Environmental Science

Degree(s)
+ Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in environmental science
+ Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in environmental science
+ Minor in environmental science

Program Overview
The environmental science program at Saint Louis University focuses on developing a scientific understanding of Earth’s natural systems and their interconnections with human society. The program represents a collaborative effort between several departments to provide a degree opportunity that bridges traditional academic boundaries. It is hosted by the department of Earth and atmospheric sciences, which provides student advising and mentoring.

Environmental science encompasses the study of Earth’s environment, which is comprised of the geosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere and biosphere, with emphasis on human interactions with these spheres. Students will learn how these spheres interact with each other in the natural world, how human activities influence the environment and how people are affected by the ever-changing environment. Our environmental science program is designed so students first gain a thorough foundation of knowledge in all spheres and then focus more on one or more sub-disciplines, for example: soil, water, energy or climate change. The breadth-plus-depth structure of the program prepares students for advanced study toward M.S. or Ph.D. degrees in scientific disciplines, professional schools such as law or public health, or for immediate employment in industry or government.

Students majoring in the B.S. program are required to take 14 more credits of science and math than students in the B.A. program. Students interested in pursuing graduate school in environmental science or working as environmental scientists are encouraged to pursue the B.S. degree. The B.A. degree is appropriate for students interested in pursuing an advanced professional degree, or interested in the public policy associated with environmental science.

About the Faculty
The department of Earth and atmospheric sciences has a proud tradition of combining strong classroom and field-based instruction with an internationally recognized research faculty. The department frequently hosts visiting scientists from around the globe and sponsors technical and general environmental seminars.

Curriculum
The environmental science curriculum is built upon a breadth-plus-depth model that combines a comprehensive background in the natural sciences with specialized training in a chosen area of interest. All students entering the environmental science program are required to complete a core set of preparatory and skill development courses that provide a rigorous introduction to the environmental sciences.

Students then choose a specialized track that provides more advanced instruction in a specific discipline germane to environmental science. The track requirements are individually defined by the collaborative departments and are roughly equivalent to completing a minor in the specific area of interest. All students must also complete an internship or a capstone project.

Although students in the program will take many of their upper-division classes in other departments, all students within the program have full access to departmental resources, including excellent computer and research laboratories, field- and laboratory-based research opportunities with department faculty, departmental field trips, and a strengthening relationship with internship opportunities in the St. Louis area. Opportunities for research and field experiences in biology and chemistry are also available to qualified students.

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Graduate Programs
For a full listing of graduate programs, visit graduate.slu.edu.
Admission Requirements

Freshman: All applications are thoroughly and carefully reviewed. Solid academic performance in college preparatory course work is a primary criterion in reviewing a freshman applicant’s file. College admission test scores (ACT or SAT) are used as an additional indicator of the student’s ability to meet the University’s academic requirements and to qualify the student for certain University scholarship programs. To be considered for admission to any Saint Louis University undergraduate program, the applicant must be approaching graduation from an accredited high school or have an acceptable score on the General Education Development (GED) test.

Transfer: Applicants must be a graduate of an accredited high school or have an acceptable score on the GED. An official high school transcript and official test scores are required only of those students who have attempted fewer than 24 transferable semester hours (or 30 quarter hours) of college credit. Those having completed 24 hours or more of college credit need only submit a transcript from previously attended college(s). In reviewing a transfer applicant’s file, the office of admission holistically examines the student’s academic performance in college-level coursework as an indicator of the student’s ability to meet the academic rigors of Saint Louis University.

Internships and Careers

Undergraduate students in the environmental science program have the option to pursue internship opportunities through the host department or in collaboration with other departments on campus. Students also have the option to participate in a capstone project designed to provide a real-world perspective as part of their undergraduate training. In addition, students may choose to participate in faculty research projects, many of which include funding specifically to support the participation of undergraduate students.

Demand for graduates with a comprehensive knowledge of natural systems and their interactions is strong and projected to increase in the face of greater public awareness of the influence of humans on the natural environment. With judicious planning, the program serves as excellent preparation for graduate degrees in medicine, the sciences, law and other disciplines where a strong background in environmental science is desirable.

Scholarships and Financial Aid

There are two principal ways to help finance a Saint Louis University education:

+ Scholarships: awarded based on academic achievement, service, leadership and financial need.
+ Financial Aid: provided in the form of grants and loans, some of which require repayment.

For priority consideration for merit-based scholarships, applicants should apply for admission by Dec. 1 and complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by March 1.

For information on other scholarships and financial aid, visit the student financial services office online at finaid.slu.edu.