ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES, B.S.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus
End Campus: Altoona

Program Description
This interdisciplinary major is designed to provide students with an integrated and critical knowledge of the natural environment and human interactions with it. Students will receive a strong foundation in the natural and physical sciences, but will extend their studies across several disciplines, emphasizing both public policy issues and the role of the natural environment in literature, history, and culture. The goal of the program is "ecological literacy," which means that students will develop a broad-based understanding and awareness of environments and environmental issues, and they will develop the problem-solving and technical skills to address those issues. Program requirements include interdisciplinary courses in environmental studies and a broad array of courses in biology, geology, chemistry, physics, geography, economics, political science, English, history, and philosophy. By selecting appropriate electives to supplement the "additional courses" requirement of the major, students may develop an emphasis in either a specific field (i.e., biology) or in a general area of study (natural science, social science, and humanities).

The B.S. in Environmental Studies will better prepare our graduates for graduate studies and/or employment in the sciences (e.g., ecology, geosciences, environmental sciences, and physical geography). Many graduate programs require at least one semester of calculus, chemistry, and physics. Furthermore, the requirements of additional 400-level courses in the sciences will permit students to target their undergraduate studies in a particular area of science so that they are best prepared for graduate work in their area of choice and/or employment.

What is Environmental Studies?
Environmental Studies provides a broadly-based liberal arts background for the study of environmental issues, blending the principles of the natural sciences with the intellectual traditions of the humanities and the social sciences. Emphasis is placed on experiential learning, ecological literacy, and problem-solving with a goal towards purposeful action.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES (http://altoona.psu.edu/academics/bachelors-degrees/environmental-studies/)

You Might Like This Program If...
You wish to develop the analytical tools for understanding environmental issues while maintaining an emphasis on the role of socio-cultural influences in shaping human behavior towards the environment. Students benefit from working closely with faculty and peers on undergraduate research, community service, and out-of-classroom activities.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT WHY STUDENTS CHOOSE TO STUDY ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES (http://altoona.psu.edu/academics/bachelors-degrees/environmental-studies/degree-options/)

Entrance to Major
For entrance into the Environmental Studies B.S. program, students must have completed the following course: ENVST 100, and have received a grade of C or better in the course.

Degree Requirements
For the Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Studies, a minimum of 121 credits is required:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Education</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirements for the Major</td>
<td>88-90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes: 3 credits of GH courses; 9 credits of GN courses; 6 credits of GQ courses; 6 credits of GS courses.

General Education
Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required.)
- Quantification (GQ): 6 credits
- Writing and Speaking (GWS): 9 credits

Knowledge Domains
- Arts (GA): 6 credits
- Health and Wellness (GHW): 3 credits
- Humanities (GH): 6 credits
- Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS): 6 credits
- Natural Sciences (GN): 9 credits

Integrative Studies (may also complete a Knowledge Domain requirement)
- Inter-Domain or Approved Linked Courses: 6 credits

University Degree Requirements
First Year Engagement
All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.
First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

**Cultures Requirement**

6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

- United States Cultures: 3 credits
- International Cultures: 3 credits

**Writing Across the Curriculum**

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

**Total Minimum Credits**

A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

**Quality of Work**

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn a grade of C or better in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44. For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

**Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition**

To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn a grade of C or better in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80). More information is available from the college of graduation.

**Requirements for the Major**

To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn a grade of C or better in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80). More information is available from the college of graduation.

**Program Learning Objectives**

- Develop structural knowledge pertaining to an interdisciplinary problem or course theme.
- Integrate and/synthesize information from a variety of contexts or fields of knowledge.
- Apply the knowledge of physical and socio-economic environments in the analysis of multi-dimensional environmental issues.
- Demonstrate an active interest in the natural world as evidenced by involvement in environmental issues and/or outdoor activities after receiving their degrees.

**Academic Advising**

The objectives of the university’s academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and-out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee’s unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.
**Suggested Academic Plan**

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2021-22 academic year. To access previous years’ suggested academic plans, please visit the archive ([https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/](https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/)) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition (Note: the archive only contain suggested academic plans beginning with the 2018-19 edition of the Undergraduate Bulletin).

**Environmental Studies, B.S. at Altoona Campus**

The course series listed below provides only one of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an Academic Requirements or What If report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

### First Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>ENGL 15, 30H, or ESL 15‡</td>
<td>3 ENGL 180†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BIOL 110†</td>
<td>4 BIOL 220W*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CHEM 20*</td>
<td>3 MATH 22 or 40‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CHEM 21†</td>
<td>1 CAS 100‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ENVST 100*‡‡</td>
<td>3 ECON 102 or 104*</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>PSU 3</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>General Education (GHW)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total Credits 16-17**

### Second Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>CHEM 110*</td>
<td>3 PHYS 250*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CHEM 111†</td>
<td>1 General Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MATH 110 or 140*</td>
<td>4 General Education (GS)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SOILS 101†</td>
<td>3 BIOL 230W, 240W, or 222‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>GEOSC 1†</td>
<td>3 General Education (GN)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>General Education (GHW)†</td>
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**Total Credits 16**

### Third Year

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Semester</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>STAT 200 or 250*</td>
<td>4 ENVST 200*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CHEM 202*</td>
<td>3 GEOG 115†</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>GEOG 160*</td>
<td>3 ENVST 428‡</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ENGL 202A, 202B, or 202C‡</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>General Education Course</td>
<td>3 PLSC 135 or PLSC 425*</td>
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</table>

**Total Credits 16-17**

### Fourth Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Arts and Humanities Course †</td>
<td>3 ENVST 400W*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>HIST 453*</td>
<td>3 PHIL 403*</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ENVST 395 or 496*</td>
<td>3 Elective</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>General Education Course</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Natural Sciences 400-level Course*</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total Credits 123-124</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major
† Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education
# Course is an Entrance to Major requirement
‡ Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

**University Requirements and General Education Notes:**

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy University Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

GWS, GQ, GH, GN, GA, GH, and GS are abbreviations used to identify General Education program courses. General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ) and Knowledge Domains (GH, GW, GN, GA, GH, GS, and Integrative Studies). Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of ‘C’ or better.

Integrative Studies courses are required for the General Education program. N is the suffix at the end of a course number used to designate an Inter-Domain course and Z is the suffix at the end of a course number used to designate a Linked course.

**Career Paths**

This degree prepares students for graduate studies, and/or employment in the sciences such as environmental science, conservation biology, earth science, geology, and physical geography.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES PROGRAM ([http://altoona.psu.edu/academics/bachelors-degrees/environmental-studies/alumni/](http://altoona.psu.edu/academics/bachelors-degrees/environmental-studies/alumni/))

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES ([http://altoona.psu.edu/academics/bachelors-degrees/environmental-studies/alumni/](http://altoona.psu.edu/academics/bachelors-degrees/environmental-studies/alumni/))

**Contact**

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