Environmental Studies

Overview

Our program is one of the first in the U.S., founded in 1968 by nationally known ecologists and long-time faculty members William A. Niering and Richard H. Goodwin. The program is part of a College-wide commitment to conservation and sustainability. As a major, you choose from two tracks – one focused on natural science, the other on social science. Your professors are your instructors, advisers and mentors, and they push you to tackle issues from multiple perspectives. For example, you might take an environmental policy course focused on a particular area of the world, along with a class on the region's ecology, geology and plant life. Many students enroll in a semester-long immersion program at the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole, Mass. You can also join student groups such as the Energy Conservation Organization, work in the College’s organic garden and get involved in numerous sustainability initiatives.

Research Opportunities

You have many research opportunities with faculty from any of 10 departments. Many students do summer internships with faculty, write peer-reviewed articles and travel with them to conferences or symposia. Others complete College-funded internships off campus. You may also apply to one of the College’s interdisciplinary certificate programs. Students in the Goodwin-Niering Center have interned at sites as varied as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in Boston and organic farms in Costa Rica and Panama.

Facilities

Our equipment and facilities include transmission and scanning electron microscopes, light microscopes, an extensive greenhouse, water quality instruments and a hydraulic flume that models stream and river hydrodynamics. Classes and research take full advantage of the College’s Arboretum, including areas established for long-term study of vegetation change. Our freshwater ecology lab maintains interactive data on lakes in the northeastern U.S. as well as tools to identify microscopic algae.
Faculty

Robert A. Askins, Katharine Blunt
Professor of Biology
B.S., University of Michigan; M.S., Ph.D., University of Minnesota
Ecology; ornithology; impact of forest fragmentation on natural communities; ecology of early successional birds; conservation biology

Siri Colom, C3 Postdoctoral Fellow,
Environmental Studies
B.A., Tufts University; M.A., University of Massachusetts, Boston; Ph.D., University of California Berkeley
Urban governance and politics; racial institutions of domination; political economy; environmental change; social change amidst socio-natural and economic disasters; development and globalization

Andrew Davis, Adjunct Assistant
Professor of Environmental Studies
B.S., Trinity College; M.S., Ph.D., University of Massachusetts, Amherst; J.D., George Washington University
Environmental law and policy; marine pollution; environmental studies

Jane Dawson, Virginia Eaton
Weissmann ’51 Professor of Government and Environmental Studies; Director of the Goodman-Niering Center for the Environment
A.B., Bryn Mawr; M.A., Harvard University; M.A., Johns Hopkins University; Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley
International environmental politics; comparative environmental activism and politics; international environmental justice

Chad Jones, Associate Professor of Botany
B.S., Brigham Young University; Ph.D., University of Washington
Plant ecology; plant succession; invasive species; GIS and ecological modeling

Manuel Lizaralde, Associate Professor of Botany and Anthropology
B.A., M.A., Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley
Ethnobotany; environmental anthropology

Michelle Neely, Assistant Professor of English
B.A. University of California at Berkeley, M.A., Ph.D., University of California, Irvine
American literature in 1900; racial studies; eco-criticism; animal studies; African-American and Native American literatures; women’s literature; literary and political theory

Peter Siver, Charles & Sarah E. Becker
’27 Professor of Botany; Director of Environmental Studies Program
B.A., SUNY Binghamton; M.S., University of New Hampshire; Ph.D., University of Connecticut
Limnology; acid rain; phyology

Douglas M. Thompson, Professor of Geology
B.A., Middlebury College; M.S., Ph.D., Colorado State University
Geomorphology; hydrology; hazards; geology; geography; civil engineering

Selected Courses

Environmental Studies as a Natural Science; Environmental Studies as a Social Science; Hydrology; Environmental Activism and its Political Impact Around the Globe; U.S. Environmental Policy and Politics; Introduction to Geographic Information Systems; Freshwater Ecology; Plant Ecology; Earth Surface Processes and Landforms; Coastal Dynamics of Southern New England; Geologic Hazards and Humans; Sustainable Agriculture; Law, Science and the Environment; Environmental Economics; Thinking Philosophically About the Environment

About Connecticut College

Connecticut College is a private, highly selective liberal arts college with 1,850 students and more than 40 majors in the arts, sciences, social sciences and humanities, and the option for students to self-design majors. The College offers a high level of intellectual challenge, and a campus culture that supports students to tailor their educational experience to their own interests and goals. A four-year career development program teaches students how to translate a liberal arts degree into a first job or graduate school admission. Connecticut College is situated in the small New England seaport of New London.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.CONNCOLL.EDU/ACADEMICS/