

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES & SUSTAINABILITY

AT HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE



The Environmental Studies & Sustainability Program (ESSP) is a multidisciplinary program for students and faculty across the college. It brings together a rich grouping of courses, ongoing projects, campus programs, and speaker series so that students can develop their own ways to combine the sciences, social sciences, and humanities to study and work on environmental and sustainability topics. Through ESSP, Hampshire students develop a truly interdisciplinary, project-based course of studies that allows them to tackle, with the help of faculty and other students, complex, real-world issues.

Admissions Office

Hampshire College

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Sample First-Year Course

Sustainable Living

In this course our conversation will take the form of critical inquiry into current popular notions of sustainable fuel, fiber, food, and shelter. Can biomass fuel replace fossil fuel and with what consequences? Will local farms supplant mega-foodmarts? Can we find ways to locally integrate our life support systems, balancing human needs and the services provided by the ecosystems we occupy? Through lectures, readings, class discussions, debates, and projects we will critically examine innovative “green” technologies, using our own locale as a classroom, and gaining observational and analytical skills in the process.

Student Project Titles

Natural Building

Learning for Our Future: Moving Towards a Sustainable Worldview

Tropical Reforestation

Wetland Biogeochemistry and Climate Change

Ecology and Management of Three Caribbean Fisheries

Enviro-Education at a School in the Woods: an Ethnographic Journey

Where the River Runs Dry: An Analysis of the Ecological and Socioeconomic Impacts of Large Dams on the Indus Delta

Sample Courses

At Hampshire

Agriculture, Ecology & Society
Agriculture, Food & Human Health
Beyond Sprawl & Crawl: Developing Policies to Tame Car Dependence
Biomass Energy
Culture, Religion & Environmentalism
Earth Resources
Ecology
Ecology of New England Old-Growth Forests
Elements of Sustainability
Environmental Chemistry
Environmental Ethics
Environmental Policy in a Time of Globalization
Pollution & Our Environment
Stream Ecology
Sustainable Agriculture Seminar
Sustainable Living
Sustainable Technology
Sustainable Water Resources
This Land is Your Land: Land & Property in America
The Unknown Microbial Majority

Through the Consortium

Environmental Science (MHC)
Field Methods in Ecology (UMass)
Fundamentals of the Environment (UMass)
Intro to Environmental Biology (UMass)
Soil Chemistry (UMass)

(continued on reverse)

Faculty Profiles

Charlene D'Avanzo, dean of the School of Natural Science, professor of ecology

Charlene D'Avanzo received her B.A. from Skidmore and her Ph.D. from Boston University Marine Program, Marine Biology Lab in Woods Hole. She is particularly interested in marine ecology, estuaries and wetlands, and coastal pollution. She also receives funding from the National Science Foundation to improve ecology teaching nationwide. She teaches courses in ecology, marine ecology, natural history, environmental science, and environmental education.

Robert Rakoff, professor of politics and environmental studies

Bob Rakoff received his B.A. from Oberlin College and his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Washington. He taught at the University of Illinois in Chicago and worked for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development before coming to Hampshire in 1979. His teaching and research interests include environmental history and policy, politics of land use, the cultural construction of nature, creative non-fiction writing about the outdoors, and the political economy of farming and rural life in the U.S.

Brian Schultz, associate professor of ecology and entomology

Brian Schultz received a B.S. in zoology, an M.S. in biology, and a Ph.D. in ecology from the University of Michigan. He is an agricultural ecologist and entomologist who does research at the Hampshire College Farm Center and has spent a number of years in Central America and the Caribbean studying methods of insect pest control. He is also interested in statistical analysis and world peace.

Steve Roof, associate professor of earth and environmental science

Steve Roof received his B.S. from the University of California at Santa Cruz, his M.S. from Syracuse University, and his Ph.D. from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Roof's teaching and research focus on environmental issues such as climate change, pollution, and land conservation. Roof and his students travel frequently to Death Valley and the Southwest for climate change field research. He also coordinates a climate change research program in the High Arctic for undergraduate students called the "Svalbard REU." He consciously integrates the scientific, political, and social aspects of environmental problems in his classes and projects. Roof teaches and supervises projects in geology, climate change, resource conservation, land use planning, geographic information systems, environmental chemistry, and the evolution of scientific thought.

Facilities and Resources

Resources available for Hampshire Environmental Studies and Sustainability Program students include our state-of-the-art labs and electronic classrooms, and extend beyond the boundaries of the college. Hampshire owns 800 acres of land that includes woodland, pastures, fields, and streams. This serves as a living laboratory where students can study and experiment.

Through the Five College Coastal and Marine Sciences program, students can use the Hampshire bioshelter for research in aquaculture and marine ecology. In addition, the program sponsors student seminars and internships at or with the support of the Marine Biological Laboratory at Woods Hole. Recently, the program has also sponsored training trips on oceanographic vessels, and field courses in the Caribbean and Central America.

Hampshire College Associate Professor of Ecology and Entomology Brian Schultz constructed a canopy walkway in the woods surrounding campus. Students can climb to tree-top level to better observe and study the plants and wildlife native to the region.

Students interested in agriculture work on, and study, many aspects of organic farming at the several-hundred-acre Hampshire College Farm Center and through the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project based at the Farm Center.

The School of Natural Science maintains a complete GIS (Geographic Information Systems) computer lab with the latest software from ESRI installed on high performance computers. Using state-of-the-art GPS units and an extensive library of recent and historical aerial photos and maps, students are building a growing digital database of Hampshire's natural resources, including maps of trails, soils, wetlands, and wildlife sightings.

