M.S. in Environmental Science

Program Description

The M.S. in Environmental Science is an interdisciplinary program housed in the College of Natural and Behavioral Science (NBS). The mission of the program is to prepare leaders, thinkers and planners necessary to address and solve environmental challenges using interdisciplinary approaches. Because of our location and internship opportunities, the emphasis of the program is on the urban environment.

Core and elective courses in the natural and social sciences introduce students to the unique problems of the urban environment; to environmental analysis, policy and planning; to mathematical and analytic skills, and to the original research literature in environmental science. Elective courses allow students the flexibility to tailor their academic programs to meet specific goals. Real-world experience is obtained through internships in governmental, non-governmental, or other organizations. The program culminates with an original research project leading to a thesis.

Admission Requirements

Applicants must hold a bachelor’s degree in a natural or social science from an accredited university with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 overall or 3.0 in the last 60 upper division semester (90 quarter) units of upper division course work; have completed the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) or equivalent at the graduate level; and have completed two courses in a field related to environmental science and a statistics course, with grades of “B” or better.

Students who meet all but one requirement may be admitted in conditionally classified status at the discretion of the Program Coordinator. They must meet all conditions by the end of the first academic year.

Career Possibilities

Employment opportunities for recipients of an M.S. in Environmental Science are available in government agencies, particularly in the areas of environmental protection and management; water, sewer and power-generation utilities; analytic laboratories; environmental and engineering firms; private industry management; and non-profit organizations. In addition, the M.S. in Environmental Science is excellent preparation for further academic pursuits, such as a Ph. D. in environmental science or a degree in environmental law.

Program Faculty

Rod Hay, Professor of Earth Sciences, Ph.D., University of Arizona
John Keyantash, Associate Professor of Earth Sciences, Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles
Terrence McGlynn, Assistant Professor of Biology, Ph.D., University of Colorado
Brendan McNulty, Professor of Earth Sciences, Ph.D., University of California, Santa Cruz
Ana Pitchon, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Ph.D., University of Georgia
John Roberts, Emeritus Professor of Biology, Ph.D., University of California, Santa Barbara
John Thomlinson, Associate Professor of Biology, Ph.D., University of North Texas
Connie Vadheim, Adjunct Professor of Biology, Ph.D., University of Washington
Degree Requirements (30 units)

The M.S. in Environmental Science requires completion of 30 units, at least 21 of which must be at the graduate level. An internship and a thesis research project are required.

A. Required Courses (24 units)
- ANT 555 People, Culture, and Environment (3 units)
- BIO 502 Biostatistics or PSY 530 Advanced Analysis of Variance and Multivariate Techniques (3 units)
- BIO 510 The Urban Environment (3 units)
- GEO 433 Environmental Analysis and Planning (3 units)
- ENV 590 Graduate Seminar in Environmental Science (must be taken twice) (3 units [1-2 units each])
- ENV 596 Internship in Environmental Science (3 units)
- ENV 598 Directed Research (3 units)
- ENV 599 Thesis (3 units)

B. Electives (6 units). In consultation with an academic advisor, each student will select 2 elective courses from the following list. Other courses may be substituted with the approval of the Program Coordinator.
- BIO 416 Landscape Ecology
- CHE 474 Geochemistry
- COM 467 Public Relations Workshop
- EAR 410 Environmental Geology
- EAR 460 Global Change
- EAR 476 Groundwater
- GEO 405 Advanced Cartography
- GEO 408 Remote Sensing and Image Processing
- GEO 412 Rivers and Streams
- GEO 415 Geographic Information Systems
- GEO 416 Earth’s Climates
- GEO 420 Natural Resources
- SOC 408 Survey Research

C. Thesis. A written thesis, based on an original research project in environmental science, and an oral defense of the thesis are required for completion of the degree.

Application Procedures: Prospective students must:
1. Submit an application to the University for admission with graduate standing, following the procedures outlined in the Graduate Degree & Postbaccalaureate Studies section of the University Catalog.
2. Submit to the M.S. in Environmental Science Program Coordinator:
   a. A Statement of Intent describing interests, goals and expectations in pursuing the master’s degree in environmental science
   b. Two letters of recommendation sent directly from individuals who can evaluate potential for graduate study
   c. Verification of completion of the GWAR or equivalent
   d. Official undergraduate transcripts (separate official copies from those sent to University Admissions)

Contact Information
Acting Program Coordinator
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