

# Environment and Society

Over the past few decades, the injurious effects of human behaviour on Earth's natural systems have become increasingly obvious. There can be little question that ecological changes leading to extinction of species and loss of habitat pose a threat not only to our health, our prosperity and even our existence, but to the biosphere as a whole. Our failure to change our ways must be acknowledged and confronted. With its expertise in many domains of human endeavour, St. Thomas University is well prepared to help students interrogate the social processes that promote both our degradation of Earth and our persistence in such destructive behaviour.

Students completing the Major in Environment and Society are required to complete a second Major as well. This second Major may be in any field of their choice. ENVS electives taken from other departments may be counted both for the ENVS Major and for the Major in that Department.

**The Major in Environment and Society will consist of 36 credit hours distributed as follows:**

## *A. Required Environment and Society Courses*

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| ENVS 1013 | Introduction to Environmental Problems          |
| ENVS 2023 | Introduction to Perspectives on the Environment |
| ENVS 3013 | Environmental Policy                            |
| ENVS 3023 | Environmental Praxis                            |
| ENVS 4003 | Capstone Seminar in Environment and Society     |

*B. Natural Science (Students are required to take 3 credit hours in an approved natural science course). Recommended courses are:*

|           |                       |
|-----------|-----------------------|
| BIOL 2113 | Ecology               |
| PHYS 2543 | Environmental Physics |

Other courses may be substituted for either of these with the approval of the Program Director.

*C. Electives (18 credit hours from the following):*

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| ANTH 3533 | Food   |
| ANTH 3723 | Human Ecology  |
| ECON 2203 | Community Economic Development                                       |
| ECON 2333 | Ecological Economics   |
| ECON 3323 | Environmental Economics  |
| ENGL 2773 | Reporting the Environment: The Journalism of John McPhee             |
| ENVS 4006 | Work Study Project   |
| HIST 3403 | Water in World History   |
| HIST 3423 | Agriculture in World History   |
| HIST 3933 | Canadian Land Struggles in Comparative Global Perspective since 1945 |

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| NATI 3223 | Native Environmental Ethics and Ecology              |
| NATI 3923 | Aboriginal Rights: The Land Question                 |
| PHIL 3563 | Philosophy of Science                                |
| RELG 2133 | Religion and Ecology                                 |
| RELG 3523 | Environmental Ethics                                 |
| STS 2803  | Controversies in the Earth and Environmental Science |
| STS 3003  | Scientific Reasoning                                 |
| SCWK 6823 | Ecology and Social Justice                           |
| SOCI 2213 | Society and Ecology                                  |

*Electives Available from UNB*

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| HIST 3925    | Technology and Western Society                   |
| PHIL 3221-19 | Selected Topics in Philosophy of the Environment |
| POLS 1603    | Politics of Globalization                        |

**ENVS-1013. Introduction to Environmental Problems**

This course introduces students to the nature of ecological problems and the relationships between human activities and environmental deterioration. The course examines the nature of the biosphere: how living plant, animal and microbial communities and their supporting air, water and soil cycles function.

**ENVS-2023. Introduction to Perspectives on the Environment (HMRT 2243)**

This course explores how society has attempted to understand the social origins of environmental degradation and the changes necessary in society to end human disruption of the environment. This involves a review of the different perspectives within the environmental movement, and of the attempts by the social sciences and the humanities to understand the social origins of environmental degradation. Prerequisite: ENVS 1013, or permission of the instructor.

**ENVS-3013. Environmental Policy (HMRT 3213)**

Building upon familiarity with the major perspectives within the environmental movement, the course will examine various approaches to resolving environmental problems such as: bioregionalism, sustainable growth, deep ecology, rightsizing economic activity, etc. Students will explore how alternate visions of the future would translate into public policy. Prerequisites: ENVS 1013 and ENVS 2023, or permission of the instructor.

**ENVS-3023. Environmental Praxis (HMRT 3223)**

This course explores how alternative visions of the future translate into political action at the international, national, provincial, community, and personal levels. This involves an analysis of alternative theories of the nature of social change. A component of this course may be service learning. Prerequisites: ENVS 1013 and ENVS 2023, or permission of the instructor.

**ENVS-4003. Capstone Seminar**

This is a required course for the Major in Environment & Society which is designed to integrate the entire program of study. The seminar will focus on developing a multidisciplinary understanding of a selection of environmental issues as determined by student and faculty

interests. Issues considered will include ecological damage, social origins, and alternative approaches to addressing problems. Prerequisites: ENVS 3013 and ENVS 3023 or permission of the instructor.

**ENVS-4006. Work-Study Project**

This is a course in experiential learning for students in the final year of their Major in ENVS. Students will work with a non-profit organization which is actively involved in addressing environmental problems. Each student's activities will be designed under the direction of a faculty supervisor in consultation with the student and the work-place mentor. Enrolment is subject to the approval of the Coordinator of the Environment and Society program.

*NOTE: Not all courses listed are offered each year. Please consult with the Department Chair for more information about current and planned course offerings.*