

School of Environmental Studies – 4th year Options

Students in Environmental Science Majors and Environmental Studies Majors may choose between ENSC 430 and ENSC 50502 as a fourth year honours project to complete their degree. Final course registration for ENSC 50502 in place of these project options.

Course Description

ENSC 430 Honours Project in Environmental Sustainability (6.0 units)

Interdisciplinary study of the scientific, sociopolitical, and economic aspects of selected local, national, or global issues related to environmental sustainability. Teamwork is emphasized.

NOTE Field Trip: estimated cost \$30.

Requirements: Prerequisite Level 4 or above and registration in an (ENSC Major, ENVS Major, ENVS Media, EBIO, ECHM, EGEO, EGPY, ELSC or ETOX Plan) or permission of the School.

This course runs for the full academic year. The fall term includes a series of lectures and skills workshops that can be completed at your own pace, and individual assignments to prepare for the final group project. There are no lectures or workshops in the winter term, but a 3-hour weekly session is reserved in the schedule to facilitate group work and to ask questions of the teaching team. Teamwork is emphasized (group assignments will account for 50% of your grade), though there will also be several individual assignments (the other 50% of your grade).

This course is designed to be a “capstone” experience for ENSC and ENVS Majors. It incorporates many of the issues and concepts you have been exposed to in Environmental Studies and requires you to apply knowledge and methods you have learned in other courses toward a ‘real world’ case study. The course is interdisciplinary in nature, and we will explore scientific, sociopolitical and economic aspects of the environment in an integrative fashion. A central goal of the course is to help prepare you for the type of interdisciplinary, collaborative, team-based environmental projects you will inevitably find yourself involved in after you graduate.

The main course theme for 2024/25 is "Applied Climate Science: Mitigation, Modeling, and Analysis".

ENSC501 Independent Environmental Study (6.0 units) –fall/winter term

<https://www.queensu.ca/ensc/undergraduate/courses/ens501502>

synthesize novel ideas or concepts through the combination of available information.

ENSC 502 is a 12-unit course that normally includes acquisition of new data or substantial analysis of an existing data set. This can be from laboratory work, surveys, field studies, etc., usually done as a member of the supervisor's research group. Often ENSC 502 projects are started in the summer before registering in the course, e.g. as a summer research assistant.

Choosing a project or topic along with a supervisor for ENSC 501 or 502.

There are two common situations for students who choose these courses.

A) a student is really keen to study a particular environmental topic as part of their degree, and would love to spend many hours researching the topic to become an expert. Getting course credit for doing all that work sounds like a great way to make time for it.

B) a student has met Prof. X (in a course, at a seminar, etc.) and really wants to do more in depth work with Prof. X than is possible in a regular course. The exact topic is not critical as long as it's in Prof. X's research area and Prof. X will supervise the work.

Step 1: Find a Supervisor

Each student will have a supervisor and an examiner. The supervisor has the primary responsibility for student advising, while the examiner is involved with providing feedback and marking course components (outline, draft report, etc.). If appropriate, the student can have two co-supervisors instead. The supervisor is usually a faculty member in SES (includes Adjunct and Cross-appointed faculty) with expertise in the research topic area. The examiner can be from outside SES with approval of the ENSC 501/502 Coordinator. Occasionally (e.g. Situation B above) the supervisor may be from outside SES in which case the examiner must be from SES and there must be approval from the Coordinator.

It is the student's responsibility to identify a supervisor, and this should be done as early as possible (i.e., spring or early summer). Usually this is done through an email request from the student to the faculty member. A list of faculty members and their interests can be found here: <https://www.queensu.ca/ensc/people/faculty-and-staff>. If a student is not sure who to contact for a particular topic, they may also contact other SES faculty or the Coordinator for advice on who might be an appropriate supervisor. Note that leaving this

Step 3: Supervision

The student and supervisor will discuss and refine the specific research topic to be addressed. The supervisor should provide advice related to defining the scope of the study, suggest relevant literature and other sources of information and provide input on the basic plan for the student's work. This can begin at the start of September. More information regarding timelines and deliverables will be posted on onQ by September.

Further information:

Undergrad Chair (Fall 2024):

Dr. Kristen Lowitt kristen.lowitt@queensu.ca