested in pursuing ENS Program Honors must work individually with faculty to identify a feasible honors project. An application must be completed and approved by the faculty supervisor and program. A copy of the application will be retained by the program and by the Office of Undergraduate Education. Applications must be approved by 15 March of the spring before the Undergraduate Capstone is taken. This allows at least one year to complete the project, including time to seek funding (if necessary) and prepare for presentation at a symposium or publication. To receive ENS Program

Honors students must graduate with a cumulative undergraduate, UIS, and ENS GPA of at least 3.5. Students may apply for provisional admission to ENS Program Honors provided that each of those GPAs are at least 3.25 and it is mathematically possible to bring them to 3.5 by the time of graduation. Send an email to ens@uis.edu to request an application for ENS Program Honors.

Students pursuing ENS Program Honors will complete the same Undergraduate Capstone closure course as other majors. However, the Capstone project will necessarily be more substantive than the projects pursued by students not seeking ENS Program Honors. Students must enroll in at least 1 credit of ENS 425 Undergraduate Research to document their work.

Topics encompassed by environmental studies are broad, and student research, scholarly, or creative works will similarly be diverse. Student projects might take the form of *discovery*, *integration*, *application*, or *teaching*. (Please refer to Ernest Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered* for detailed discussion of these terms.) Students must present their results/products at a professional symposium or in a refereed medium before graduation. Students will work directly with ENS faculty who will serve as the primary supervisor; if appropriate, other ENS faculty can assist. Faculty supervisors will:

- Work collaboratively with students in developing and refining the project.
- Advise the student regarding resources and/or course work needed to accomplish the project.
- Advise the student regarding the Institutional Review Board, Institutional Committee for the Care and Use of Animals, and/or other units providing research oversight, if necessary for the particular project.
- Read and critique the written component of the project.
- Help the student find a forum for dissemination of the results; this may take the form of a professional symposium or publication in a refereed medium.

There is no pre-determined minimum or maximum length for the written document that must be approved by the faculty supervisor; instead the length should be dictated by the topic. Students should follow APA style unless there is a compelling reason the faculty supervisor requests another style (such as writing in the style of a particular journal where the manuscript will be submitted for publication). The final written document must be approved by the faculty supervisor and the Undergraduate Capstone instructor; in the case where those positions are held by the same person, the Program Lead or designee will be the second approver. This document must be approved before the week of final exams in the semester during which the student will graduate.

With the approval of the faculty supervisor, students may submit a Student Petition to apply up to four credits of ENS 425 Undergraduate Research based on their honors project toward electives required for the major in Environmental Studies. Those credits can be applied toward the total required number of upper division hours for a degree from UIS. With an approved Individualized Course Title form, ENS 425 can be listed on the student's transcripts with a more descriptive name representing the specific work being done.

ENS Program Honors is distinguished from “Undergraduate Honors” which is awarded at graduation for designated GPAs and are labeled *summa cum laude*, *magna cum laude*, and *cum laude*. ENS Program Honors is also separate from the Capital Scholars Honors Program, which has its own set of requirements.

The Bachelor's Degree

The Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies at UIS includes a multi-disciplinary curriculum with interdisciplinary learning goals that incorporates the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities.

Advising

Any student with an interest in Environmental Studies should speak with an academic advisor about the major and/or minor requirements. The major and both minors are open to students of all academic backgrounds. Students can declare the major and/or either minor using a Change of Curriculum form.

Program Learning Outcomes

Students earning a bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies will:

1. Develop basic interdisciplinary literacy in the natural sciences, social sciences, and the humanities as they contribute to an understanding of environmental issues.
2. Critically analyze environmental problems by integrating evidence from multiple sources.
3. Critically evaluate the ethical implications of environmental actions and engage in responsible decision-making.
4. Identify key stakeholders involved in environmental issues and understand their perspectives, values, and objectives.
5. Acquire knowledge of the historical roots of environmental problems and the impact of human and natural activities over time.
6. Skillfully address environmental issues through appropriate policies and regulations.
7. Work collaboratively and productively in interdisciplinary professional settings with people from diverse backgrounds with different types of expertise.
8. Communicate effectively and persuasively (orally, visually, and in writing) and adjust communication styles to fit the intended audience.
9. Develop, implement, manage and evaluate short-and long-term solutions to environmental problems.

Requirements

To earn their degree, students must complete a minimum of 34 credit hours, including 4 core courses and 7 elective courses (22 credit hours of electives across 2 thematic areas). Because this is an interdisciplinary major, students must select at least 4 elective courses from the Environmental Social Sciences & Policy thematic area and at least 3 courses from the Environmental Natural Sciences thematic area. At least 4 elective courses must be at the 400 level; only 1 elective can be either 100 or 200 level. Students must earn at

least a C in the four required courses and a C average in the elective courses.

In addition, students must complete all general education requirements in the UIS undergraduate curriculum. Up to semester hours of lower-division courses transferred from an accredited institution may be counted toward the ENS major; the decision to accept transferred hours will be made on an individual basis by the ENS Program. Students are expected to meet with an ENS advisor before or soon after declaring the major.

Core Course Requirements

ENS 251	Introduction to Environmental Sciences	3
ENS 271	Introduction to Sustainability	3
ENS 451	Undergraduate Capstone	3
ENS 476	Environmental Ethics	3

List of thematic categories and appropriate electives ^{1,2}

The 100- to 300-level elective courses listed below are each three credit hours. Undergraduate students enrolling in 400-level courses listed as “three or four hours” must enroll in the three-credit hour section. 400-level courses counted toward an undergraduate degree cannot be taken again and counted for credit toward a graduate degree.

Environmental Social Sciences and Policy (at least 4 courses required)

ENS 101	Women and the Environment	
ENS 311	ECCE: Global Change in Local Places	
ENS 332/ IGS 331	ECCE: Cultural Geography	
ENS 401	ECCE: Environmental Justice: Science, Policy, and Activism	
ENS 411	ECCE: Introduction to Environmental Education	
ENS 418/ HIS 438	ECCE: American Environmental History	
ENS 419	Environmental Law	
ENS 421	Environmental Economics	
ENS/SOA 422	Environmental Sociology	
ENS 448	Sustainable Food Systems	
ENS 449	Agricultural Politics & Policy	
ENS 465	Water Resources and Society	
ENS 475	Political Ecology AKA The Political Life of Trees, Trash, & Turtles	
ENS 483	Environmental Policies: National Environmental Policy Act	
ENS 485	Environmental Policies: Water Quality	
ENS 488	China's Environment and the World	

Environmental Natural Sciences (at least 3 courses required)

BIO 371	Principles Of Ecology	
ENS 151	Earth Science	
ENS 262	Environmental Physical Geography	
ENS 304	Mapping our Physical and Social World	
ENS 403	Transportation: Problems and Planning Procedures	
ENS 404	Fundamentals of Geographic Information Systems	

ENS 405	Fundamentals of Remote Sensing
ENS 425	Ecological Issues
ENS/BIO 444	Aquatic Ecology
ENS/BIO 445	Biology Of Water Pollution
ENS 447/ CHE 431	Environmental Chemistry
ENS 455	Introduction to Environmental Consulting
ENS 463	Our Changing Climate
ENS 464	Paleoecology
ENS 466/467	Ecohydrology
ENS 468	Environmental Geology
ENS 472	Urban Environments
ENS 477	Renewable Energy
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Total Hours	34

¹ Students must enroll in the three-credit hour section.

² Students may count up to four hours of ENS 440 Topics in Environmental Studies with approval of a Student Petition.

Environmental Studies Minors

- Environmental Studies Minor
- Geographic Information Systems Minor