

June 30, 2015

Steven Carlip, Chair
Faculty Executive Committee
College of Letters and Science

Re: Environmental Humanities Minor Proposal

Undergraduate Council declines to approve the minor in Environmental Humanities in L&S, at least with the current degree of documentation. Undergraduate Council does not see in the current proposal the necessary analysis of the likely student interest. Given the administrative costs, there is little point in offering even a minor if only a few students are likely to pursue it.

The letter proposing the minor notes that there exists a “large pool of students with deep interests in environmental questions who might benefit from - and enjoy - the diverse perspective such a minor would offer them.” “Some of these students have already petitioned the administration to include more humanities and social science course work in their environmental major requirements (see attached letter).” The mention of the attached letter might be read as indicating that the minor was designed to meet the request of the signatories, and that the letter represents, in no small part, some of the justification for this minor.

Yet the letter is from students in the Environmental Policy Analysis and Planning (EPAP) major and is addressed to the ESP Department within CA&ES. It is not obvious that the proposed minor in L&S will address the concerns of these students; they seem to want one or two courses, not five courses in a minor, and those two to be courses on environmental justice rather than on British nature poetry. It is not clear that ESP was consulted in the development of the proposal; nor do any of the ESP faculty members appear to be involved in this minor. Perhaps ESP itself is working toward a solution to their students’ request; indeed, the replacement within ESP of the faculty member whose death left the void in these course offerings would be a more direct solution. Some communication from ESP and CA&ES is necessary to explain the situation.

The EPAP major has 160 majors at the current count, graduating about 50 per year. The major has many tracks (which is why the students’ petition about a capstone course makes one wonder that any of their ideas should be given much weight). For perhaps two of those tracks would an environmental justice course be useful: assuming that the tracks are more or less evenly distributed (they are not, but no precise count is available), perhaps 15 – 20 students would be interested per year in a course on environmental justice. The number that would want the more extensive minor in Environmental Humanities would be smaller, say 10-12 students per year. That number seems too small to justify a new minor. A survey of existing EPAP majors would be more convincing that the number would not be too small.

Student interest within L&S itself might be sufficient, except that the recent experience with the Nature and Culture major indicates the opposite. Fifteen years ago the major in Nature and Culture was viable, with about the same number of majors as now in EPAP. A few years ago the number had fallen so far that all concerned asked Undergraduate Council that the major in Nature and Culture be closed. A key course in the old major and in the proposed minor, namely ENL 184 has fallen from regular enrollments of more than 80 to less than 20. How many students taking ENL 184 also have taken HIS 172 and PHI 120? That subset is the likely number of prospective minors in Environmental Humanities, and the number looks to be small. Put differently and more positively, what has been learned about the demise of the major in Nature and Culture that can improve students' interest in a minor in Environmental Humanities?

Respectfully,



Jeffrey Williams, Chair

Davis Division Academic Senate Undergraduate Council

Enclosure: Proposal for Establishment of New Minor in Environmental Humanities

Cc: André Knoesen, Chair, Davis Division Academic Senate
Gina Anderson, Executive Director, Davis Division Academic Senate
Carolyn Thomas, Vice Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Education
Susan Kaiser, Interim Dean, Humanities, Arts and Cultural Studies
George R. Mangun, Dean, Social Sciences

February 19, 2015

Andre Knoesen, Chair
Davis Division of the Academic Senate

Subject: Establishment of New Minor in Environmental Humanities

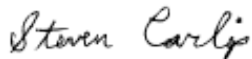
Dear Professor Knoesen:

The faculty of the English, Native American Studies, Philosophy, Italian, Comparative Literature, Anthropology, History, American Studies, Religious Studies, Sociology, Design and Human Ecology has proposed establishing an interdisciplinary minor in Environmental Humanities. In accordance with the provisions of PPM 200-25, the proposal has been reviewed by Deans Susan Kaiser, Division of Humanities, Arts & Cultural Studies and George R. Mangun, Division of Social Sciences, who have expressed support for the proposed action.

After careful review the College of Letters and Science Executive Committee has recommended approval of the proposal to establish the minor in Environmental Humanities. The Committee carefully considered the comment from the Educational Policy Committee regarding the potential for exceeding the overlap between a major and this minor, but were satisfied that the commitment of the advising resources from the home department (as well as the collaborating programs), policies regarding overlap, and the technology available to assist advisors in tracking students' progress toward their degrees mitigated that issue.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, I am hereby forwarding the proposal to you for review and action by the Davis Division.

