

Environmental Studies

Learning Goals

1. To develop the ability to anticipate and understand interconnectivity within complex and dynamic socioecological systems.
2. To develop the practice of engaging, communicating, and collaborating to enrich our understanding of complex environmental systems and to advance solutions to the world's most challenging environmental problems.
3. To develop the habits of mind and heart to bring intellectually sophisticated and culturally aware knowledge of nature, environmental decision making, and human-nature relationships into lives of compassionate, ethical, and engaged citizenship.

About the major

Founded in 1965, the Middlebury College Environmental Studies Program is the oldest undergraduate ES program in the United States.

Our program brings together a community of scholars and students engaged in the study of the human relationship to the environment from many different directions, across 24 departments on our campus. Our 10 core faculty members and 40 affiliated faculty colleagues together offer an interdisciplinary major and minor.

Two-thirds of all environmental studies majors study abroad for one semester at schools and programs across Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Australia. Our senior majors collaborate on a community-connected learning project in partnership with local environmental organizations in the Senior Seminar. ES majors and minors graduate with in-depth knowledge of the American story of human-environmental interaction, but also recognize that there are other stories, often strikingly different, from other parts of the world.

With more than 900 graduates, our alumni work in environmental fields as entrepreneurs, scientists, policy makers, scholars, consultants, teachers, volunteers, activists, and founders of nonprofits.

“The environmental policy major prepared me to enter the cleantech industry with confidence. My understanding of environmental markets and drivers enabled me to jump into discussions with my coworkers from day one. I am looking forward to continuing my academic journey this fall at business school.”

—Hilary Platt '12
MBA Candidate,

UC Berkeley, Haas School of Business

Reasons you might choose this major

- You have a deep-seated respect for and curiosity about the environment.
- You are looking to expand and deepen your knowledge of the environment and humans' relationship to it through inter- and multidisciplinary approaches.
- You care deeply about some of the biggest challenges facing our times—climate change, equitable access to natural resources, and global biodiversity loss—and are excited to explore the issues and solve problems in an integrative way that acknowledges complexity and uncertainty.
- You want your academic pursuit to challenge you to develop the tools, knowledge, and perspectives to make a difference in a rapidly changing world.



Translating Learning into Professional Competencies

Throughout your time at Middlebury, you will develop and enhance the following core professional competencies, skills, and dispositions highly valued by employers that will prepare you for leadership and success in any given field:

Critical Thinking: Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems.

Oral/Written Communications: Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms.

Teamwork/Collaboration: Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers from diverse backgrounds.

Leadership: Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others.

Professionalism/Work Ethic: Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits.

Global/Intercultural Fluency: Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions.

Digital Technology: Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.

Career Management: Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional development.

Where environmental studies majors go

Applying your learning through internships . . .

Students pursue internships and research in a variety of fields, enabling them to apply their liberal arts learning in real-world settings. Internships, research, and self-directed projects enrich your academic experience and help prepare you for life after Middlebury. Students have interned or done research at the following:

The Andean Alliance for Sustainable Development

Missouri Coalition for the Environment

Mountain Research Station/Niwot Ridge
Long Term Ecologica

Environmental Defense Fund

Center for Science and Environment

Bioregions International

GridMarket, LLC

NatureServe

Scape Design Studio

The Nature Conservancy GLOBE Alaska

Novus Biologicals

US Department of Veterans Affairs

Independent-Project: Gaines-Ota Family
Farm Revitalization

EOS International, Nicaragua

Vermont Institute of Natural Science

United States Fish and Wildlife Service

The Nature Conservancy Globe Intern

NOAA- Coral Reef Ecosystem Program

Little Village Environmental Justice
Organization

Vermont Edible Landscapes and Interlace
Agroforestry Farm

. . . leading to meaningful, dynamic, and engaging career paths.

See just some of the many interesting ways our graduates have applied their liberal arts learning to engage the world. If you want to see what other Middlebury alumni are doing now, log into Midd2Midd and search by major. **go/midd2midd**

Kristin Link Science Illustration, *Science
Illustrator and Natural History Artist*

Vermont Hard Cider, *General Manager*

NE Water Pollution Control Commission,
Director, Water Quality

Mayo Clinic, *Dermatologist*

Aspen Skiing Company, *Director,
Sustainability*

Chevron, *Environmental Scientist*

Sparkfund, *Founder and CEO*

National Renewable Energy Laboratory,
GIS Scientist

U.S. EPA, *Remedial Project Manager*

Backcountry Magazine, *Digital Producer
and Editor*

The Keystone Center, *Director, Science and
Public Policy*

The National Marine Sanctuary Program,
Superintendent, Florida Keys

Wilkinson Ecological Design, *Senior
Restoration Designer*

U.S. Dept. of Transportation, *Senior Trial
Attorney, Federal Railroad Administration*

World Wildlife Fund, *Senior Program Officer*

Alder Environmental, LLC, *Wildlife Ecologist*

Casella Waste Systems, *Associate General
Counsel*

U.N. Development Programme, *Climate
Change Policy Analyst*

National Grid, *Business Development
Manager*

Lockheed Martin Energy, *Energy Storage
Marketing and Strategy Manager*

State of Vermont, *Environmental Health
Surveillance Chief*

Jawbone, *Director of Content Design*

Conservation International, *Manager,
Conservation Tools for Business*

City of Seattle, *Strategic Partnership
Manager*