Environmental Studies
Self-Study Review

April 22, 2010

“Happy Earth Day!”

ESF
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

- 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

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

12 part-time faculty
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

- Land Use Planning
- Geographic Info & Tech
- Environmental Policy Option
- Env. Communications and Culture
- Bio Sci Applications
- ES Majors (undeclared option)
Student Expectations

Most Important Skills to Career Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making Contacts</td>
<td>46%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation Skills</td>
<td>42%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internships</td>
<td>42%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>39%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Society and Politics</td>
<td>38%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Work</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sci</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Studies</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Econ</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computing</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Club Activities</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>1%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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