

ENVS-202

Senior Project and Thesis Information

1. REQUIREMENT and ROLE

Six credits of ENVS-202 are required of all majors. The catalog states: "Senior Project and Thesis. Senior level project or thesis under faculty direction." As the concluding element in the environmental studies curriculum the senior project or thesis provides the student with an element of depth to complement breadth.

2. CONCEPT

- a "capstone" to each student's individualized major
- develops critical thinking and problem solving skills
- has a scholarly component
- has a final material product
- builds on previous courses
- is at a senior level
- has a focal study question

3. EMPHASIS

✓Research	✓Project	✓Creative Arts
Independent inquiry	"Hands on" activity	Creative endeavor
Tests hypothesis or answers study question	Completion of task	Completion of creative objective
Generates new knowledge	Experiential learning	Creative use of medium
Extensive literature review	Extensive literature review	Extensive literature review

Note: An internship can form the foundation or template for a project or research. Internships emphasize structured skill development in organizations combined with experiential learning.

4. ENTRY

To begin work on your ENVS-202 activity, you must pass ENVS-201, attaining a C grade or better for the research, project, or creative-arts **PROPOSAL**. If you pass ENVS-201, but receive a grade of C- or lower for the proposal, meet with the ENVS-202 Coordinator to determine what changes in the proposal are necessary in order to be acceptable for approval. In most cases this will involve revising the proposal, having it endorsed by at least two advisor/evaluators, and then approved by the ENVS-202 Coordinator.

5. THE PROPOSAL

A **Research Proposal** presents the plan for research, demonstrating the proposed research is likely to succeed. The methodology selected for testing hypotheses and/or addressing study questions, including frameworks of analyses, shall be derived and documented from literature in an appropriate field. An extensive literature review will place the proposed research in the context of previous work.

The **Project or Creative Arts Proposal** presents the proposed activity, demonstrating how the project or creative goals are to be achieved. The methodologies for completing the specific goals shall be derived from literature or documented practice and/or overseen by supervisors who are experts in the field. An extensive literature review will place the goals, methods and outcomes in an appropriate context. The ENVS-202 final product will be described in detail. The proposal may also include personal learning goals; if so, the methodologies to meet these goals and the means to evaluate the successfulness of meeting the goals will be clearly detailed.

6. SUPERVISION

Enrollment in ENVS-202 requires two "**ADVISOR/EVALUATORS**" who provide advice during the research, project, or creative process, and evaluate the work done for ENVS-202, including all final theses, documents, and/or other materials. Typically, one of the evaluators serves as the principal advisor for the student throughout ENVS-202. At least one evaluator must be an Environmental Program faculty member. It is the student's responsibility to obtain evaluator signatures on Evaluator Agreement forms, before commencing work on their research or project.

The advisor/evaluators are part of each ENVS-202 student's team, working together toward a successfully complete senior work. To ensure success, you should meet on a frequent and regular basis with your advisor/evaluators during all phases, from planning and proposal creation, through the work and analysis phases, to the preparation of conclusions and final products.

7. FINAL PRODUCT

All ENVS-202 students must complete a material final product including a **Written Document** containing at least the following sections. A final product shall place the work done in a context provided by the literature review.

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. title page | e. methods/procedures used |
| b. abstract | f. results and outcomes |
| c. introduction | g. discussion and conclusions |
| d. literature review | h. recommendations |

For students doing **research** the final product shall be in a thesis format acceptable to the two evaluators.

For students doing a **project** or **creation arts** endeavor the character of the final product is detailed in the project proposal, and includes at least the written document described above.

8. EVALUATION and GRADE

Each evaluator submits a completed evaluation form to the ENVS-202 Coordinator (currently Ian Worley) who determines the final grade based upon the evaluations. **Note:** there are separate forms for theses, projects, and creative arts projects.

