

Seattle Central College Transfer Major Planning Guide

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES/SCIENCE

What can I do with a major in environmental studies or environmental science?

Students planning to major in environmental studies or environmental science may go on to pursue a wide range of careers. Students may work for governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, or corporations on environmental policy or collecting data or monitoring compliance on environmental issues. Students who major in environmental science or studies may work outdoors monitoring water quality, tracking endangered species, or introducing children to the natural environment, or indoors advocating for new policies or better enforcement of policies that protect the environment or human health.

Common concentrations and related undergraduate majors include:

- Environmental chemistry
- Environmental education
- Environmental health
- Environmental policy
- Forestry
- Natural resource management
- Restoration ecology
- Sustainability
- Wildlife conservation

How can I prepare at Seattle Central for a major in environmental studies or environmental science?

Both environmental studies and environmental science are interdisciplinary majors that students can prepare for at Seattle Central by taking a variety of classes in the natural sciences, math, and possibly humanities or social sciences. Students planning to major in environmental studies at a baccalaureate institution often need a broad background in the natural sciences and social sciences; the upper-division classes in the major usually focus on environmental history, policy, ethics, and natural history. Environmental science focuses more on the natural sciences, with the upper-level coursework often including chemistry, physics, geology, and biology. The preparation at Seattle Central for either major may include coursework in **biology, chemistry, geology, physics, calculus, statistics, and/or possibly social science or humanities classes**. Students preparing for either major should include general education requirements in their coursework to prepare to transfer. Specific prerequisite requirements vary according to the specific program and the transfer university, so it is strongly recommended that students work with an advisor at Seattle Central as well as advisors at the universities where they are considering transferring to ensure they take the appropriate classes to be prepared to enter their chosen major when they transfer.

Depending on the precise major and concentration, students planning to major in environmental studies or science should consider earning the Associate of Arts – DTA, the Associate of Science – DTA, or the Associate of Science – Option #1 degree to prepare to transfer. Advisors can help students look at prerequisite requirements and choose the degree that will work best for them.

Consider an emphasis to your associate degree before you transfer, such as SAGE, Global Studies or Global Health. This can enhance your resume, personal experience and be something you put into your personal statement. You may even already have completed it without knowing it! For questions on how to plan your emphasis, please contact your advisor.

Tips for Success as an Environmental Studies or Environmental Science Major

- Students planning to study environmental science will often need to take several sequences of courses, for example, three-course sequences of biology and chemistry for majors. Check prerequisites for these courses, start early, and make sure to complete the entire sequence at the same college.
- Most environmental science and environmental studies undergraduate programs will require statistics or calculus or both. If your math skills are weak or it has been some time since you took math, do not put off getting started! Depending on your placement scores, you may need to take math for several quarters before you are ready to start calculus.
- Check prerequisites, admission requirements, and GPA requirements at your intended transfer university early so you can be well-prepared to transfer.
- Most universities offer at least one major that focuses on the environment, but the concentrations they offer vary. If you are more interested in policy than science, for instance, make sure your intended transfer university offers that focus.
- Check both university *admission* and *graduation* requirements at your preferred transfer university as a guide to choosing your classes. Some universities, for example, may require a year of foreign language as a graduation requirement. It may be much easier (and cheaper!) to meet that requirement at Seattle Central rather than waiting until later.

Where can I earn a bachelor's degree in environmental studies or environmental science in Washington?

Most universities in Washington offer majors related to environmental studies or environmental science. You can use the College Navigator search engine (<http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>) to look for environmental programs in Washington and around the country.

Because environmental majors may have a variety of names, it can also be worthwhile to check the website of any university you are interested in to find out what majors it offers that are related to the environment.

Next Steps:

- Research the universities you are interested in attending and the prerequisite classes they require for your major.
- Meet with an advisor to choose a transfer degree, discuss prerequisites, and plan what classes you need to take in the next quarter or two.
- Explore the professional organizations in your area of interest for more information about education and career options.