ESF Minor Curriculum Change Proposal Form
Committee on Curriculum - ESF Faculty Governance
Office of Instruction & Graduate Studies

Date: 1/28/18
Department: Environmental Studies
Curriculum Title: B.S. in Environmental Studies

For Minor Changes in existing curriculum (check all that apply):

☒ revised courses ☐ change in total cr. hrs.
☐ new course sequence ☐ new program objectives*
☒ new courses added ☐ new accreditation/assessment requirements

*See SUNY Guidelines

1. Rationale for Change

Please provide an explanatory narrative outlining the rationale for the change, and the impacts of this change on the learning outcomes of the curriculum:

Proposed Change: Creation of a new EST 132 course titled EST 132: Orientation Seminar for Environmental Studies and the renaming of the old EST 132 course to EST 133: Introduction to Environmental Studies

We plan to separate out orientation-related content from our current EST 132 course: Introduction to Environmental Studies, and place that content into a one-credit course titled EST 132: Orientation Seminar for Environmental Studies. This new course would therefore be used as an overall introduction to the faculty, department, and campus resources. We would like to renumber the current 3-credit EST 132 course (we suggest EST 133) and leave the remaining content, which serves as foundational material for our Bachelor’s degree, as is. This would thus give us a one-credit orientation course and a 3-credit foundations course. Creating this one-credit orientation course resolves a number of existing challenges: (1) it frees up some class time for more introductory material in the old EST 132 class; (2) it addresses a curriculum issue caused from a previous curriculum change that eliminated the requirement for a chemistry lab, leaving our lower division curriculum deficient one credit. The proposed change would resolve issues caused by this one “widow credit”; and (3) this change also puts our department in line with other departments. Though we would be adding one credit to our lower division curriculum with this change, no new content is actually being administered, just a reorganization of content between the two courses.

Proposed Change: Removal of the requirement for an upper division social science course.
The requirement for an upper division social science course seems redundant to the major and is an artifact of previous formulations of option areas that have since been revised, most notably Natural Systems Applications. We suggest the removal of this requirement and instead add one additional three credit course to the option electives (change from 12 credits to 15 credits) for the Policy, Planning and Law and Environment, Communication and Society option areas. For the Natural Systems Applications option area, we suggest adding a 3-credit course to the Social Science Communications requirements which currently requires two courses in communication. This change would now require three courses in this focal area.
2. Institutional Impact:

Changes from existing condition:

Anticipated Enrollment or Enrollment Change: No change

Faculty or Staffing Requirements: An instructor of record for EST 132 will be assigned for the purposes of grading, but the new orientation course will be co-taught by the ES faculty. All other curriculum changes would not require any changes in faculty/staffing.

Technology, Computing Resources, and Classroom Resource Demands: A large lecture classroom will be needed for the new orientation course.

Change in Accreditation Requirements: None

Changes to Assessment Plan: None

Library Resource Requirements: None

3. Catalog Narrative:

Please attach to this proposal form a copy of the current catalog description in MS Word format, with revisions shown in “track changes”.

Proposed course
EST 132 - Orientation Seminar: Environmental Studies (1)
One hour of lecture, discussion and/or exercises per week. Introduction to campus resources available to ensure academic success. Introduction to Environmental Studies as a field of inquiry, and the three option areas that the department offers. (Fall).

Old course with new course number
EST 133 - Introduction to Environmental Studies (3)
Three hours of lecture, discussion and analytical activities per week. Gateway course for EST majors. Introduction to the study of environmental problems in the social sciences and humanities. Topics: pollution, conservation, preservation, human health, ecosystem health, limits to growth, sustainability, ecosystems, population, energy, risk and traditional knowledge. (Fall).
4. Curriculum Transition Plan:

Please provide a narrative description of your plan for transitioning from your existing curriculum to the proposed new curriculum. Please provide specific dates for implementing curriculum changes, overlap periods where old and new curricula may exist simultaneously, and final phase out of old curricula. Please also include impacts and mitigating considerations for transfer students and students in mid-program during implementation, impacts of changes in semester delivery of existing courses, addition of new courses within a particular semester, etc.

Assuming approval, we will make both EST 132 and EST 133 required courses for incoming freshman and transfer students starting in fall 2018. Students currently pursuing their degrees will not be required to take the new orientation course as they will be grandfathered into their old curriculum plan sheets. The change of the one 3-credit social science course to an option elective course will also start in fall 2018. This change will not affect current students.

5. Approval Signatures:

Signatures below, or attached letters, indicate that the affected departments, programs or units have been notified of this proposal and have had an opportunity to assess the impact of the proposal on their respective units. If departments did not respond to your notification, you may wish to document your effort to contact them.

Affected Academic Department(s) or Program(s):

Environmental Studies
Department/Program 1
Name of Chair/Program Director
Chair Signature
Date
Or letter attached □

Department/Program 2
Name of Chair/Program Director
Chair Signature
Date
Or letter attached □

Department/Program 3
Name of Chair/Program Director
Chair Signature
Date
Or letter attached □

[If more/less than three Departments/Programs, please add/delete lines as appropriate.]

Other Units

__________________________________________ Or letter attached □
Library Director

Computing and Network Services

Physical Plant

Forest Properties

Environmental Health and Safety

Admissions

Other

Office of the Provost

Signature below, or attached letter, indicates that the Provost either a) agrees that there is no need for additional resources from the College; or b) indicates willingness to provide the extra support to the department.

Provost Signature

Date
6. Proposer Information and Department Chair Affirmation:

Contact Person:

Name:_______________________________  Department:_______________________
Email:_______________________________  Phone:___________________________

This proposal has been reviewed and approved by the sponsoring Department. Affected departments have been notified and given the opportunity to provide feedback. Department resources are or will be made available to support this curriculum revision, or a plan is in place to meet the resource needs as identified in the Institutional Impacts section of this proposal (see Section 2, above).

Name:________________________________ Department Chair (or designated curriculum representative)  Date:___________

Signature:________________________________ Or letter attached □

Department Chair (or designated curriculum representative)
7. Final Approvals:

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