

Environmental Studies Major (BA)

A Bachelor of Arts degree (120 credits) consists of [Core Curriculum](#) (30 credits) and at least one [major](#) (36–60 credits), as well as [minors](#) and/or elective courses of the student's choosing.

Environmental Studies is an inherently transdisciplinary field arising from the interaction of Western-based natural and social sciences with other sources of wisdom and tradition. The Environmental Studies 36-credit major is designed to empower students to develop the knowledge base and skill set needed to address complex environmental issues.

The Environmental Studies curriculum integrates the complex and interconnected relationships of the natural environment, human culture, and personal experiences. These relationships are studied through five interrelated strands: field science; sacred ecology; sustainability; permaculture; and environmental history and justice.

Program Vision

Environmental Studies at Naropa University integrates a deep understanding of the living world through the study of science, systems, sacred ecology, historic and contemporary environmental movements, diverse perspectives and wisdom, and contemplation, as well as engaging in hands-on, community-based work. We believe that through critical examination and understanding, engaging in deep relationships, and developing appropriate skills, humans can learn how to respond to the rapidly increasing degradation of our natural resources, and creatively move forward with resiliency for a more balanced, sustainable relationship with the living world.

Senior Project

BA majors are required to complete an individual senior project in the final year of the program. The project can take the form of either a traditional senior thesis paper or a community-based project. This requirement is fulfilled by completing ENV480.

Internship and Independent Study Opportunities

The Environmental Studies program has fostered partnerships with community organizations where students can arrange internships and co-create meaningful independent study opportunities that supplement the Environmental Studies curriculum.

Permaculture Certificate

Students who take and successfully complete ENV260 and ENV342 at Naropa University with grades of "B" or better in both courses, including their final project, are eligible for a Permaculture Certificate, which originates from the Permaculture Institute USA Inc. This is issued by the permaculture instructor.

Environmental Studies Major Requirements

Prerequisites

- ENV100 [Physical Geography: Beholding the Body of the Earth](#) (3)
 - ENV245 [Geography: Pilgrimage and Sacred Landscape](#) (3)
- These courses are prerequisites for courses included within the major requirements.

Required Courses

Gateway

- ENV207 [History of the Environmental Movement](#) (3)
- ENV215 [Sustainability](#) (3)
- ENV223 [Field Ecology](#) (3)
- ENV238 [Survival Skills](#) (3)
- ENV260 [Introduction to Permaculture](#) (3)

Milestone

- ENV318 [Deep Ecology](#) (3)
- ENV321 [Geology](#) (3)
- ENV350 [Nature, the Sacred, and Contemplation](#) (3)
- ENV355 [Environmental Justice](#) (3)

Special Focus Course

Choose 3 credits

- ENV236 [Green Building](#) (3)
- ENV253 [Environmental Economics](#) (3)
- ENV257 [Food Justice](#) (3)
- ENV342 [Permaculture Design](#) (3)
- ENV363 [Indigenous Environmental Issues](#) (3)
- ENV370 [Ecopsychology](#) (3)

Capstone

- ENV420 [Environmental Service Learning: Ecological Restoration](#) (3)
- ENV480 [Senior Project](#) (3)

Total Credits: 36

Environmental Studies Course Listings (ENV)

ENV100

Physical Geography: Beholding the Body of the Earth (3.0)

Deepening our natural understanding of the earth as a living system, this course explores Gaia Theory and the new cosmology of the earth that is emerging in science. Within this framework, we explore the formation of the earth+geomorphology and geophysiology+or one could say the "digestion," "circulatory," and other systems of Gaia. This new vision in Western science can reawaken understanding and reconfirm our commitment and reciprocity with the earth.

ENV207

History of the Environmental Movement (3.0)

An examination of the history of the environmental movement from a U.S. and global perspective. Fundamental elements that inform and shape environmental movements around the world, and the impact on people and their responses, are studied. Required for ENV majors.

ENV215

Sustainability (3.0)

An introduction to the definitions and principles of sustainability, this course explores models and dimensions of sustainability in both the natural world and in human societies. Current examples of sustainable design and development in different parts of the world are offered to inspire students to "think sustainably" and to be alert to it in every aspect of their learning. Personal impact on the environment and personal sustainability are examined as aspects of developing a sustainable vision for the present and the future. Required for ENV majors.

ENV223

Field Ecology (3.0)

This course introduces students to the principles of ecology, systems science, and the ecosystems of the Boulder region. The flow of energy and cycles of materials through the earth, water, air, and biological systems are explored. Field trips are one central aspect of this class. We visit the diverse array of ecosystems of this region at various elevations. Students learn to read and understand the ecosystem patterns of our area and observe systems principles expressed in the landscape. Required for ENV majors.

ENV236

Green Building (3.0)

An introduction to green construction practices and design, as well as a wide range of green technologies that contribute to sustainable living, the course includes practical, hands-on experience and field trips.

ENV238

Survival Skills (3.0)

This course introduces philosophical understanding of living in the natural world, in its rhythms and seasonal cycles. Basic wilderness survival skills are learned, including making fire, building shelter, finding medicinal plants, hunting, and tracking. Prerequisite: ENV100. Required for ENV majors.

