

# Environmental Studies and Sustainability

It is widely accepted that focusing attention on “sustainability” may be our best approach to ensuring a lasting quality of life on Earth. Sustainability refers to using resources such that they will be available to future generations. That concept is part of this curriculum at Northern Michigan University.

The student who majors in Environmental Studies and Sustainability at NMU is trained and educated to observe and measure how people interact with Earth’s natural and cultural environments. Such observations and measurements yield knowledge that will help us to better understand our changing world and its parts. This environmental awareness subsequently improves the performance of business, planning, law, management, education, communication, criminal justice, public affairs, and other professions as they deal with environmental ethics and challenges.

## Skills and Competencies

Multiple general education classes will count towards a degree in Environmental Studies and Sustainability. These classes will help you develop invaluable skills and competencies, all of which you will use in the work force. Communication skills, for example, are particularly needed in most career fields today, and Environmental Studies and Sustainability is no exception. Effective writing and speaking skills will help carry you far. In this program, you will fine-tune analytical skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making.

## Course Work

This degree includes the following courses as part of the program requirements, and specific major requirements along with general education and graduation requirements.

### Core

- GC101 Intro to Environmental Science (4 cr.)
- GC100 Physical Geography (4 cr.)
- GC164 Human Geography (4 cr.)
- GC205 Introduction to Geographic Research (4 cr.)
- GC220 Economic Geography (4 cr.)
- GC225 Introduction to Maps (2 cr.)
- GC235 Quantitative Methods (4 cr.)
- GC269 Introduction to Sustainability (4 cr.)
- GC310 Urban Geography (4 cr.)
- GC320 Environmental Policy and Regulation (4 cr.)
- GC335 Geographic Information Systems (4 cr.)
- GC360 Population Geography (4 cr.)
- GC489 Human Impact Upon the Env. (4 cr.)

### Choose 8 credits

- AN210 Ecological Anthropology; People, Culture and nature ( 4 cr.)
- AN320 Native Peoples of North American (4 cr.)
- EC345 Environmental and Natural Resource Economics (4 cr.)
- EC425 International Economics (4 cr.)
- EC460 Economic Development (4 cr.)
- GC202 Soils (4 cr.)
- GC210 Earth Hazards (4 cr.)
- GC285 Earth’s Climate: Past Present, and Future (4 cr.)
- GC300 Regional Studies; World Cultures (4 cr.)
- GC303 Practicing Geography (4 cr.)
- GC316 Geography of Tourism (4 cr.)
- GC317 Geography of Food Systems (4 cr.)
- GC342 Energy and the Environment (4 cr.)
- GC 362 Wetlands (4 cr.)
- GC424 Environmental Justice (4 cr.)
- GC470 Environmental Ethics (4 cr.)
- GC475 Environmental Impact Assessment (4cr.)
- GC491 Internship (2-6cr.)
- NAS340 Kinomaage: Earth Shows Us the Way (4 cr.)
- NAS342 Indigenous Environmental Movements (4 cr.)
- PS206 International Relations (4 cr.)
- PS415 Politics of American Foreign Policy (4 cr.)
- SO351 Social Change (4 cr.)
- SP432 Environmental Communication (4 cr.)

Detailed course descriptions can be found at [www.nmu.edu/bulletin](http://www.nmu.edu/bulletin).

## Career Development

You should begin the resume-building process as soon as you can. The Academic and Career Advisement Center can assist you with career planning, while Career Services will help you fine tune your resume and look for jobs related to your field. In the meantime, the more hands-on experience you have, the better the chances are that you will find a job. Becoming involved in a related internship is a way to develop your professional skills and gain experience. Your academic course work is important as well, so be sure to apply yourself. We recommend that you take GC303 Practicing Geography for a major elective to prepare for your job search.

## Additional Considerations

You can gain excellent experience in the environmental field by finding an internship related to your interests. Practical work experience can increase your marketability.

Minors in biology, outdoor recreation, criminal justice, Spanish, geomatics, math, alternative energies, or business may be helpful if pursuing work in environmental fields.

## Job Outlook

The general field of Environmental Studies and Sustainability is expected to evolve and grow. Job growth is at or above average depending on the career path in the broad range of environmental occupations. Visit [www.bls.gov/ooh](http://www.bls.gov/ooh) for more information.

# Potential Careers

NMU's Environmental Studies and Sustainability Program prepares students for employment in many careers including the following:

- Ecotourism Guide
- Environmental Conservation Officer
- Environmental Consultant
- Environmental Educator
- Environmental Lawyer
- Environmental Protection Specialist
- Organic Farmer
- Park Naturalist
- Park Ranger
- Environmental Policy Expert
- Recreational Consultant
- Resort Manager
- Sustainability Coordinator
- Sustainable Agriculture Practitioner
- Transportation Planner
- Urban Planner
- Waste Management Specialist
- Water Conservationist

# Additional Resources and Information

For Career Planning and Opportunities:

Academic & Career Advisement Center  
3302 C.B. Hedgcock  
906-227-2971  
[www.nmu.edu/acac](http://www.nmu.edu/acac)

Earth, Environmental, & Geographical Sciences  
3001 Weston Hall  
906-227-2500  
[eegs@nmu.edu](mailto:eegs@nmu.edu)  
[www.nmu.edu/eegs](http://www.nmu.edu/eegs)

For Job Search, Resume and Career Information:

Career Services  
3502 C.B. Hedgcock  
906-227-2800  
[www.nmu.edu/careers](http://www.nmu.edu/careers)

For Information about NMU Student Organizations Associated with this Major Contact:

Center for Student Enrichment  
1206 University Center  
906-227-2439  
[www.nmu.edu/cse](http://www.nmu.edu/cse)

EcoReps  
[ecoreps@nmu.edu](mailto:ecoreps@nmu.edu)

NMU Conservation Crew  
[nmuconservationcrew@gmail.com](mailto:nmuconservationcrew@gmail.com)

NMU Hoop House  
[hoophouse@nmu.edu](mailto:hoophouse@nmu.edu)

Internet Resource Links:

[www.careers.org](http://www.careers.org)  
[www.careerresource.net](http://www.careerresource.net)  
[www.bls.gov/oohwww.aess.info](http://www.bls.gov/oohwww.aess.info)

[www.mymajors.com/environmental-studies-major](http://www.mymajors.com/environmental-studies-major)

For Career Information with National Organizations:

[www.nature.org](http://www.nature.org) -The Nature Conservancy



**NORTHERN MICHIGAN  
UNIVERSITY**

MARQUETTE, MICHIGAN

The Academic & Career Advisement Center  
2021



What to do with  
a major in...

**Environmental Studies  
and Sustainability**

