EARTH SCIENCES, B.S.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: University Park

Program Description
This major provides a comprehensive program in environmental sciences based on a strong emphasis in Earth sciences. It is especially directed toward study of the problems that arise from the complex interaction of humanity’s technological and social activities with the natural environment. Graduates are in demand for positions in government, industry, and consulting. Professional activities include gathering and evaluating data on environments; management and coordination of specialized programs in environmental control and modification; and industrial and government planning. Suitable choices of courses may qualify students for graduate work in several fields.

What is Earth Sciences?
Earth sciences is the study of interactions between the lithosphere (solid Earth), hydrosphere (oceans and other bodies of water), atmosphere, and biosphere (humans and other animals). It involves a mixture of geosciences, geography, meteorology, and other natural sciences. Earth scientists seek to use a comprehensive understanding of the Earth and environmental processes to solve big picture problems in the world and answer outstanding questions about the universe. The flexible curriculum includes your choice of an interdisciplinary minor, which might include Climatology; Earth Systems; Earth and Sustainability; Energy Business and Finance; Marine Science; Planetary Science and Astronomy; or Watersheds and Water Resources. If you want to personalize your own curriculum, the Earth Sciences major may be right for you.

You Might Like This Program If...
• You like learning about human interactions with the Earth.
• You enjoy collaborating with people who have different perspectives and backgrounds.
• You have a broad interest in geosciences, meteorology, and/or geography, and would like to explore all of these disciplines and learn where they intersect and overlap.
• You seek to personalize an interdisciplinary curriculum that combines Earth science with other natural sciences such as planetary science or marine science.

Entrance to Major
In order to be eligible for entrance to this major, a student must:
1. attain at least a C (2.00) cumulative grade-point average for all courses taken at the University; and
2. have at least third-semester classification (https://www.registrar.psu.edu/enrollment/semester-classification.cfm).

READ SENATE POLICY 37-30: ENTRANCE TO AND CHANGES IN MAJOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY (https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/37-00-entrance-to-a-college-or-major/)

Degree Requirements
For the Bachelor of Science degree in Earth Sciences, a minimum of 123 credits is required:

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 (https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44).

21 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes: 9 credits of GN courses; 6 credits of GQ courses; 6 credits of GWS courses.

Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better
Select 15 credits of advanced earth science of the following:

Select 15 credits of introductory earth science of the following:

Select 3 credits of writing-intensive courses from within Earth and Mineral Sciences to include, but not limited to the following:

Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better
Select 15 credits of advanced earth science of the following:

Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better
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 and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- Quantification (GQ): 6 credits
- Writing and Speaking (GWS): 9 credits

Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- Arts (GA): 3 credits
- Health and Wellness (GHW): 3 credits

- Humanities (GH): 3 credits
- Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS): 3 credits
- Natural Sciences (GN): 3 credits

Integrative Studies

- Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain): 6 credits

Exploration

- GN, may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
- GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses. This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher: 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 at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Program Learning Objectives

- To produce graduates who can collect, analyze, understand, and use data and model results relevant to the Earth and environmental sciences.
• To produce graduates who possess an interdisciplinary understanding of Earth processes and resources through application of principles of meteorology, geography, and geosciences.
• To produce graduates who can communicate the results of scientific inquiry through writing and speaking to an audience with diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

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 advisor who serves as the student’s primary academic advisor, serving as the primary resource in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning.”

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/)

University Park
Jacob Hoover
Undergraduate Program Coordinator
542 Deike Building
University Park, PA 16802
814-865-7791
undergrad@geosc.psu.edu

Suggested Academic Plan
The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2024-25 academic year. To access previous years’ suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition.

Earth Sciences, B.S. at University Park 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>Fall</th>
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<td>MATH 141 or 141G††</td>
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Second Year

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| Total Credits         | 17      |

Third Year

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| Total Credits         | 14      |

Fourth Year

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<td>Minor Course§</td>
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<td>Minor Course§</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced Math/Stat/ CMPSC/GEOSC 210</td>
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<td>16.5-17.5</td>
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Total Credits 123-124

* 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 Cultural Diversity 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.
General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of ‘C’ or better.

All incoming Schreyer Honors College first-year students at University Park will take ENGL 137H/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL 138T/CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry the GWS designation and satisfy a portion of that General Education requirement. If the student's program prescribes GWS these courses will replace both ENGL 15/ENGL 30H and CAS 100A/CAS 100B/CAS 100C. Each course is 3 credits.

1 Students who begin their studies at non-UP locations and/or join the college after their first year should substitute CAS 100 (GWS), CAS 100A, CAS 100B, or CAS 100C; or ENGL 202C (GWS) for EM SC 100S (GWS). EM SC 100S Earth and Mineral Sciences First year Seminar (3) is a required course only for students who begin their studies at UP in the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences.


3 Supporting Course: Select 8-9 credits in other approved courses (Students may apply 6 credits of ROTC).

4 Advanced EARTH elective: Select 15 credits of advanced earth science from the following list (courses may not double count with minor requirements): GEOG 430(3), GEOG 438W(3), GEOG 412(3), GEOSC 204(4), GEOSC 320(3), GEOSC 340(3), GEOSC 402Y(3), GEOSC 416(3), METEO 300(4), METEO 431(3), METEO 475(3).

5 Complete one of the following interdisciplinary minors, in consultation from an adviser:
   CLIMATOLOGY
   MARINE SCIENCE
   WATERSHEDS & WATER RESOURCES
   EARTH SYSTEMS
   ENERGY BUSINESS & FINANCE
Earth Sciences, B.S. at Commonwealth Campuses

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General Education Health and Wellness (GHW) 1.5 Minor Course *⁵ 3

Advanced EARTH elective *⁴ 3

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- CLIMATOLOGY
- MARINE SCIENCE
- WATERSHEDS & WATER RESOURCES
- EARTH SYSTEMS
- ENERGY BUSINESS & FINANCE

Career Paths

The interdisciplinary nature of Earth sciences makes it a suitable degree for a variety of Earth- and environment-related industries, as well as for postgraduate studies in a variety of environmental sciences fields. It is also excellent preparation for a career in science education.
Careers
Graduates are in demand for positions dealing with environmental science, teaching, or environmental law or policy within government, industry, and consulting. These roles focus on gathering and evaluating data on environments, managing and coordinating specialized programs in environmental control and modification, and industrial and government planning.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF THE EARTH SCIENCES PROGRAM (https://www.geosc.psu.edu/undergraduate/why-geosciences/career-outlook/)

Opportunities for Graduate Studies
Graduates of the program may continue on to graduate-level studies in the geosciences, environmental science, meteorology, oceanography, planetary science, or other Earth sciences, as well as environmental law and related programs.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES (https://www.geosc.psu.edu/graduate/)

Professional Resources
• Geosciences Club (https://www.facebook.com/groups/46384419817/)
• Association for Women Geoscientists (https://sites.psu.edu/awgpennstate/)
• American Water Resources Association Penn State Student Chapter (https://agsci.psu.edu/students/clubs/list/other/)

Contact
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