

# Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science

The Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science degree program is designed for students interested in an interdisciplinary scientific perspective on environmental and sustainability issues, analysis, and management. The degree program provides the broad foundation in physical, life, and social sciences needed for a career or graduate study in environmental science and related fields such as climate change, ecology, and conservation. Students who complete the program successfully will be able to assess environmental issues critically from multiple perspectives; to perform field, laboratory, and computer analyses; and to conduct original research. The program is designed to prepare graduates for careers in local, state, and federal government laboratories and nonprofit agencies, environmental consulting firms, environmental education and outreach agencies, and universities and other research settings. The degree is offered by the College of Natural Sciences with a major in biological sciences, by the College of Liberal Arts with a major in geographical sciences, and by the Jackson School of Geosciences with a major in geosciences. The degree programs share common prescribed work, but each degree has its own specific requirements. Students may earn only one Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science degree from the University.

The Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science degree requires 126 total semester credit hours of coursework. All students must complete the University's Core Curriculum. The specific degree requirements consist of prescribed work, major requirements, and electives. In some cases, a course that is required for the degree may also be counted toward the core curriculum.

A course in one prescribed work area may not also be used to fulfill the requirements of another prescribed work area.<sup>†</sup>

## Prescribed Work Common to All Majors

- a. Introductory course: Environmental Science 301
- b. Field experience and research methods: Environmental Science 311
- c. Environment and sustainability coursework:
  - i. One environment and sustainability course: Business, Government, and Society 325, 372, Finance 372T, Geography 309C, 320J, 342C, 342N, or 344G.
  - ii. One geographic information systems course: Geography 460G, 462K, or Geological Sciences 327G.
  - iii. Two earth system courses: Geological Sciences 416W and one course chosen from Geography 330W, 301K, Geological Sciences 347D, 370E, 476K, 476M, 376S, or 377P.
  - iv. Two computational science courses chosen from: Geography 462K, 464K, 368C, 369D, 470C, 370D, Geological Sciences 325G, 352P, 455S, Petroleum and Geosystems Engineering 338, Statistics and Data Sciences 320E, 320H, 321, Biological sciences majors must take Statistics and Data Sciences 320E, 320H, or 321
- v. Please note:
  - Geographical sciences majors may not use the same coursework to satisfy both requirements 3 and 11.
  - Geosciences majors may not use the same coursework to satisfy both requirements 3 and 12.
  - Students may not use the same coursework to satisfy both requirements 3 and 5.
- d. Courses in each of the following environmental science areas:

- i. Geological Sciences: Geological Sciences 401 or 303.
  - ii. Geography: Geography 412E.
  - iii. Ecology: Two courses chosen from Integrative Biology 373 or Marine Science 320 and Integrative Biology 373L or Marine Science 120L. Biological sciences majors must choose Integrative Biology 373 and 373L.
- e. Capstone Research Experience chosen from one of the following pairs:
- i. Environmental Science 271 and 371 or 171 and 471.
  - ii. Environmental Science 172C and 472D or 272C and 372D.
  - iii. Environmental Science 271 or Marine Science 370, and one course chosen from: Chemistry 320M, Geography 460G, 462K, 368C, Geological Sciences 327G, Mathematics 408D, 408M, Statistics and Data Sciences 320E, 320H, or 321.
  - iv. Please note:
    - Geographical sciences majors may not use the same coursework to satisfy both requirements 5 and 11.
    - Geosciences majors may not use the same coursework to satisfy both requirements 5 and 11.
    - Geosciences majors may not use the same coursework to satisfy both requirements 5 and 12.
    - Students may not use the same coursework to satisfy both requirements 3 and 5.
    - Statistics and Data Sciences 320E, 320H, and 321 may not be used in this requirement by students in the College of Natural Sciences.
    - Biology 377 may substitute for Environmental Science 271 with prior approval of the faculty advisor.
    - Tutorial Course 660HA and 660HB may substitute for Environmental Science 271 and 371 with prior approval of the faculty advisor.
    - Geological Sciences 172H, 173H, and 379H may substitute for Environmental Science 271 and 371 with prior approval of the faculty advisor.
    - Natural Sciences 323 and 371 may substitute for Environmental Science 271 and 371 with the prior approval of the faculty advisor.

6. Mathematics: Mathematics 408C, 408N and 408S, or 408K and 408L.
7. Chemistry: Chemistry 301 or 301C and 302 or 302C.
8. Physics: Physics 317K and 117M, Physics 303K and 103M, or Physics 301 and 101L.
9. Biological Sciences: Biology 311C and 311D, or 315H.

## Geographical Sciences Requirements

A total of 126 semester credit hours is required.

The following 30 semester hours of coursework are required; these hours must include at least 18 hours of upper-division coursework. A grade point average of at least 2.00 in the 30 hours of geography coursework is required for the major.

- j. Geography 401C
- k. Twenty-six additional hours of coursework in geography, chosen from:
  - Geospatial methods: Geography 440L, 350E, 356T (any topic), 462K, 464K, 369D, 470C, or 370D.
  - Physical geography: Geography 301K, 404E, 333C, 333K, 334K, 334L, 335C, 335K, 335N, 338C, 339, 346, 357, 460G, 366C, 366K, 367K, 368C, or 476T (any topic).
  - Please note:

- See an approved list for additional topics.
- Geographical sciences majors may not use the same coursework to satisfy both requirements 3 and 11.
- Geographical sciences majors may not use the same coursework to satisfy both requirements 5 and 11.

### Additional Prescribed Work

- l. *Writing and Literature*: English 316L, 316M, 316N, or 316P<sup>†</sup>
- m. *Foreign language/culture*: One of the following foreign language/culture choices:  
Courses taken to attain a certain level of proficiency in a foreign language are not electives and cannot be taken on the pass/fail basis.
- Second-semester-level proficiency, or the equivalent, in a foreign language.
  - First-semester-level proficiency, or the equivalent, in a foreign language and a three-semester-hour course in the culture of the same language area.
  - Two three-semester-hour courses in one foreign culture area chosen from a list of approved courses available in the Student Division or from the undergraduate advisor.
- n. *Social science*: Three semester credit hours in a social science field, in addition to the course taken to satisfy the Social and Behavioral Science requirement of the Core Curriculum.

A list of approved courses is available each semester in the Student Division and on the [College of Liberal Arts website](#).

- o. *Cultural expression, human experience, and thought*: Three semester hours of approved coursework. The course must be in a field of study taught in the College of Liberal Arts. A course counted toward any requirement of the core curriculum may not also be counted toward this requirement.

A list of approved courses is available each semester in the Student Division and on the [College of Liberal Arts website](#).

## Electives

In addition to the core curriculum, prescribed work, additional prescribed work, and major requirements, the student must complete enough elective coursework to provide the 126 semester hours required for the degree. These 126 hours may include no more than 12 hours of conference courses and internship courses combined as described in [Conference Courses and Internship Courses](#); 12 hours of Bible courses; nine hours of designated coursework in air force science, military science, or naval science, except for students enrolled in the Military Leadership minor; 16 hours completed on the pass/fail basis; 39 hours in any one field of study offered in the College of Liberal Arts or the College of Natural Sciences, unless major requirements state otherwise; and 36 hours in courses offered in any other single college or school of the University. Mathematics courses at the level of college algebra may not count toward elective hours.

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<sup>†</sup> Effective April 2025, UT Austin no longer requires Skills and Experience flags.