

Appendix J
Environmental Studies Leadership Option

Overview

The Environmental Studies program is an interdisciplinary graduate program in place since 1970. The program attracts students from around the world with expertise in a variety of disciplines including those in the life sciences, physical and earth sciences, and social sciences.

In 2008, the program began expanding its presence at Ohio University and within the geographic region of Southeast Ohio. The practical leadership option increases the capacity of Environmental Studies students by providing a community component to the academic experience. In addition, this option supports organizations throughout the region with academically-talented students.

Practical leadership option-why a practical experience?

The Leadership Option combines interdisciplinary course work and a problem-solving practical experience for the purpose of preparing students for leadership roles as policy makers, educators, communicators, scientists, engineers, and community leaders. The key component of the option is the practical experience. The practical experience will require students to move beyond an awareness of environmental concepts to gaining experience in solving actual environmental problems.

Agency or organization benefits and responsibilities

The practical experience offers students an opportunity to work with organizations that are involved in environmental issues. The agency, or “preceptor,” will provide practical, problem-solving experience in the form of a project. The preceptor and project must be identified by the student and approved by the leadership option coordinator. In addition, the student’s faculty advisor and graduate committee should approve the experience if possible.

The agency or organization will benefit from this option by having a Masters of Environmental Studies student assist, collaborate on and complete specified projects. The student will make a presentation about the project in a public forum.

Student and site collaboration

The student will offer time, expertise and leadership skills to the practicum site. The student and organization will create a specific schedule, responsibilities and project goals agreed upon by the sponsoring organization/agency, faculty member, and student. The student, faculty member, and the organization will develop a time frame for the practicum spanning one through three quarters. Students must complete at least 100 hours of practical experience.

Guidance will be provided throughout the internship by a practicum coordinator, a faculty advisor (if possible), and a representative of the organization. When appropriate, guidance will also be provided by staff of the Voinovich School for Leadership and Public Affairs. A site

visit by the leadership coordinator or faculty advisor will take place at least once during the practicum.

Curriculum

The Environmental Studies Student may participate in any of the six tracks within Environmental Studies for a minimum of 60 credit hours total. In addition to the requirements for each track, the student is required to complete ES 560 (5 credit hours), POLS 588 (5 credit hours), and ES 692 (minimum of 5 credit hours).

Collaborative Roles

The leadership option will involve collaboration among the Environmental Studies program office, the student, several faculty members, and an agency or organization external to the University. The following outlines the roles of those involved.

Environmental Studies Program

- Provide the University leadership option coordinator
- Orient and approve enrollment into the option and for ES 692
- Assist students in identifying opportunities

Preceptor

- Offer a project or series of projects for student to work on
- Provide a representative for student guidance and project development
- Assess and evaluate student work

Student

- Identify possible sites
- Adhere to time commitments
- Work with organization to identify problem
- Complete project portfolio
- Present project in a public forum