ENVS 191 / ENVS 291 Environmental Practicum Guidelines

ENVS 191 and ENVS 291 are Environmental Studies course numbers for independent research, supervised field studies, internships and practicum projects. ENVS 191 is for activities done at the intermediate level; ENVS 291 is for senior or advanced level activities. You may earn a minimum of a 0.5 credit to a maximum of 9 credits in either course in a single semester or for a single project. We expect a minimum of 50 hours of effort for each credit hour earned. You may design and enroll in more than one ENVS 191 or 291 experience to earn credits toward your ENVS degree. ENVS 291 is also acceptable for graduate credit toward advanced degrees.

Planning
The Environmental Program places a high value on experiential education and encourages its students to engage in such experiences as an integral part of their undergraduate education. Thus, it is pleased to enroll students in ENVS 191 and ENVS 291 and offer assistance wherever possible. The Environmental Program insists on rigor and quality for individualized studies. A student considering an independent study should understand that it is up to the student to design the idea for the research, field study, or practicum. Much preliminary planning and preparation is required before enrollment is approved. In general, we expect more self-initiative and responsibility of the student than is expected in most traditional courses.

Credit is not granted for the ENVS 191 or 291 experience in and of itself but for the learning that results from all aspects of the activity. To receive ENVS 191 or 291 credit, the planned activity must have a significant environmental component; ENVS 191 or 291 is not for projects better done in other departments, nor is it an automatic "course of last resort" for projects unaccepted in other departments.

Supervision
In planning and carrying out your ENVS 191/291 project, you will be responsible to both your practicum supervisor and your faculty sponsor. You may consult with Environmental Program faculty and staff to discuss your ideas and to find a suitable faculty sponsor.

The ENVS FACULTY SPONSOR oversees the practicum learning experience from proposal to evaluation, making sure the activity is academically sound and appropriate to the student’s capacities.

The PRACTICUM SUPERVISOR directly oversees the work being done and is often someone off-campus or from another university department. The Practicum Supervisor is asked to provide written comments and an evaluation or grade that is passed on to the Faculty Sponsor. The Practicum Supervisor and the Faculty Sponsor can be the same person.

The ENVS 191/291 COURSE COORDINATOR may have little direct involvement with the student. The Course Coordinator is responsible for overall administration of ENVS 191 and ENVS 291, seeing that project plans and grades are properly submitted for those enrolled.

Note: All three of these people must sign the Learning Contract (See Page 3) indicating final approval of your Project Plan before it is formally approved and placed in your file.
ENVS 191 / ENVS 291 PROJECT PLAN

1. Project Title and Justification
   Why are you choosing to do an independent study and why this particular project? What is the importance of the work; how does it relate to your curriculum? Be sure to identify the site location and primary project supervisor as well as the number of credits requested and semester(s) in which credits will be enrolled.

2. Learning Objectives and Project Goals
   What do you hope to gain from this project? What will you know or be able to do at the end that you don't know or can't do now? What are the specific outcomes intended? Essentially, what do you intend to learn and do for credit during this experience?

3. Methods
   State exactly what you expect to be doing. How is each learning objective and project goal to be accomplished? Provide as much detail as possible, linking specific methods to each learning objective and project goal. Include information on exact time frame of the experience and the number of hours per week you will be engaged. Describe your anticipated timeline for meetings with supervisors and submission of final products and evaluation. Restate how many credits you are requesting for this activity.

4. Evaluation and Final Product
   Explain how you will demonstrate the degree to which you were successful in meeting your learning objectives. To document your learning, we require a final reflection paper that demonstrates how well you achieved your learning objectives and project goals, and how they may have changed over the course of your activity. The university catalogue requires this documentation to be retained by the Environmental Program. Many faculty sponsors recommend keeping a journal log of your activities to help you review your experience as you are writing your final paper.

APPROVAL and ENROLLMENT
   The project plan, complete with the Faculty Supervisor's approval signature, must be submitted to the Course Coordinator for final approval before enrollment in ENVS 191/291. Provide a copy of the signed plan to your Practicum Supervisor, your Faculty Sponsor, and the Course Coordinator, and keep a copy yourself. You may enroll in ENVS 191 or 291 at any point in the semester once approval has been granted and the electronic override has been submitted by the Course Coordinator.

Note: Students who register in ENVS 191 or 291 without all necessary signatures cannot expect that approval will be forthcoming. You will be dropped from ENVS 191 or 291 if your plan is not approved.

GRADES and EVALUATION
   You should meet with your Faculty Sponsor as needed throughout the project, though generally your Practicum Supervisor will be your primary contact. You are encouraged to call upon other knowledgeable persons (other faculty, off-campus experts, etc.) for assistance with various aspects of your activity.

   If your activity will extend beyond the end of a semester you may spread the credits over more than one semester. If this is the case, you will receive a temporary SP grade for each semester until the work is completed. You will then receive the final letter grade at the conclusion of your work. Your Faculty Sponsor will make your final grade determination, based on evaluation comments from your site supervisor. S/he will then submit this grade to the Course Coordinator who enters it online. Copies of final products and evaluations should be submitted to the Course Coordinator to be retained by the Environmental Program in your student file.
ENVS 191 AND ENVS 291 LEARNING CONTRACT

STUDENT

I have read the requirements for enrollment in ENVS 191 or 291. I understand what is expected of me.

Signature of Student ___________________________ Date __________

PRACTICUM SUPERVISOR

I agree to serve as the Practicum Supervisor of the above named student as described in the attached Project Plan. I have read and understand the plan; I assess the planned work to be realistic. I agree to provide guidance and direction for the student and to be available should difficulties arise. At the conclusion of the project, as described in the Project Plan, I will evaluate the work and determine the extent to which the learning and project objectives were reached. I will forward my evaluation and a copy of each final product to the Faculty Supervisor.

I understand what is expected of me.

Signature of Practicum Supervisor ___________________________ Date __________

FACULTY SPONSOR

I agree to be the Faculty Supervisor of the above named student as described in the attached Project Plan. I have read and understand the plan; I assess the planned work to be realistic and to conform with UVM Guidelines for Independent Study. I agree to provide guidance for the student and to be available should difficulties arise. At the conclusion of the project, as described in the Project Plan, I will evaluate the work and determine the extent to which the learning and project objectives were reached. Based upon my evaluation and the evaluation of the Practicum Supervisor, I will determine a grade for the student. I will forward the grade, the evaluations, and a copy of any final product to the Course Coordinator.

I understand what is expected of me.

Signature of Faculty Supervisor ___________________________ Date __________

COURSE COORDINATOR

The above named student has permission to enroll in [ENVS-191] [ENVS-291] for _________ credits according to the terms of the attached Project Plan.

Signature of Course Coordinator ___________________________ Date __________