



Hollins' New Major In Environmental Studies Emphasizes Hands-On Learning

Roanoke, Va. – Hollins University will add a new field of study to its undergraduate program in the fall of 2005 with the introduction of a major in environmental studies (ES).

The new major is designed to provide students with a holistic understanding of environmental issues of local, national and global importance. The program's core courses are intended to ground students in the study of the environment from scientific, cultural, historical and societal perspectives. At the same time, a wide range of elective courses will offer students the opportunity to craft the direction they want to take in exploring environmental concerns.

“A student interested in environmental science may choose, for example, to center her elective courses in biology, chemistry and economics,” explained Renee Godard, associate professor of biology at Hollins and director of the ES program. “Or, a student interested in global environmental issues may choose elective courses in international studies, political science and anthropology.”

Godard noted that Hollins' ES major is unique from other programs of its kind because of its emphasis on experiential learning. Through Hollins' affiliation with the School for Field Studies (SFS), students can spend a semester in another country and engage in field research that addresses the environmental problems and needs of local communities.

“ES majors can conduct research in game management in Kenya, rainforest ecology in Australia, sustainable development in Costa Rica, or coastal ecology in Mexico,” said Godard. “The SFS faculty consists of experienced teachers and research scientists with extensive knowledge of the local cultures.”

Another unique facet of the ES program is its outdoor leadership component. Hollins is the first women’s college or university to be certified by the Wilderness Education Association to offer a National Standards Program (NSP). The NSP is a three-to five-week course designed for those with minimal wilderness experience who wish to pursue a career in outdoor leadership, outdoor education, adventure travel, wilderness therapy, or any field where a leader must be capable of planning, organizing, leading, and executing a safe and environmentally sound wilderness expedition.

Hollins is an independent liberal arts university offering undergraduate education for women, selected graduate programs for men and women, and community outreach initiatives. Founded in 1842 as Virginia’s first chartered women’s college, Hollins offers 29 other majors in addition to environmental studies.

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