Sincerely,



Steven Carlip, Chair Executive Committee
College of Letters and Science

cc: B. Floyd, Director
Undergraduate Education and Advising
College of Letters & Science

January 28, 2015

TO: Steven Carlip, Chairperson
College of Letters and Science Executive Committee

FR: Warren Pickett, Chairperson
Committee on Educational Policy

RE: Proposed establishment of new Minor in Environmental Humanities

The Committee on Educational Policy recommends approval of the establishment of a new interdisciplinary Minor in Environmental Humanities. The EPC would like to comment that careful advising will be required as the potential for exceeding the overlap of courses between a major and this minor is high.



ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
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ONE SHIELDS AVENUE
DAVIS, CALIFORNIA 95616

16 December 2014

Professor Steve Carlip, Chair, Letters and Science Executive Committee

Dear Chair Carlip:

On behalf of over twenty Letters and Sciences faculty members, I write to propose a new undergraduate interdisciplinary minor in environmental humanities. The environmental humanities minor would allow UC Davis students from across the campus to thoughtfully concentrate their studies around environmental issues from the perspectives of literature, history, philosophy, design, cultural anthropology, cultural studies, and the visual and other arts. The minor aims to coordinate and promote coursework already offered by UC Davis humanities and social science faculty on questions related to the environment understood as a historically emergent category, a philosophical concept, a venue for political and cultural struggle, and an inspiration for and object of creative work. UC Davis has long been a pre-eminent institution in the development of this field, which has only recently found a broadly accepted name, and our current faculty is stronger than ever before in its capacity and desire to critically engage undergraduate students in the study of the complex ecosystems in which they live and work. The strong emphasis on the technical aspects of environmental studies and policy at UC Davis means that there is a large pool of students with deep interests in environmental questions who might benefit from—and enjoy—the diverse perspectives that such a minor would offer them. Some of these students have already petitioned the administration to include more humanities and social science coursework in their environmental major requirements (see attached letter).

Environmental humanities as a field of scholarly inquiry has grown rapidly over the past decade. Graduate programs and concentrations now exist at Stanford, Princeton, UCLA, Oregon, Oregon State, Arizona State, Delaware, Utah, and Utah State, among others. Internationally, environmental programs exist at University of New South Wales (Australia), the KTH Royal Institute (Sweden), Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität (Germany), Exeter (UK), Leeds (UK), and Oxford (UK). There are several journals in the field: *Environmental Humanities*, *Resilience*, *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and the Environment*. As the body of literature and cadre of trained scholars have grown, the environmental humanities research agenda has begun to trickle down to undergraduate curricula. Arizona State and the University of Delaware have recently launched undergraduate minors in environmental humanities, and there are no doubt many equivalent programs hiding under different names in liberal arts colleges across the nation. UC Davis already has the faculty and the student body to be the premier institution in this field.

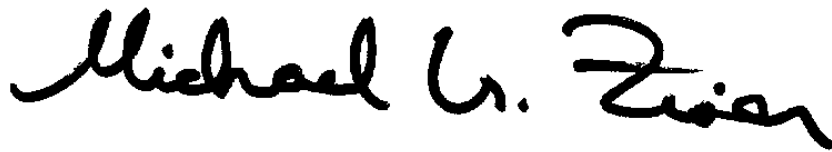
As the accompanying description (attached) will explain in greater detail, we propose to offer a minor of 20 upper-division units. Three courses (12 units total) would be specifically required: one in environmental history, one in literature and the environment, and one in environmental philosophy. These courses are offered at least every other year, and care will be taken to make certain that the required courses or acceptable substitutes

are available. The remaining two courses (8 units) would be drawn from a list of acceptable electives that has been culled from the general catalog with the consultation of faculty from the departments involved. Because environmental subject matter often appears in topics courses that vary from instructor to instructor and quarter to quarter, a significant element of administering the minor will consist of keeping a comprehensive, accurate, up-to-date, and accessible list of these electives.

The new minor will be administered—and student advising be provided—by the English Department using existing advising staff and faculty advisors. During the review period, all communications should be directed to Prof. Michael Ziser at his university mail and email addresses. While English is taking the lead in this proposal, the minor will draw upon coursework and expertise from over a dozen different departments and programs in HARCS and Social Sciences, all of whom have contributed to the drafting of minor (see comments from chairs, attached). The proposed minor relies entirely upon courses that are already offered by various departments and requires no additional formal curriculum changes at the outset. Beyond the very modest increases in advising and promoting the new minor, no additional resource implications are foreseen. Indeed, it is our hope that an environmental humanities minor will draw students (and accompanying resources) to L&S from outside of the College.

