

Environmental Studies Self-Study Review

April 22, 2010

“Happy Earth Day!”



State University of New York
College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Purpose of Self Study

- ✿ SUNY requirement that undergrad programs be evaluated every 5 years or so
- ✿ Previous study was in 2005
- ✿ Reflect on direction and accomplishments
- ✿ Envision future program possibilities
- ✿ “Constructive critique is essential to effective evaluation of programs.”



EST Program Timeline

- 🌿 **1960s-70s: Phase I: BLA Safety Net**
 - backstopping LA students; negative approach
- 🌿 **1980s: Phase II: Individualized**
 - stand alone EST program; individually designed curriculum; heavy use of SU courses
- 🌿 **1990s: Phase III: College Distributed**
 - major overhaul, natural and social science core, options supported by 4 other cooperating Faculties
- 🌿 **2000s: Phase IV: Integrated Autonomous**
 - new communication option, other options gradually phased out or brought in-house, gateway and core overhauled, balance of humanities, social science and natural science



History

- 🌿 Beginnings as a fallback option and limited program offerings
- 🌿 Move to college-wide supported program that later was mostly phased out
- 🌿 Slow, but steady progress towards a robust, autonomous, interdisciplinary program served by a diverse core faculty
- 🌿 Differentiating EST from Environmental Science
- 🌿 Continuously improving the curriculum
- 🌿 Still a ways to go...



Our Current Curriculum

Core provides a balance of:
math & natural sciences
social sciences
humanities



Students then specialize in one of three option areas:

- Environmental Communication, Culture and Writing
- Environmental Policy, Planning and Law
- Biological Science Applications



Our Goals for Our Students

- ❁ Demonstrate **critical thinking skills** in relation to environmental affairs
- ❁ Demonstrate knowledge and application of **communication skills** and the ability to write effectively in a variety of contexts
- ❁ Demonstrate an ability to **integrate the many disciplines and fields** that intersect with environmental concerns
- ❁ Demonstrate an awareness, knowledge, and appreciation of the intrinsic values of **ecological processes and communities**
- ❁ Demonstrate an integrative approach to environmental issues with a focus on **sustainability**



Improvements Since 2005 Review

- New gateway course
- New senior seminar
- New theory and skills courses; others revised
- Revised core requirements with more humanities and social science focus, and more choice
- Revised communication and policy options
- Strengthening of writing program
- Professional advising in the lower division (reduced advising load for faculty)
- New system of program evaluation



New Initiatives

Environmental Studies Breadth Option

- expanded core ES knowledge sampled from the other options

Sustainability Analysis Option

- systems analysis tools for dealing with energy and environmental sustainability

Study abroad

Service learning

Enhancing the synthesis experience



Faculty Profiles

12 full-time faculty,
including 3 with the
writing program

12 part-time faculty

- Rank
- Type of academic appointment
- Highest degree earned
- Institution from which highest degree earned & year
- Years of Experience
 - in government or industry practice
 - in academia
 - at ESF
- Level of Activity
 - Professional societies
 - Research
 - Consulting

