

# Environmental Studies (ENV) - Courses

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## Courses

ENV 101 Cr.3

### **Introduction to Sustainability and Environmental Studies**

This interdisciplinary, introductory seminar explores current sustainability and environmental issues from a variety of perspectives (historical, social, and scientific) and disciplines (humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences). Attitudes toward the natural world and approaches to public and private decision-making are examined in terms of environmental justice issues. Field trips are taken to examine local and regional practices and issues. Offered Fall, Spring.

ENV 301 Cr.3

### **Environmental Sustainability**

What can we do as individuals and as a society to meet our own needs without harming future generations? This seminar course approaches sustainability as a way of asking better questions, drawing from many academic disciplines and practical experiences. Students will discuss environmental sustainability for multiple scales, including personal lifestyles, organizations, businesses, and public infrastructure systems. Prerequisite: ENV 101 or ENV 201. Offered Fall, Spring.

ENV 303 Cr.3

### **Topics in Environmental Studies**

This fully interdisciplinary seminar provides the opportunity to explore how scientific, historical, political, and ethical issues are interrelated in a specific environmental topic. Complexity of social-ecological systems is inherent in each pressing environmental issue. Course topics could include food, bicycle politics, environmental activism, and forest management. Repeatable for credit - maximum six. Prerequisite: ENV 101 or ENV 201. Offered Fall, Spring.

ENV 304 Cr.3

### **Topics in Environmental Justice**

Environmental inequalities for poor and minority populations are increasingly recognized by media, environmental leaders, and organizations around the world. As we study relationships between humans and the environment, we highlight attempts to rectify these uneven circumstances. Themes of the topic courses could include food justice, conservation and access to natural areas, dynamics within environmental organizations, history of the environmental justice movement, and sustainability. Repeatable for credit - maximum six. Prerequisite: ENV 101 or ENV 201. Offered Annually.

ENV 310 Cr.3

### **Food, Culture, and the Environment**

This course provides an opportunity to investigate reasons for our food choices and impacts of the food system. Students meet professionals in the food system and ask questions that are both personal and societal. What led to our "normal" food options? Why is food waste a big deal for the planet? How are other people affected by our food choices? Is organic farming a solution? What can we do to reduce our carbon and water footprints? To investigate these kinds of questions, the course incorporates interviews, photography, video presentations, readings, service learning, food sampling, and discussion groups. Prerequisite: ENV 101. Offered Occasionally.

ENV 311 Cr.3

### **The Mississippi River: Mighty and Managed**

This course examines how land and river management of the "Mighty Mississippi" have resulted in both infrastructure we depend on and significant environmental damage. This course examines reasons for river management; underserved communities along the river; and controversies with river transportation, flooding, recreation, pollution, and invasive species. Students study this dynamic and highly manipulated part of our "natural" landscape through readings, field trips, guest lectures, and discussion to develop a personal connection to the river and foster an understanding of how changes in one part of a hydrologic system impact those upstream and downstream. Prerequisite: ENV 101. Offered Occasionally.

ENV 312 Cr.3

### **Sustainability through Cinema**

Cinema has long shaped American culture and conversation. In this course students watch drama, animated, or documentary films with sustainability themes to help examine environmental fears and options. Through readings, discussion, and critical writing, students reflect on the accuracy of the films, the strengths and limitations of the art form, and if films motivate anyone to make changes on behalf of the planet and/or people. Prerequisite: ENV 101. Offered Occasionally.

ENV 313 Cr.3

### **Woodlands of the Driftless: History, Ecology, and Management**

Human dimensions have interacted with ecological processes throughout the history of the Driftless region forests. Understanding human interactions with woodlands brings greater meaning to our time in nature and leads to more informed choices for land management. In this course, students use a multi-disciplinary approach to examine competing values that influence management choices including forest products, rights of indigenous nations, biodiversity, recreation, aesthetics, and other ecosystem services. Students apply class concepts to real places through field trips, guest speakers, and an off-campus assignment. Prerequisite: ENV 101. Offered Occasionally.

ENV 314 Cr.3

### **Bicycling the Wisconsin Landscape**

This course provides an intellectual and active engagement with bicycling by exploring local, national, and global trends in bicycling. Students examine the history and politics of bicycling in relation to other forms of transit and includes the cultural, economic, and social dimensions of bicycling. Local and state planning efforts to improve bicycling are discussed and compared with cases where improving bike-ability has been successful and those that have not been as effective. Prerequisite: ENV 101. Offered Occasionally.

ENV 315 Cr.3

### **Sustainability: Principles and Practices**

This seminar course approaches sustainability using multiple academic disciplines and practical experiences to examine how both individuals and society can meet current needs without harming future generations. Students discuss environmental sustainability for multiple scales, including personal lifestyles, organizations, businesses, and public infrastructure systems. Prerequisite: ENV 101. Offered Occasionally.

