Environmental Studies Department

THE PROGRAM

“How will you walk this earth?” asks Wayne Gilchrest, former United States Congressman. His question, posed to a group of Environmental Studies (ENVR) Department students in a summer kayaking class, is central to our program – for whether you seek to become a professional environmental advocate or wish to enrich your own understanding of the world around you, we encourage you, in the words of Thoreau, to live deliberately.

SU’s fast-growing and exciting Environmental Studies Department integrates courses in the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences to give students the tools they need to examine complex environmental issues in depth and assess them from a variety of perspectives. The program combines a solid academic foundation with extensive experiential learning; frequent opportunities for research and community engagement provide ENVR graduates with a substantial foundation for further graduate study or meaningful careers in environmental fields.

Getting Our Hands Dirty

ENVR majors gain valuable real-world experience through a wide variety of activities. Opportunities for study abroad abound: ENVR students can snorkel coral reefs in Honduras, investigate glacial landscapes in Iceland or explore biodiversity in Trinidad. Some share meals with rural villagers in India and others walk Shinto Buddhist pilgrimage routes in Japan.

Closer to home, they canoe remote Eastern Shore creeks, kayak to Smith Island – Maryland’s only offshore inhabited island, with a three-century tradition of harvesting the bay – and witness the mass spawning of horseshoe crabs in Delaware Bay. They study organic gardening with Jay Martin, the farmer who started Community Sponsored Agriculture on the Eastern Shore, and investigate an ever-changing range of Chesapeake Bay topics with award-winning author Tom Horton. Green Floor Living Learning Community students share common ENVR classes, develop environmentally oriented activities and perform green service projects. ENVR students intern in organizations as diverse as the Maryland Coastal Bays, U.S. Geological Survey, Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center, Nanticoke Watershed Alliance, Irvine Nature Center in Baltimore and the Maryland Department of the Environment. Six ENVR majors have been awarded Environmental Protection Agency Greater Research Opportunity Fellowships.

Stewardship

Stewardship and advocacy opportunities comprise an important part of our program. Environmental Studies students have worked to ban arsenic in chicken feed, helped political candidates push for storm water regulations, removed invasive privet from local forests and taught area middle school students how to monitor electricity use. They held a fundraiser to purchase an Environmental Studies Department greenhouse, built raised-bed gardens at a nearby elementary school and mapped out an interpretive trail at a local forest preserve. ENVR students are growing vegetables on campus and working to develop an on-campus sustainability tour for both students and visitors.

A DYNAMIC ENVIRONMENT

For the outdoor adventurer who loves marshes, rivers, forests and barrier islands, there’s no better-situated university on the east coast than SU. With the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean next door, students can:

- Explore some of the mid-Atlantic’s most intact river systems, the Nanticoke and the Pocomoke
- Study coastal barrier islands such as Cedar and Assateague
- Visit major wildlife refuges at Blackwater and Chincoteague
- Observe working watermen’s communities on Smith and Tangier islands
- Investigate close to a hundred thousand acres of wetlands

The Environmental Studies Department offers a flexible and relevant mix of coursework and field opportunities – and, above all, the chance to cultivate what Rachel Carson termed “a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life.”

www.salisbury.edu/environmentalstudies

environmentalstudies

Contact Information
For information on the Environmental Studies Department:
410-543-8105
wanelson@salisbury.edu