

Environmental Leadership Seminar (ENVI490)

Macalester College, Fall 2019

Monday 7-10pm Library 250

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Office hours by appointment

Access Course Website as ENVI490



This course offers an interdisciplinary approach to studying environmental leadership by integrating a weekly seminar session and an intensive internship experience (8-10 hours/week) with an environmental organization or business in the Twin Cities metro region.

This course is intended to provide you with the resources, space and support for intentional reflection on how you balance personal leadership style, academic/technical skills and professional career goals. Each week we will explore a range of themes that help you analyze and interpret the work of local leaders and their organizations. The ultimate goal of the course experience is to help you explore your own leadership style and chart out a professional course for your post-Macalester years.

Over the course of the semester we will work through some challenging exercises that will eventually help you answer these questions:

- What matters most to you? How can you translate your life goals into a post-college plan?
- What are your skills, talents and academic interests? Can you identify gaps you need to fill?
- What kinds of working environments suit you best? What kind of mentors do you need?
- What are the challenges confronting recent ES graduates? How can you prepare yourself to find new opportunities and launch your career?
- Where do you see yourself 5 years from now? How do you plan to land that dream job, start that organization or get that next degree?

Student Evaluation

Students must register for **BOTH** ENVI489 (4 credits) and ENVI490 (2 credits). ENVI489 is pass/fail. Students will receive a letter grade for ENVI490.

In ENVI490, students will be evaluated on the basis of:

1) Seminar attendance & participation (20%)

Your participation grade will be based on thoughtful, respectful, and productive engagement in class discussions. You are expected to attend **every** seminar session and to complete your internship hours each week. If you must be absent due to illness or other extenuating circumstance, contact me as soon as possible. If you must be absent from your internship, notify your supervisor.

Please remember that we only have ONE class meeting a week. More than one absence in seminar will result in a reduction in your participation grade. If you are regularly late to class, this may be counted as an absence. You are responsible for checking in with your peers for missed material.

2) Submission of short writing assignments (35%)

There are 10 short writing assignments in this course. They are due prior to each week's seminar meeting. The assignment is listed on this syllabus and also on the Moodle site. Your assignment is due by **12pm the morning of class**. They must be submitted through the course website. DO NOT e-mail assignments to me. **I cannot accept late assignments.**

These writing assignments will be graded as outstanding (A), excellent (A/A-), good (B+), satisfactory (B), and unsatisfactory (C) for each submission. **I reserve the outstanding mark for those submissions that thoughtfully and articulately respond to the question prompt in the contexts of the assigned readings.** Occasionally, I will respond directly to your submission on Moodle. If your writing is referred to in class, your identity will remain confidential. Your writing assignments will not be shared with your supervisor.

3) Final paper and poster presentation (30% total – paper 20%; poster 10%)

There will be a poster presentation session on Monday Dec 4th 4:30-6pm when you will share your internship experiences with the rest of the college community and your supervisors. While my preference is for computer generated posters, students may also exhibit their work in the form of hand illustrated drawings, photo essays or other multimedia work. The main purpose of the assignment is to summarize your work this semester in a succinct and interesting way so that others can easily understand what you have accomplished. This is also an important opportunity for other ES majors to learn about potential internships. The posters will be judged by a small committee and prizes will be awarded. All supervisors will be invited to the poster session.

Your final paper is due on Friday Dec 15th at 5pm on Moodle. It should be approximately 1500-2500 words (5 single spaced pages). In this paper, I will ask you to imagine yourself 5 years from now and narrate how you have gotten there. In the course of the paper, I expect you to reflect on your internship experience in detail. What have you learned about the field you investigated? How well did your internship connect with your coursework in Environmental Studies? What were your most memorable moments and what did they teach you?

4) **E-Portfolio (15%)**

This semester you will be asked to design and create a portfolio that describes your goals and achievements. It's a space for you to narrate your life story. We will workshop these in class. The final submission date can be at the end of the term or over January.

If you submit the poster or final paper late, you WILL be graded down one full step for each day past the deadline. For example, an assignment handed in one day late will begin with a B+; two days late a C+.

Final Grade Scale: A (95-100); A- (90-94); B+ (87-89); B (83-86); B- (80-82). Similar ranges for C grades (70-79) and D grades (60-69); Below 60 is a failing grade.

Academic Integrity: It is assumed that all members of the class will act with academic integrity and will not engage in behavior such as plagiarism, academic dishonesty, misrepresentation, or cheating. Please refer to the college's policy on academic honesty.

Student Health and Well-being: This is a stressful year for most students as they begin to imagine life beyond College. It is important to acknowledge any stressors you may be facing, which can be mental, emotional, physical, financial, etc., and how they can have an academic impact. If you are having difficulties maintaining your well-being, please don't hesitate to contact me and/or find support from the resources list I have posted on Moodle.

Mark your Calendars - Important Deadlines

Monday Sept 9: Learning contract due on Handshake. Add/drop deadline is Sept 13.

Monday Oct 21: Mid-term evaluation by site supervisor due

Friday Nov 8 - Saturday Nov 9: Senior/FYC Eagle Bluffs Retreat

Monday Dec 2: Poster presentations - ES reception 4:30- 6pm

Friday Dec 6: Final self-evaluation by student and site supervisor due

Monday Dec 9: Final ELP class dinner at Briggs House

Monday Dec 16: Final paper and E-portfolios due on Moodle by 5pm



Class Schedule & Assignments

September 9: First Class (with invited special guest Maya Swope '19)

Part I: Introduction to the Internship Experience with Mike Porter

Part II: What will define your senior year as an Environmental Studies major?

Reading (emailed to you):

- W. Cronon. 1998. "Only Connect...The Goals of a Liberal Education," *The American Scholar*. September 22, 1998.

Writing assignment #1 due at first class meeting:

As you begin your senior year, what matters most to you? Can you translate these into goals for the year ahead? Does Cronon's essay resonate with you? If so, do you feel close to having achieved the goals laid out for you in his essay?

September 16: What is Environmental Leadership?

*Introduction to E-Portfolio project.

Reading:

- D. R. Gallager. 2012. "Why Environmental Leadership," *Environmental Leadership: A Reference Handbook*. Sage Press. Pp. 1-17.
- P. Loeb. 2011. "Chapter 1: Making Our Lives Count," in *Soul of a Citizen*. NY: St. Martin's Press. Pp. 21-41.
- S. Cain. 2017. "Not Leadership Material? Good. The World Needs Followers," March 24. NY Times.

Writing assignment #2: Leaders and Followers

The authors paint portraits of many leaders, including Rosa Parks, in their writings. For this assignment, we will consider their and your version of the concept "environmental leadership".

The first section of your essay should describe a leader who has made a lasting impression on you (its fine to build on someone mentioned in the reading). Whether it was a global figure or an unsung local leader, what about their personal story struck a chord with you? The second section of the essay should reflect on your own life experiences. How would you describe your own leadership traits? Do they



reflect the leader you chose? Finally, did the NY Times piece resonate with you in terms of the need for followers, as much as leaders?

A main goal of this assignment is for you to explore and begin to deconstruct/redefine the meaning of “environmental leadership”.

September 23rd: First Impressions and Observations

Reading:

- R. Emerson et al. 1995. “Chapter One: Fieldnotes in Ethnographic Research” and “Chapter Two: In the Field” in *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: Univ of Chicago Press. Pp. 1-38.

Writing assignment #3: Organizational Profiles and Your Projects

Write a one-two single spaced page description of your work site. Use your writing to reflect on what the organization does and why you have chosen this site to perform your internship. Describe your positive and negative first impressions. What will your semester project/s look like? Submit this much on Moodle. On a separate page draw a map of your workplace and where you work/fit on this map. Bring your map to class.

September 30: Young Alumni Night - Jobs and Grad School after your ES Degree

With Sam Burlager, Mark Reigel, Erin Daly, Alice Madden, Elspeth Cavert

Submit a set of questions (at least 4-5) on Moodle for our guests about life after Macalester

October 7: Equity, Inclusivity and Diversity with invited guests Julia Eagles ('06) and Halston Sheets

Reading:

- N. Swaminathan. 2017. “The unsustainable whiteness of green.” Report for Grist.org
- D. Wilson. 2007. “We are Bridges,” in *Diversity and the Fate of the Environmental Movement* (ed) Emily Enderle. New Haven: Yale Univ Press. Pp. 96-106.
- SKIM: D. Taylor. 2014. *State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations*.
Also see leader profiles at <http://www.diversegreen.org/leadership/>

Writing assignment #4: How does your organization work towards equity, inclusivity and diversity?

In one to two single spaced pages address a subset of these questions:

How do issues of equity, inclusivity and diversity manifest in the day to day activities you witness at work? Is equity part of the organization's mission (staffing, programs)? Are there workplace norms that surprise you? Submit this much on Moodle. On a separate page attempt to draw an organizational chart indicating formal and informal chains of command (who reports to/supervises who). Bring this to class.

October 14: Loving to Hate Networking with guest Amanda Duffy, CDC-Hub

- A. Grant. 2017. Networking is Overrated. *NY Times*. August 27. (Only one page)
- T. Casciaro et al. "Learn to Love Networking," *Harvard Business Review*

Writing Assignment #5: Networking

Your assignment is to attend and reflect on a networking event, either from the list I've provided or something you've found. First, attend that event. Second, bring us back an artifact from that event (be creative). Third, read the assigned one page essay. Finally, write a one to two single spaced reflection describing the event and what you gained/or lost through the experience.

SAMPLE Networking events:

Wed Oct 2: 7:30-9am Fresh Energy 2019 Breakfast (5-7 spots)

Thurs Oct 3: "Evening Celebrating the Mississippi", Friends of the Mississippi (5-7 spots)

Thurs Oct 10: Metro CERT Networking Happy Hour 4-7:30pm St. Louis Park Rec Center

Tues Oct 15: Feminist Energy Fight Club Happy Hour 4:30-6pm Augustine's

October 21: E-portfolio Design Workshop with Karin Trail-Johnson

Writing assignment #6: About Me

Review the sample e-portfolio sites we've shared. Submit on Moodle and bring a draft to class of your "About Me" section and ONE other section (this could be a tab called "Leadership", "Career Goals", "Service").

October 28: Mentors and Confidants

* This assignment requires scheduling an interview with your supervisor (please plan ahead)

Writing assignment #7: Interview your supervisor (or other senior staff) about their career trajectory and life history.

In your write-up, describe your supervisor's leadership style and career trajectory. Did you learn something about them that surprised you? Have they made difficult choices toward balancing their life goals? How do they and you see their role in building and maintaining the organization? Who were their mentors? What might you take away from this interview that you can apply toward decisions you will have to make in the near future?

November 4: Knowing Your Story -- Vocational Discernment with invited guest Rev. Kelly Stone.

We will meet in the CRSL Lounge (lower level of the Chapel)

Readings:

- M. Schwehn and D. Bass. 2006. "Chapter 7: How Shall I Tell the Story of My Life" in *Leading Lives that Matter*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdsmans Publishing. Pp. 451-485.

- M. C. Bateson. 2004. "Chapter 27: Composing a Life Story" in P. Loeb's *The Impossible Will Take a Little While*. New York: Basic Books. Pp. 207-215.

Writing assignment #8: "This I believe..."

Write a 400-500 word personal essay that describes your personal philosophy. You can read more about the project and see sample essays from the 1950s and now at:

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4538138>

***Overnight Retreat Friday Nov 8-Sat Nov 9 to Eagle Bluffs - leave at 2:30pm and return Saturday 6pm**

Nov 11: Trading Places (No class tonight)

Writing assignment #9: Trading places - Internship site visit exchange (submit by Monday Nov 11)

Submit a one-two page summary of your exchange reflecting upon how the qualities of a job site (your own and the one you are shadowing) might inhibit/enhance/facilitate (1) course goals or course experience, and(2) personal learning, productivity, professional growth.

November 18: Career Center Workshop with Amanda Duffy

Bring copies of the cover letters and resumes that you have prepared for the job ads for Mock Job Night to class – we will workshop them. We will talk also talk about the Myers-Briggs, Strong Interest Inventory and Enneagram tests.

Nov 25: Mock Job Night with invited local senior environmental leaders

Writing assignment #10: Mock cover letter & resume

Follow the instructions for this assignment on the Moodle site. You will need to choose two of the mock job ads posted and prepare your applications by writing a resume and cover letter for each. We will conduct mock interviews in class.

Dec 2: Poster presentations and ES reception 4:30-6pm

More details and sample posters coming.

Dec 9: Senior dinner at Alumni House 5:30-7pm. Wrap up and evaluations

**** Final reflection paper are due on Monday Dec 16th on Moodle by 5pm.**