ENV 316 Cr.3

**Occupying the Driftless: Culture, Place, and Environment**

This course examines the social, cultural, and ecological formations that shape the area popularly known as the Driftless, which includes northeastern Iowa, northern Illinois, southeastern Minnesota, and southwest Wisconsin, including La Crosse. The Driftless is marked physically by the action of glaciers and shaped by diverse human and non-human communities, including the enduring presence of indigenous nations. Students learn about the origins and effects of environmental and social challenges in the region through guest speakers including indigenous community leaders, farmers, scholars, activists, writers, and artists. Additionally, students learn how to engage with community partners using storytelling and oral histories for public good. Prerequisite: ENV 101. Offered Occasionally.

ENV 350 Cr.3

**Justice, Injustice, and Activism**

In this seminar course, students broadly examine social movements including the relationship between the history of environmental inequalities and the environmental movement, as well as recent political movements that seek to rectify environmental injustices and develop new possibilities for a more equitable future. This course draws on the work of scholars, activists, and local organizers to bring attention to the ways that race, ethnicity, class, and gender have been absent and disenfranchised by historic and present efforts to resolve environmental problems. The discussion-based format prepares students to grapple with and consider complex and often conflicting perspectives about the environmental movement. Students apply the theory and practical skills learned in class to develop a grassroots campus campaign with a focus on campus sustainability issues that tie into the La Crosse Climate Action Plan. Prerequisite: ENV 101. Offered Occasionally.

ENV 351 Cr.3

**Feeding the Planet: Environmental Justice of our Food Systems**

The ways in which society uses and transforms the ecosystem to produce food has impacted the world more than any other environmental change. One of the biggest global challenges is to feed an ever-growing population under the growing pressure of climate change, pollution, health impacts, scarce resources, and species decline. This discussion-based course examines how the food system works, its failures, alternatives, and the ways it plays out unevenly for people on the planet. Related topics include industrial agriculture, the impacts of GMOs and pesticides, food security, food sovereignty, agroecology, food production, and governance, among other topics. Prerequisite: ENV 101. Offered Occasionally.

ENV 352 Cr.3

**Americans, Global Parks, and Wilderness**

This course examines how concepts of wilderness have been envisioned historically, the ways in which views about parks and wilderness have evolved, and the extent to which the 1964 Wilderness Act is still relevant. The management, use, and access to wilderness areas have created great controversy especially regarding under-represented groups that include Native American, African American, Latina/o, LGBTQ+, disabled communities, and senior citizens. In addition, wilderness areas have created conflict among wilderness purists, loggers, hunters, sport outfitters, ranchers, and miners, among others. Students become familiar with the biophysical, social, and political economic drivers that influence wilderness and national park establishment and management and consider the role of dominant paradigms and social discourses in these processes. Students consider perspectives from political ecology, environmental history, and non-western science to examine these dynamics. Finally, students assess the exportation of the U.S. Park model to other parts of the world and the complications posed by issues such as co-management and fortress conservation. Prerequisite: ENV 101. Offered Occasionally.

ENV 353 Cr.3

**Rural Livelihoods: Sustainability and the Environment in the Upper Midwest**

This course examines the past, present, and future of sustainable rural communities in the Upper-Midwest through the framework of race, identity, and sense of place. Focusing on rural people including indigenous leaders, farmers, miners, activists, and writers, students examine the origins and effects of environmental and social challenges in the region. Students analyze the connections and divisions that rural people perceive and experience in relation to urban spaces. Students interview rural residents in Wisconsin who are engaged in the dwindling tobacco industry, present maple syrup economy, and emerging cannabis production. Prerequisite: ENV 101. Offered Occasionally.

ENV 450 Cr.1-3

**Internship in Environmental Studies**

Direct work experience with an agency or organization that deals with environmental issues or problems from an interdisciplinary perspective. The student works under supervision of both faculty adviser and agency staff member. Examples of sites include governmental agencies, advocacy groups, environmental education centers, alternative technologies companies, and environmental compliance divisions of corporations. All internships must be approved in the semester prior to the semester that the internship occurs. Repeatable for credit - maximum three. Prerequisite: ENV 201; declared environmental studies minor. Consent of internship coordinator. Consent of instructor. Offered Fall, Spring, Summer.

ENV 496 Cr.3

**Environmental Studies Capstone**

As a culmination of the environmental studies minor, this course has two main purposes. The first is to take action locally on an environmental service learning project. Action in the community builds professional skills, offers networking, and solidifies student interests. The second purpose is to help students clarify personal and career goals that are based on their environmental philosophy. Hearing from recent graduates and professionals in environmental fields provides students with a wide variety of perspectives and ideas as they consider their future decisions. Prerequisite: ENV 303; ENV 301 or ENV 304 or SOC 328 or SOC 332; six credits from the natural sciences electives, social sciences electives, or arts and humanities electives. Offered Fall, Spring.

ENV 499 Cr.1-3

**Independent Study in Environmental Studies**

Under supervision of instructor, individualized study in environmental studies on issues/topics not available in existing courses. All independent studies must be approved in the semester prior to the semester that the independent study occurs. Repeatable for credit - maximum three. Departmental option for pass/fail grading. Prerequisite: ENV 101 or ENV 201; declared environmental studies minor. Consent of environmental studies director. Consent of department. Offered Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer.