

# MEMO

**To:** Michael Zimmerman  
**From:** David Barnhill, Director, Environmental Studies  
**Re:** Environmental Studies Annual Report  
**Date:** 6/10/04  
**cc:** John Cross, ES Faculty

## **PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES (2003-2004 AY)**

### **MAJORS AND MINORS:**

- At the beginning of the school year in September 2003, we had 26 majors and 24 minors. By the end of the year, May 12, there were 45 declared majors and 21 declared minors. This growth has occurred despite recent turnovers in ES faculty, continued reliance on an adjunct instead of full-time faculty, and the lingering effects of not having an established schedule for courses that is known by students.
- This growth should continue given new stability in course offerings, the arrival of two new faculty members, and promotional efforts by the program.

### **NEW FACULTY:**

- This year the program brought in three faculty: David Barnhill as Director and Professor of English; John Baumann, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies; and Ryan Haley, Assistant Professor of Economics.
- The program was successful in hiring two key faculty members. Jim Feldman replaces Adrian Ivakhiv as full-time faculty in the ES program, and he gives the program an expert in environmental history, something the program noticeably lacked and very much needed. His particular interest and expertise in Wisconsin will be valuable. Stefan Becker, on the other hand, adds to the international expertise of our faculty. As  $\frac{1}{3}$  ES and  $\frac{2}{3}$  Geography, he replaces Charles Allen. Jim and Stefan are excellent and energetic instructors. The only down-side of hiring these two outstanding young faculty members is that we were unable to increase the diversity among our faculty, despite that being a high priority during the search.

### **CAMPUS ACTIVITIES:**

- The ES Program was active in the week-long Earth Charter Community Summit in October 2003. ES faculty participated in a variety of panels and other events, which drew students, faculty, and the broader community.
- The ES Program was a major organizer of the Earth Week celebration that lasted ten days in April 2004. Here too ES faculty participated in a variety of panels and other events, which drew students, faculty, and the broader community.

### **FOCUS ON CAREERS AND GRADUATE SCHOOLS**

- In cooperation with the Career Services Office, the ES Program offered its first Environmental Studies Career/Internship/Graduate School Fair in April 2004. There was a panel that featured representatives of various environmental organizations discussing internship and career opportunities, and another panel with representatives of Wisconsin's three master's programs in environmental studies: U.W. Green Bay, U.S. Madison, and U.W. Stevens Point. Students were able to discuss graduate school opportunities with those representatives. This was, we believe, the first time all these programs were brought together to present information to students. Plans are already made for next year's Environmental Studies Fair, which will become an annual event.

- Careers and graduate school was stressed for the first time in ES 490: Senior Seminar, with students receiving training in resumes, interviews, networking, and public speaking. For the first time, students presented their research in public during the Earth Week celebration. Next year this event will be linked with the university day for student research.
- Information on environmental careers and graduate schools was added to the ES website. This will be expanded in the coming year, with the goal being one of the most comprehensive websites concerning environmental careers and graduate schools in the country.

## **COURSES**

- The ES program includes many courses that are offered only through departments (such as Biology or Political Science), and these courses do not appear on the computer's list of courses for the ES program. As a result, students have been unable to find a full list of ES courses. This year a complete list was created, sent to students and faculty, and put on the ES website – now a regular feature of the program.
- A regular rotation of ES courses was established, so students and advisors will know in advance when the core courses and most of the upper level electives will be offered. This information is now a handout for students and will be put on the ES website this summer.
- New core courses were added to the program:
  - ES 243: Introduction to Nature Writing (cross-listed with English);
  - ES 244: Japanese Nature Writing (cross-listed with English);
  - ES 282: Environment, Community, and Values (replacing ES 272, for which we have no instructor).
- New elective courses were approved for the program (a number of them are still in the process of receiving official institutional approval). Some of these new electives will give students the ability to do individualized study in the program (ES 300, 446, and 456), while others (in the sciences) will give students greater flexibility and make it easier for Environmental Studies majors to double major in a science.
  - Biology 327: Microbial Ecology
  - Biology 336: Freshwater Algae
  - Geography 313 Wisconsin
  - Geography 371 Cartography
  - Geography 382 Remote Sensing of the Environment
  - Geography 471 Geographic Information Systems
  - Geology 328 Oceanography
  - Geology 366 Chemical Hydrogeology
  - Geology 370 Field Hydrogeology I
  - Geology 371 Field Hydrogeology II
  - ES 300: Internship
  - ES 446: Independent Study
  - ES 456: Directed Reading
  - ES 474: Honors Thesis
- The ES Curriculum Committee began a series of discussions concerning the coordination of core courses. With faculty from different departments teaching our core courses, it is essential that we develop coordination and integration of topics, texts, and approaches in order to avoid both gaps and overlaps and to enable faculty to know what students have already had in previous courses. These discussions will continue next year with the addition of two new faculty teaching core courses.

