Bachelor’s Degree in Environmental Science

Letter to Prospective Students

The problems facing those who work with environmental issues (including natural resource management) are among the most difficult and complex in society. Each issue possesses political, scientific, sociological, economic, and legal ramifications. In addition, the scientific aspect of a given environmental problem typically can be further broken down into separate disciplines such as biology, chemistry, geology, etc. No environmental issue can fall under the jurisdiction of a single discipline because any environmental issue has such a great variety of ramifications.

For these reasons, we have designed the B.S. in Environmental Sciences at the University of New Mexico to allow students to obtain a rigorous basic science/math background while simultaneously exposing them to the thought processes and tools of the many other disciplines that are involved with Environmental Sciences. Rather than offer a program that provides a basic understanding of a variety of environmental issues but no specific training in any one discipline, our program requires students to focus in several selected areas, and then to apply that study to environmental issues through the required Environmental Science courses.

By working with several academic departments, we offer concentrations in several ‘track’ areas: including geoscience, hydroscience, geochemistry, surficial processes, climate, ecology, and data analysis. With a faculty academic advisor, you will create a program designed for your particular interests and goals. Included in your concentration will be two courses in Environmental Sciences in which you will deal with real environmental issues and learn to work with many different disciplines to analyze the problems you face.

Most environmental issues are assessed and managed within a regulatory framework and concrete timelines. Gaining familiarity with these regulatory guidelines and governing agencies at the local, state, national and international level is a component of the Environmental Sciences curriculum. Effective communication and presentation skills will also be developed.

Society needs the most energetic and the very brightest people using science broadly to treat environmental questions as the multidisciplinary questions they are. To work effectively on environmental questions requires integration of technical skills, sensitivity to the needs and interests of a technologically advanced and diverse society, dedication to improving the quality of people’s lives, and a willingness to accept responsibility in balancing competing interests. The Environmental Science degree provides the academic framework constituting the first steps toward a career in this challenging and rewarding field.

Sincerely,

Laura Crossey
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Faculty Advisor, Environmental Sciences