

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES HANDBOOK



ASHOKA
UNIVERSITY

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

MONSOON 2021

Department of Environmental Studies

Today, more than ever, our well-being and that of our fellow creatures depends on how we think and act upon the biophysical world we share. Fundamental changes in the earth's climate and oceans threaten basic survival. Rivers, forests and grasslands are shrinking. Cities are collapsing into chaos. Meanwhile millions of people still lack adequate food, water, energy and shelter. Environmental Studies (EVS) provides the concepts, methods and modes of analysis to understand and address this range of critical issues. By offering rigorous training that combines classroom teaching with field research, and by bringing together the humanities, social and natural sciences, EVS equips students with the intellectual and practical resources for achieving social and ecological justice. The department's faculty members work on a variety of subjects—from wildlife conservation to sustainable food systems, urban planning to air pollution, collective action and environmental movements. They approach problems from a range of disciplinary perspectives—biology and ecology, cultural geography and history, sociology and anthropology. Their research draws on experimental methods, quantitative modelling, geographical information systems, field-based observation, ethnographic and archival methods. Cutting-edge, empirically rich, and theoretically rigorous inquiry and teaching is the hallmark of Environmental Studies at Ashoka.

Faculty Members:

- Amita Baviskar
- Aniket Aga
- Divya Karnad
- Divya Vasudev
- Ghazala Shahabuddin
- Meghna Agarwala
- Mitul Baruah
- Mukul Sharma

For more information, please email:

- **Student Representative**, Anjali Dalmia anjali.dalmia_ug22@ashoka.edu.in
- **Department Head**, Amita Baviskar amita.baviskar@ashoka.edu.in
- **Department Manager**, Rajendra Tewari rajendra.tewari@ashoka.edu.in

Requirements

Minor

To pursue a minor in Environmental Studies, one must complete **six** courses for a total of 24 credits in Environmental Studies (code ES). Of the 6 required courses, at least 2 have to be in a different stream from what the student intends to focus on. That is, a student must take either 4 social sciences and humanities courses and 2 biophysical sciences courses, or 2 social sciences and humanities courses and 4 biophysical sciences courses. These may include courses offered by other departments that are cross-listed with EVS (there is no maximum limit on the number of cross-listed courses which can fulfil requirements).

Concentration

To pursue a concentration in Environmental Studies, one must complete any **four** courses in Environmental Studies (code ES) (this includes courses offered by the ES department and courses offered from other departments and cross-listed with ES).

Cross-listing Policy

The Department has **no limit** on the number of cross-listed courses (offered by a different department and cross-listed with ES) which can count towards the ES minor or concentration. (For example: If you wish to take four courses from the Sociology Department, which have been cross-listed with ES, all four of those courses will be counted towards your EVS minor.)

Ashoka Scholars Programme Honours Thesis

Eligibility: Ashoka Scholar's Programme (ASP) students intending to write a thesis must have taken at least 6 courses offered by, or cross-listed with, EVS. They should also have taken at least one methods course related to their field of interest.

Timeline: Students should identify a potential supervisor by December in Year 3 to discuss thesis prerequisites and draft a research proposal. The preliminary proposal (1000 words) should be submitted by 31 May. The final proposal to be presented at the start of Monsoon term, year 4. The summer between semesters 6 and 7 should be used for preliminary fieldwork. The thesis should be submitted by the beginning of April.

Guidelines: The final thesis should be no more than 15,000 words and cover 8 credits (4 each semester). The thesis will be evaluated by the faculty advisor and, potentially, another Ashoka faculty member

Course Catalogue

(From Monsoon 2018)

Elective Courses, 2021

1. **ES-2402/ ECO-3702-1: Understanding Conflict and Cooperation over Natural Resources** – Divya Karnad (Monsoon 2021, Monsoon 2020, Monsoon 2019)
2. **ES-1001-1: Seminar, Human-Wildlife Conflict** – Meghna Agarwala (Monsoon 2021, Monsoon 2020)
3. **ES-4081-1: Capstone Research** – Amita Baviskar (Monsoon 2021)
4. **ES-1102-1: Wildlife Conservation: Introduction to India's Wildlife** – Divya Karnad (Monsoon 2021, Spring 2020, Monsoon 2020)
5. **ES-2001-1: Conservation in Practice** – Divya Vasudev (Monsoon 2021)
6. **ES-2902/ BIO-4018/ BIO-6018-1: Ecological Statistics** – Divya Vasudev (Monsoon 2021)
7. **ES-1101-1: Ecology: Ecosystems and Biodiversity** – Ghazala Shahabuddin (Monsoon 2021)
8. **ES-2434-1: Environmental Governance: Institutions, Policy, Politics** – Mukul Sharma (Monsoon 2021)
9. **ES-1901/ ES-6901-1: GIS I** – Meghna Agarwala (Monsoon 2021, Monsoon 2020)
10. **BIO-3012/ ES-3301-1: Ecology and Evolution (Lab)** – Imroze Khan, Shivani Krishna (Monsoon 2021, Spring 2021, Spring 2020, Monsoon 2019)
11. **SOA-3212/ ES-3407-1: The Right to Water** – Mitul Baruah (Monsoon 2021, Monsoon 2020, Monsoon 2019, Monsoon 2018)
12. **MS-2120/ ES-2903-1: The Ashoka Conversation** – Tisha Srivastav (Monsoon 2021)