## **CLOSE CONTACT WITH STUDENTS**

- Extensive, personal advising was emphasized. A checksheet was established and distributed to help students see what requirements they have and have not satisfied. A new computer file has been

created for each student which shows courses taken and those still needed both in the ES program and for the general education requirements. Substantial time was spent with majors and minors to map out courses to take in future semesters. In several cases, minors came to realize that they could double major in ES, and majors realized that they could double major in another discipline.

- The Director was very active with both student environmental organizations, SEAC (Student Environmental Action Coalition) and Campus Greens. The Director was awarded honorable mention for the award in service as a faculty advisor to a student group.

#### **PROMOTION OF THE PROGRAM AND COMMUNITY BUILDING**

- The ES Program was represented in Summerview, Odyssey, and the Preview Days.
- The ES program started a monthly student-faculty “happy hour,” in which students joined faculty in discussing contemporary environmental issues.
- The ES program had its first end-of-the-year gathering for faculty and students, which will become an annual event.
- The Career/Internship/Graduate School Fair was another promotional event.

#### **FACULTY RESEARCH**

- David Barnhill (the only official ES faculty member this year) was active in research. He presented the paper “How Do Religions Respond to the Environmental Crisis?” at the Religion & Ecology Workshop, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, Oct. 24, 2003. He delivered the paper “Engaged Buddhism and the Dilemmas of Consumerism” at the Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies, Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Atlanta, Georgia, November 22, 2003. He continued work as Associate Editor, Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature (Ed. Bron Taylor and Jeffrey Kaplan, Continuum Publishing, forthcoming). And he was elected to be on the Steering Committee of the Religion and Ecology Group of the American Academy of Religion.
- The research activities of other faculty participating in the ES program are included in the end of the year reports of other departments.

#### **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS**

- The ES program graduated its first majors this year: Angela LeNoble, Nick Pustina, and Michael Greene.
- Angela LeNoble was chosen to attend the Women in Sustainable Development Initiative in Washington D.C. in January 2004. She also was selected to participate in Property and Environment Research Center (PERC) Seminar held at the Montana State University Campus in Bozeman, summer 2004. In addition, she was awarded the Chancellor’s Award for Excellence. She has previously served as Co-President of SEAC.
- Nick Pustina delivered the paper "Christian Pragmatism: An Ethical Analysis of Genetically Modified Foods" at the 18th Annual Student Conference of the Wisconsin Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies on April 16, 2004 at St. Norbert College, De Pere, Wisconsin. He also served as Co-President of SEAC.
- Another major, Nicole DeKeuster, was chosen as Co-President of SEAC for the 2004-2005 AY.
- Three majors, Angela LeNoble, Michael Greene and Iryna Depenchuk, completed the initial draft of an environmental audit of the campus. This was presented to the public during the Earth Charter Community Summit and to the Board of Regents. It is now part of the university’s website: <http://www.uwosh.edu/environmentalaudit/>.
- A student in the Environmental Studies Senior Seminar, Jennifer Schauer, was accepted into master’s programs at both U.W. Green Bay and the U.W. Stevens Point.

#### **GOALS FOR THE 2004-2005 AY**

- Integrate and mentor Jim Feldman and Stefan Becker while encouraging their research.

- The most important curricular task is to coordinate and integrate topics, texts, and approaches in our core courses, especially with the new faculty members. This will be done with discussions among faculty teaching core courses and possibly a program retreat during spring interim.
- The most important task for the functioning of the program is to establish a sustainable clerical situation by hiring an L.T.E. at the end of summer. Our student assistant is graduating, and a new L.T.E., who was working out exceptionally well, had to change jobs in order to get more hours. This leaves the program currently with no clerical support at all.
- Continue to develop opportunities for and visibility of environmental internships, careers, and graduate school. Student interest in all three of these is high.
- Consider possibilities of a regular Field Studies course – something students in the Environmental Studies Senior Seminar asked for.
- Develop closer ties with other departments and programs.
- A note toward the future. While the ES program was fortunate to replace two (1½) faculty in the program, it still lacks the minimum of three full-time faculty that a program like this needs (as noted in previous Annual Reports). As the program continues to grow, the need for a third full-time member will increase.