9. CHANGES

Major changes in ENVS-202 topic or approach must be

- accompanied by a revised or new PROPOSAL
- be endorsed by at least two advisor/evaluators prior to approval
- approved by the ENVS-202 Coordinator

10. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions reflect the different aspects of independent work done during ENVS-202. Note that all work done for ENVS-202 requires a component of scholarship, including at least the use of an accepted and documented methodology, and the placing of the work done in the context of a scholarly body of literature. Be aware that individual faculty members may define these terms somewhat differently.

Research: The testing of an hypothesis or, in some cases, the answering of a question, by a methodology acceptable within the natural or social sciences, the humanities, or technological and professional disciplines. An outcome of research is new knowledge. Example: testing the degree of social acceptance of animal and plant rights.

Project: Goal-based work usually seeking to create a material product or outcome. Examples: drafting proposed legislation restricting clear-cutting in Vermont; creating a suite of place-based essays.

Internship An activity wherein skill or knowledge one has recently learned is put to use in a practical setting. Example: designing and implementing environmental educational programs for a local park district. Internships per se cannot fulfill ENVS-202 requirements. However, if there is a suitable project or research component, an internship can be the basis for an ENVS-202 activity. [Credits for internships can be attained directly via ENVS-191 and/or ENVS-291.]

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

• ENROLLMENT

You may begin enrolling in ENV5-202 the semester you enroll in ENV5-201. Most students spread the required 6.0 credits through two or more semesters and/or the summer session. Grades of XC ("extended course") will be given for each enrollment until your final work is graded; then all the XC's will be removed and replaced with your final grade.

• EVALUATOR SIGNATURE FORMS

Before commencing work on your ENV5-202 project or thesis you must have a completed evaluator signature form on file. These are to be submitted to the ENV5-202 Coordinator.

• HUMAN SUBJECTS, VERTEBRATE ANIMALS, AND BIOHAZARDS REVIEW

Before commencing work on your ENV5-202 project or thesis you must have an approved Protocol Cover Sheet and attachments on file. These are to be submitted to the ENV5-202 Coordinator. If you change your topic you must submit a new Protocol Cover Sheet and attachments. If your work involves human subjects or vertebrate animals, you must design the work to qualify as "Exempt" according to Federal Law and University Policy. This will be determined by your ENV5-201 instructor and the ENV5-202 Coordinator.

• FUNDS

Limited funds are available from the Environmental Program Enrichment funds to pay for part of your ENV5-202 expenses. Amounts and procedures vary from time to time. Contact your advisor or the 202 Coordinator for current information.

• DEADLINES

Program deadlines for submission of ENV5-202 drafts are:

First completed draft: ➡	NOV 1 st (Fall Semester)	APR 1 st (Spring Semester)
Final draft for grading: ➡	DEC 1 st (Fall Semester)	MAY 1 st (Spring Semester)

Note that your evaluators may require earlier dates. DO NOT submit bound copies for evaluation until your evaluators agree your work is acceptable to bind!! When submitting copies for evaluation (one copy to each evaluator), include evaluation forms with the top part completed by you. It is your responsibility to see that the completed evaluations get to the ENV5-202 Coordinator -- by Tuesday of exam week if you are finishing at the end of the semester. You will not graduate if evaluations are missing. One copy of your final copy is to be presented to the ENV5-202 Coordinator for filing at The Bittersweet.

• HONORS

Environmental Program Honors is described in a separate sheet. College or school honors vary immensely in process and planning required, and may differ for student in the Honors College. If you are interested in college/school honors obtain current guidelines from your college/school office. Do meet with the chair of the college/school honors committee to be sure you understand what is expected of you. In some instances you must begin your planning over a year before you anticipate receiving honors. Students receiving Program, College or School honors will have their ENV5-202 enrollments changed to ENV5-203 (Honors) or another suitable Honors course number.

• HELP SESSIONS

Walk-in help sessions with the ENV5-202 Coordinator are available twice a week each semester. Check the schedule of courses or at The Bittersweet for times and location.