Previous Courses Offered by the Department:

1. **Agriculture, Food and Sustainability** - Aniket Aga (Monsoon 2020, Spring 2020, Spring 2019, Spring 2018)
2. **Decoding Genetically Modified Crops: The Global Politics of Agriculture and Biotechnology** - Aniket Aga (Monsoon 2020, 2019, 2018)
3. **Ecology and Unrest** - Aniket Aga (Spring 2020)
4. **Environment and Social Exclusion** - Mukul Sharma (Spring 2021, Spring 2020)
5. **Indian Environmental Politics** - Mukul Sharma (Monsoon 2020)
6. **Introduction to Earth Sciences** - Rahul Chopra, Iain Stewart (Spring 2020)
7. **Introduction to GIS and Remote Sensing** - Meghna Agarwal (Spring 2019)
8. **Methods in Ecology and Conservation Science** - Divya Karnad, Shivani Krishna (Spring 2021, Spring 2020)
9. **Political Ecology of Food** - Amita Baviskar (Spring 2021)
10. **Remote Sensing** - Meghna Agarwala (Spring 2021)
11. **Seminar on Sustainable Community Economies** - Divya Karnad (Spring 2021)
12. **Theoretical Ecology** - Meghna Agarwala (Spring 2021)

Cross-listed Courses from Other Departments

Biology:

1. **Exploring Life in the Neighborhood Lab** - Imroze Khan, Shiva Krishna (Spring 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018)
2. **Evolutionary Biology (Theory)** - Imroze Khan (Monsoon 2020, 2019, 2018)
3. **Ecology** - Shivani Krishna (Monsoon 2020, Monsoon 2019)
4. **Computational/Mathematical Biology** - Somdatta Sinha (Spring 2020)
5. **Plant Biology** - Sougata Roy (Spring 2020)
6. **Biostatistics and Bioinformatics** - Alok Bhattacharya (Monsoon 2019)

Sociology/Anthropology:

1. **Cities, Ecology and Equity** - Amita Baviskar (Spring 2021, Spring 2020)
2. **Political Ecology and Modes of Resistance** - Mitul Baruah (Spring 2021)
3. **Constructing Natural & Anthropogenic Realities: Narratives of the Himalayas in Transition** - Rinki Sarkar (Spring 2019)
4. **Agrarian Sociology: Land, Culture and Power** - Mitul Baruah (Spring 2019)
5. **Being Human: Anthropology of the Anthropocene** - Kathryn Collins Hardy (Monsoon 2018)

Literature:

1. **Introduction to Ecocriticism: Climate Fiction** - Alexander Robert Phillips (Spring 2020)
2. **Studies in Literature and the Environment** - Alexander Robert Phillips (Spring 2019)
3. **Seminar in Ecocriticism: Conquests of Nature** - Alexander Robert Phillips (Monsoon 2018)

History:

1. **Environment and Empire in the Early Modern World** - Pratyay Nath (Spring 2021, Spring 2020)
2. **Nature and Nation** - Mahesh Rangarajan (Monsoon 2020, 2019)
3. **Battles over Nature: Towards a Global History of the Environment** - Mahesh Rangarajan (Monsoon 2018)

Economics:

1. **Environmental Economics** - Prachi Singh (Monsoon 2020)
2. **Environmental Economics** - Eshita Gupta (Spring 2020)

International Relations:

1. **Public International Law** - Joanna Korey, Lavanya Rajamani (Spring 2019, Spring 2018)

Media Studies:

1. **Ecological Echoes: Introduction to Reporting the Environment** - Tisha Srivastav (Monsoon 2018)

Student Grant – Environmental Studies Department

The Environmental Studies department offers a fellowship for original research in Environmental Studies in the term breaks of Summer and Winter. ES minors and ES concentrations will be given preference for consideration for this grant. The fellowship is advertised by the department usually in early December and early April for winter and summer breaks respectively. A sample proposal is attached on the next page. The email id for the grant is evs.fellowship@ashoka.edu.in.

Application for Research Funds

Department of Environmental Studies, Ashoka University

Name:

Year:

Major:

Roll No.:

Minor:

Adviser:

Research question: Briefly indicate the research question you wish to investigate (250 words or less)

Total Budget:

Funds sought from EVS (Limit INR 10,000):

Locations of research:

Dates for research project:

1. What is the focus of your research? How does it contribute to existing scholarship? [750 words or less]
2. What evidence will you need to collect to answer your research question? How will you go about collecting and analysing this evidence? Please be as detailed as possible. [750 words or less]
3. Detailed budget including break ups of travel, lodging, research infrastructure, and any other significant expense.

I understand that:

- Projects may not be fully funded.
- Candidates must secure requisite approvals and permits for the research, and confirm the same before **April 30, 2021**.
- Receipts must be preserved, and will be asked for.
- Reports of research undertaken and data analysis will be due **September 15, 2021**.
- All successful candidates will present their research to EVS department and other awardees at an event organized in Monsoon, 2022.

Signature:

Date: