

INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES  
Fall 1993 - Winter 1994/ Coordinated Studies

This program examined natural systems and human affairs which interact to affect local and global environments. Areas of social and natural science which apply toward understanding issues of environment and natural resources were covered by assigned readings, lectures, written assignments, seminars, workshops, field studies, and literature-research projects. The studies focused on the environments and people of the Pacific Northwest, other regions of the western U.S., and the global environment as a whole. "Water" was thematically central to various topics, including public policy, ecological science, and their interconnections. Students developed preliminary information and written proposals for literature-based research projects during the first quarter (fall) to be completed during the second quarter (winter).

Fall Quarter 1993

During the Fall Quarter, the faculty presented lectures about: ecosystems ecology, including terrestrial and aquatic environments, and global hydrological and biogeochemical cycles; the ecology of Washington's forests, streams, Pacific salmon, and Puget Sound ("estuary"); and natural-resource policy relating to the U.S.-national, U.S. western, Indian tribal (treaties with the U.S.), and Washington State's natural-resource policies related to water rights and uses, Washington's forest practices and salmon fisheries, and the underlying history and processes of policy-making. The lectures were supported with several videos, particularly relating to natural-resource policy topics. Reading relating to these topics was assigned in *Ecology 2* (Colinvaux), *The Natural History of Puget Sound Country* (Kruckeberg), and *Perspectives on Water* (Speidel and Ruedisili). Faculty members from other areas of environmental studies at the College also gave talks about their individual specialties, including forest ecology, hydrology, environmental economics, entomology, and environmental health. An invited state-agency speaker talked about wetlands policy and practices in Washington State. Students were expected to write responses to questions about the material covered in the lectures and text-readings each week, and there were two midquarter quizzes about this area of the program.

Weekly seminars were held to discuss the following books representing a variety of environmental history, issues, and perspectives (in order of use): *The Good Rain* (Egan); *A Fierce Green Fire: The American Environmental Movement* (Shabecoff); *A Sand County Almanac* (Leopold); *Cadillac Desert* (Reisner); *Land Use, Environment, and Social Change* (White); *The Ages of Gaia* (Lovelock). Students wrote response papers about the assigned reading for each seminar.

Two field trips were made to the Skokomish River basin to observe natural habitats (stream, forest) and human water-related features (dams, diversions) of the watershed, and to hear about

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the issues of water uses and management, involving the U.S. Forest Service, Skokomish Indian Tribe, and Tacoma Public Utilities. Two field-study exercises based on forested habitats were assigned to introduce ecological field observations and the writing of field notes. A principal field guide used to identify the plants was the *Manual of Oregon Trees and Shrubs* (Randall et al).

Workshops were conducted about library resources (including on-line databases) for literature-research projects, computer word-processing, and computer spreadsheets.

An assigned individual research project was to select a river basin, develop background information about the basin, identify particular issues and problems, develop theses or questions, and produce a written research proposal from this information, with the expectation of doing the research during the second (winter) quarter.

Faculty: Jovana Brown (environmental policy), Gerardo Chin-Leo (ecology), Peter Taylor (Coordinator, ecology)

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### NOT FOR THE TRANSCRIPT PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Suggested course equivalencies: natural-resource policy - 3, introduction to general ecology & biogeochemistry - 6, seminar in environmental studies - 3, ecological field studies - 1, individual environmental literature-research topic - 3, total - 16 units/ Fall Quarter.