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 Environmental Studies Department integrates topics 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 live in Australian rain forests.

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 consider climate change from multiple perspectives in our Climate Change Seminar class, create wildlife habitat sculptures in our Eco Arts class, plan green land use in our Sustainable Landscape course and investigate an ever-changing range of Chesapeake Bay topics with award-winning author Tom Horton. Incoming freshmen in our Green Floor Living-Learning Community share common ENVR topics with award-winning author Tom Horton. Incoming freshmen in our Green Floor Living-Learning Community share common ENVR classes, develop environmentally oriented activities and perform green service projects.

ENVR students intern in organizations as diverse as the Salisbury Zoo, Delmarva Discovery Center, Maryland State Park system, World Wildlife Fund, Patuxent National Wildlife Refuge and the Maryland Department of the Environment. Six ENVR majors have been awarded Environmental Protection Agency Greater Research Opportunity Fellowships.

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

Stewardship
Stewardship and advocacy opportunities comprise an important part of our program. ENVR students have worked to build bird, bat and bee nest boxes with area high school students, worked with the Salisbury City Council to enhance urban tree canopy, created a website for regional environmental justice, and testified to the Maryland Assembly regarding energy policy. They held a fundraiser to purchase an Environmental Studies Program greenhouse, created heron and crab sculptures out of recycled materials to publicize the city and county’s “Stash Your Trash” program, and helped SU’s Ward Museum achieve green certification. ENVR students are growing vegetables and establishing pollinator gardens on campus and are helping with the Camden Community garden.

STEERING COMMITTEE & FACULTY

- Gina Bloodworth, Geography
- Jill L. Caviglia-Harris, Environmental and Natural Resource Economics
- Jim Hatley, Environmental Philosophy
- Tom Horton, Environmental Studies of the Chesapeake Bay
- Sonja Kolstoe, Environmental Studies and Economics
- Michael Lewis, Department Chair Environmental Studies
- Joan Maloof, Professor Emeritus, Biological Sciences
- Nancy Mitchell, Eco-Arts
- Fulbert Namwamba, Environmental Geosciences
- Bill Nelson, Sustainability and Experiential Education
- Tami Ransom, Conservation Biology
- Dave Scheid, Sustainable Landscape Design
- Sarah Surak, Environmental Policy

Other affiliated faculty are located throughout the University.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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

www.salisbury.edu/environmentalstudies

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.”