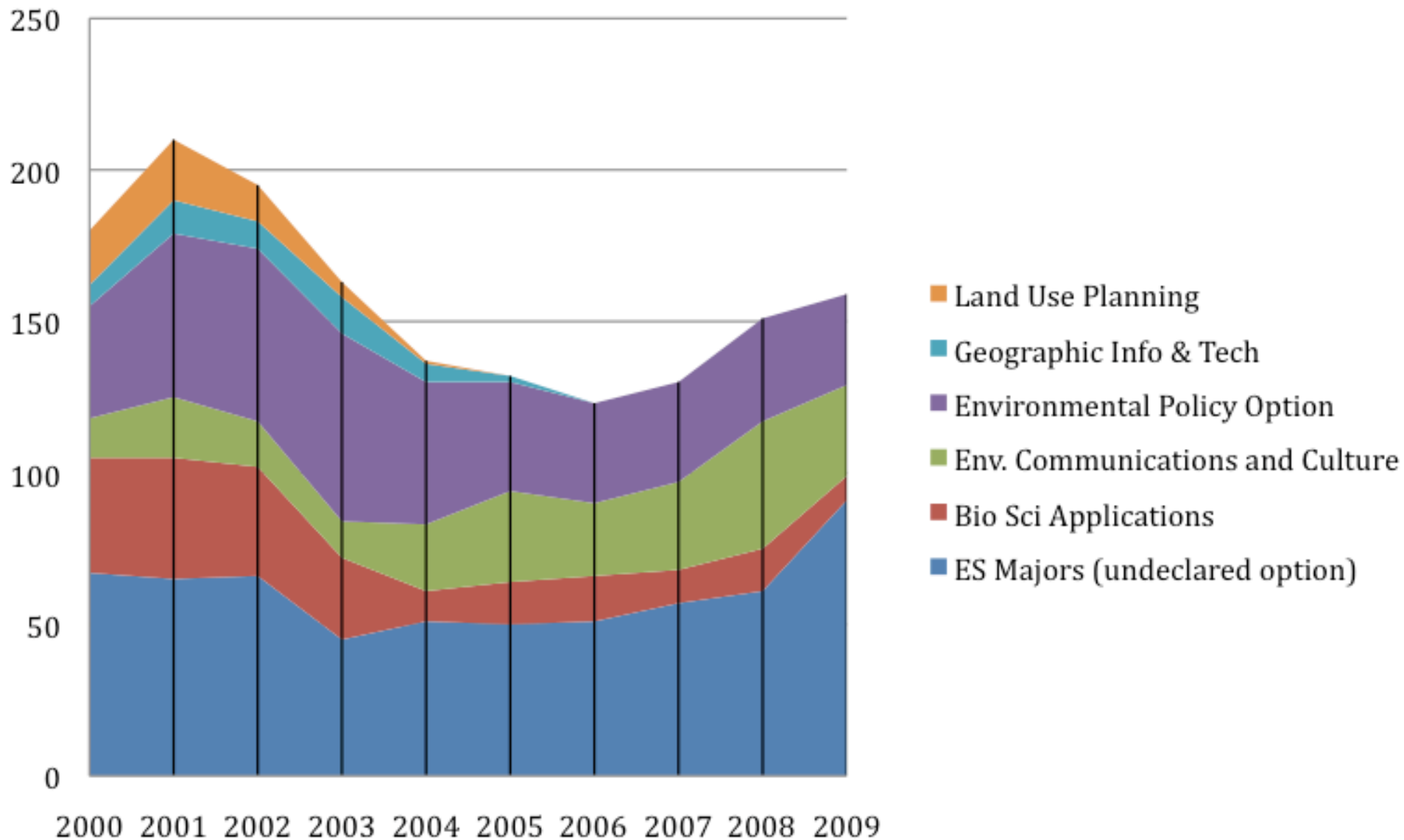


Students

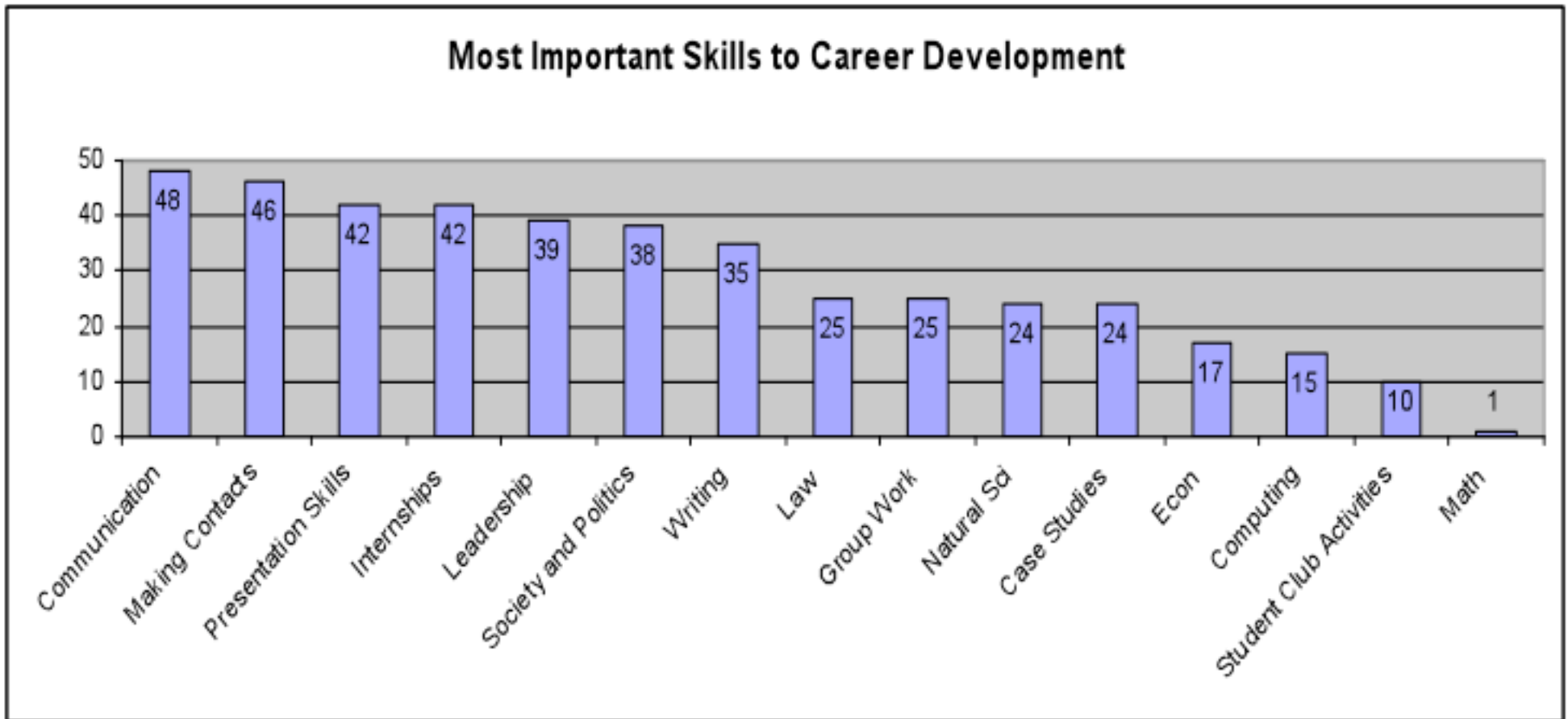
- ❖ Total numbers of EST students over time
- ❖ Numbers in each option over time
- ❖ Full-time and part-time students
- ❖ Numbers of EST students graduating over time
- ❖ Academic needs
- ❖ Educational goals
- ❖ Learning styles
- ❖ Experience
- ❖ Career expectations
- ❖ Financial needs
- ❖ Special needs



BS Environmental Studies Enrollments, 2000-09



Student Expectations



Recruitment Activities

- Enrollment planning and market research
- Prospect / inquiry generation
- Application generation
- Application selection
- Conversion
- Evaluation



Program Management and Operations

- 🌿 Departmental governance
- 🌿 Bylaws updated in 2008
- 🌿 Mission statement review ongoing
- 🌿 Reinvigorated undergraduate, graduate and part-time committees
- 🌿 Monthly meetings of each committee
- 🌿 Student participation in governance
- 🌿 Enhanced community-building activities
- 🌿 Increasing engagement with external stakeholders such as alumni, employers
- 🌿 Review of peer institutions



Support Services

- ✿ Detailed information on core services from Student Life and Experiential Learning:
 - Student activities
 - Academic success
 - Career services
 - Counseling services
 - Community service-learning
 - Multicultural affairs



Administrative Support

- ✿ Descriptions of college-wide administrative structures and support





Questions and Discussion