

# Environmental Studies

## Major and Minor

### Frequently Asked Questions

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#### **Q: Why did ENVS change its major and minor requirements?**

A: The ENVS Program sought to extend the range of perspectives and approaches students acquire as part of the breadth component of their major. Instead of requiring specific courses, the new major requirements provide a broader range of meaningful course choices for students.

Now that ENVS has several environmental methods-related courses beyond ENVS 240 (Environmental Politics & Decision Making), the Program sought to integrate those approaches more directly into the curriculum. Adding a methodological requirement will prepare our students for greater success as they undertake the junior Practicum and, even more significantly, their required senior projects. Additionally, with the reality that ENVS 260 (Environmental Ethics) cannot always be offered annually by the Philosophy Department, the Program relieved staffing pressures by including ENVS 260 as one option in a group of suitable Humanities courses. Thus, the ENVS Program can now promote broader pedagogical options, give students more choices, and reduce pressures on specific courses, while maximizing learning opportunities for students.

#### **Q: What are the specific changes to the ENVS major?**

A: There are two primary changes to the ENVS major, in both cases shifting from specific required courses to a series of choices for students:

a) Instead of *requiring* ENVS 240 (Environmental Politics & Decision Making) students will now be able to *choose* from one of the following environmental-methods courses (others may be added with approval of the ENVS Program Committee):

- ENVS 230 ~ Introduction to Environmental Mapping
- ENVS 240 ~ Environmental Politics & Decision Making
- ENVS 262 ~ Environmental Dispute Resolution
- ENVS 274 ~ Ecosystem Management

b) Instead of *requiring* ENVS 260 (Environmental Ethics) students will *choose* an elective course from among an array of environmentally-related courses from the distribution course list. No double counting is permitted, however.

Please refer to the handout entitled “Environmental Studies Guidelines & Requirements for Majors and Minors” for a complete description of the course requirements for the ENVS major.

#### **Q: What are the specific changes to the ENVS minor?**

A: There are three changes in the ENVS minor, in two cases shifting from individually privileged courses to a series of choices for students and in the other case simply shifting to a divisional model of choices:

- a) Instead of *requiring* ENVS 240 (Environmental Politics & Decision Making) students will choose from one of the following environmental-methods courses (others may be added with approval of the ENVIS Program Committee):
- ENVS 230 ~ Introduction to Environmental Mapping
  - ENVS 240 ~ Environmental Politics & Decision Making
  - ENVS 262 ~ Environmental Dispute Resolution
  - ENVS 274 ~ Ecosystem Management
- b) Instead of *requiring* ENVS 260 (Environmental Ethics) students will choose an elective course from among an array of environmentally-related Humanities courses;
- c) Instead of *requiring* two open-ended electives outside the major, students will choose two electives, one in the Social Sciences and one in the Natural Sciences.

Please refer to the handout entitled “Environmental Studies Guidelines & Requirements for Majors and Minors” for a complete description of the course requirements for ENVIS minors.

**Q: When were changes to the ENVIS major and minor finalized?**

A: The recommended changes to the ENVIS major and minor were approved by a unanimous vote of the Environmental Studies Program Committee in April, 2008 and were then submitted to the Academic Affairs Council, which in turn approved them and brought the proposals to the floor of the full faculty, where they were approved in February, 2009.

**Q: When did the new requirements officially take effect?**

A: By University regulation, changes to a major affect students who have not yet begun the major under the new requirements – in other words, students already subject to existing guidelines are expected to follow those. In our case, since the old requirements also meet the new requirements, the transition is less difficult.

**Q: I’m a Junior ENVIS minor, am I grandfathered under the old requirements, or must I meet the new requirements?**

A: Junior ENVIS majors and minors should follow the old requirements. In cases where students are prevented from enrolling in ENVIS 240 or 260 due to rigid scheduling conflicts or clear-cut cases where these courses are not available, then some version of the new requirements may be entertained with approval of the ENVIS Program Director. Current first year students, sophomores, and transfers may follow the new guidelines.

**Q: What happens if I took two electives in the Social Sciences Division to fulfill my ENVIS minor requirements under the old requirements, but now I only need one course from this Division?**

A: You can sell your extra course on eBay for millions of dollars, or enjoy the fact that you got a bonus class!

**Q: Why are the revised ENVIS major and minor requirements not listed in the Course Catalog on Denison’s website?**

A: Unfortunately, once the Course Catalog is printed it cannot be revised, as it is treated as a contract between the students and the administration. Plus, having two versions of the Catalog can create confusion. So, until the 2010-2011 Course Catalog is printed, the previous major and minor requirements will be listed. Again, please refer to the handout entitled “Environmental Studies Guidelines & Requirements for Majors and Minors” for a complete description of the NEW course requirements for ENVIS minors.