ENV245

Geography: Pilgrimage and Sacred Landscape (3.0)

Religious and cultural worldviews play a significant role in shaping our understanding of, and impact on, the earth. Students explore the world through the lens of pilgrimage and sacred landscape. Geography is a discipline of storytelling of the earth. Thus, we engage in listening, reading, writing, and telling stories to recall and awaken our connection with the earth.

ENV253

Environmental Economics (3.0)

An examination of how conventional economic theory, as well as alternative economic theories, apply to natural resource use and the environment. Fundamental principles of economic relationship to natural resources, externalities, limits to economic growth, the trade-off between growth and the environment, globalization, and global ecological issues are studied. Students learn tools of economic analysis and their application to environmental issues and problems.

ENV257

Food Justice (3.0)

An introduction to the food justice movement, this course examines it from the local, national, and international levels. Topics include food policy, grassroots movements and action, food production and food access as they relate to the systems of privilege and oppression that shape them. Equally, this course explores the actions of various communities working towards empowerment and liberation. Students engage with relevant theory, hands-on service-learning site visits, as well as contact with professionals, activists, and impacted communities in the food justice movement. Prerequisite: COR150 or COR113.

ENV260

Introduction to Permaculture (3.0)

This course introduces a core set of principles that help us to design human living environments that are increasingly self-sufficient, while reducing our society's reliance on industrial systems of production and distribution that are fundamentally damaging to the planet's ecosystems. This design system, known as permaculture, covers basic agro-ecological design theory. We explore this in a hands-on way while creating edible landscapes, diverse gardens, and compost systems, and growing food on campus. This course also includes field trips and demonstrations. Required for ENV majors.

ENV318

Deep Ecology (3.0)

This course serves as an exploration of the philosophical dimensions of the human/nature relationship. While deep ecology serves as the primary framework for this exploration, other approaches, such as ecofeminism and social ecology, are considered. Deep ecology alternatives for addressing ethical and ecological problems are examined, along with options for effective and compassionate action. Prerequisite: COR115. Required for ENV majors.

ENV321

Geology (3.0)

This field course introduces students to the basic principles of geology through exploring the Front Range, using the world-class rock exposures found in this area. Students learn to identify rocks and minerals, as well as landscapes shaped by streams, wind, and glaciers. We study the vast expanse of geologic time in the context of the history of the Rocky Mountains. Field trips are a central part of this course. Prerequisite: ENV223.

ENV342**Permaculture Design (3.0)**

Advanced coverage of the Permaculture Design course curriculum. Students solidify their understanding of permaculture and build competence in using ecological design principles and practices to create regenerative human living environments. Students gain practical skills for building living soils, harvesting runoff rainwater, designing ecological pest control, and the development of sustainable food-producing landscapes. Each student designs a final project modeling permaculture principles and ecological soundness. Prerequisite: ENV260.

ENV350**Nature, the Sacred, and Contemplation (3.0)**

An exploration of the individual, cultural, and contemplative dimensions of the human/nature relationship. It provides the contemplative tools of mindfulness meditation, sensory awareness exercises, and other nature-based awareness practices in order for students to examine and refine their own experiences of nature and the sacred. A three-day residential retreat with a solo contemplative nature walk is a required part of the course. Course fee. Prerequisite: ENV245. Required for ENV majors.

ENV355**Environmental Justice (3.0)**

An examination of contemporary issues of environmental justice and racism in the United States and throughout the world. The environmental justice movement is based on social justice and multicultural issues. Prerequisite: COR150 or COR113. Required for ENV majors.

ENV363**Indigenous Environmental Issues (3.0)**

An exploration of the historical relationship between indigenous peoples and their environment in each of the ecosystems under consideration; change in the relationship as a result of European contact; modernization and development; and the current integration of these areas into the present global market economy. Prerequisite: COR150 or COR113.

ENV370**Ecopsychology (3.0)**

This course highlights key theories and core practices associated with the emerging field of ecopsychology. A basic tenet of ecopsychology is that personal and planetary well-being are inseparable. The theory and practice of ecopsychology are directed toward enhancing the health of the human/nature relationship. The work of ecopsychology is to understand, heal, and develop the psychological dimensions of the human/nature relationship through connecting with natural processes in the web of life. Prerequisite: COR130 or COR113.

ENV420**Environmental Service Learning: Ecological Restoration (3.0)**

This course requires students to apply their skills from classroom learning and to engage in hands-on environmental work, while developing their leadership skills and contemplative approaches to environmental action. Students engage in real issues and learn through practical experience about environmental problem solving, community concerns, and teamwork. In this service-learning team project, students engage with community partners in ecological restoration work in our community. Students are responsible for project planning and design, implementation, and final presentation of outcomes to the community partners. Prerequisite: COR220. Required for ENV majors.

ENV480**Senior Project (3.0)**

The Senior Project course is a capstone project-based course in which students demonstrate their cumulative knowledge, skills, and abilities in a specific environmentally based research project. Students meet in a course format and work independently and collectively on a research project. Students are expected to follow guidelines for the research project and meet specific course criteria. Required for ENV majors.

ENV499**Independent Study: Environmental Studies (0.5-4.0)**

This course offering is an opportunity for students to engage in in-depth, concentrated study with a particular faculty member for a semester. The design of study and course work are decided upon by the student and faculty member. Independent Studies will count for a standard 3 credits. If a variable credit (0.5 - 4 credits) Independent Study is desired, a student must receive additional approval. See the Independent Study Application for further details.