If successful, the minor will allow greater intellectual traffic between the environmental sciences and the humanities, a key component of an adequate university education and a significant benefit to the general public, whose physical environment is increasingly overseen by students trained at UC Davis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael G. Ziser". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael G. Ziser
Associate Professor
Department of English
UC Davis
mgziser@ucdavis.edu

Supporting Faculty:

Thomas Beamish (Associate Professor, Sociology)
Tim Choy (Associate Professor, Anthropology)
Christina Cogdell (Associate Professor, Design)
Diana Davis (Professor, History)
Carolyn de la Peña (Professor, American Studies)
Fran Dolan (Professor, English)
Ryan Galt (Associate Professor, Human Ecology)
Claire Goldstein (Associate Professor, French)
James Griesemer (Professor, Philosophy)
Hsuan Hsu (Associate Professor, English)

Tobias Menely (Assistant Professor, English)
Beth Rose Middleton (Associate Professor, Native American Studies)
Roberta Millstein (Professor, Philosophy)
Margaret Ronda (Assistant Professor, English)
Parama Roy (Professor, English)
Juliana Schiesari (Professor, Italian and Comparative Literature)
Jim Smith (Associate Professor, Anthropology)
Daniel Stolzenbrg (Associate Professor, History)
Julie Sze (Associate Professor, American Studies)
Archana Venkatesan (Associate Professor, Religious Studies and Comparative Literature)
Louis Warren (Professor, History)

Cc: Susan Kaiser, Dean, Division of Humanities, Arts, and Cultural Studies
George R. Mangun, Dean, Division of Social Sciences
Alexandra Navrotsky, Dean, Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences
Carolyn de la Peña, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education



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16 December 2014

Letters of Support for the Proposed Environmental Humanities Minor:

1)

Dear Mike,

As Director of Science & Technology Studies, I am writing to express my strong support for your proposal for an interdisciplinary minor in environmental humanities. I am grateful for your work in organizing this; the environmental humanities are quickly become an area of great growth and intellectual excitement internationally, not only because of the urgency and scale of environmental problems, but also because environmental problems and solutions are constitutively transdisciplinary, at once technical, cultural, social, and aesthetic. As such, they catalyze and require new scholarly connections in the academy. The interdisciplinary coordination you propose is appropriate and crucial. The environmental sciences have become increasingly interdisciplinary in order to grasp scale-spanning planetary problems; the environmental humanities can do no less in studying the conditions for human life in a rapidly changing environment. A number of STS faculty do their research and teaching on subjects relevant to the environmental humanities --including such topics as environmental ethics, the social ramifications of the ecology, the technopolitics of contamination, water infrastructures, human/nonhuman relations, and theories of nature/culture and materialism-- and we will be very happy to contribute pedagogically to the new minor.

Sincerely,

Tim Choy
Director, Science & Technology Studies (STS)

2)

Hi Michael,
Thanks for the reminder. Here is my blurb (for Design):

The Dept. of Design wholeheartedly supports a new interdisciplinary minor in environmental humanities. Issues of sustainability permeate many courses in Design, in particular, DES172A, "Sustainable Design," focuses on the principles, practice and materials of contemporary sustainable design in the context of environmental crisis. A minor in environmental humanities will be greatly appealing to Design students and logical for those who intend to make a career of sustainable design.

Best,
Susan [Taber Avila]
Chair, Design

3)

Dear Mike

I have been excited to hear that you and some of your colleagues are developing a proposal for an interdisciplinary minor in Environmental Humanities. The Philosophy Department supports this idea. We **do indeed teach courses relevant to the minor, such as PHI 120 (Environmental Ethics) and PHI 108 (Philosophy of Biology), and a few others.** I think that what you are proposing is a viable and exciting educational concentration. Moreover, some of my faculty are interested in the kind of interdisciplinary coordination that is envisioned under the plan.

Good luck with this.

best regards

[David Copp]
Chair, Philosophy

4)

Dear Michael,

Comparative Literature is very enthusiastic and supports wholeheartedly the new Environmental Humanities Minor. We have faculty who are interested in teaching for this minor and we have interest from students.

Many thanks,

juliana

Professor, Juliana Schiesari
Chair, Department of Comparative Literature

5)

I write with the strongest possible support for the proposed interdisciplinary Environmental Humanities minor, a minor which will speak to a need and desire among our students to conceptualize our moment of ecological crisis from diverse disciplinary perspectives beyond the sciences. We believe this interdisciplinary minor will only strengthen Davis's reputation as a center for innovative work in environmental studies and ecology. In the English Department, we have 6 or 7 faculty members working in the area of ecocriticism and/or literature and the environment, and 4 of them regularly teach our "Literature and the Environment" class and many other topics classes related to the environmental humanities. We in English are excited about the opportunity to introduce students from other parts of campus to the exciting environmental humanities work we are doing in our classes and our research, and we are excited that this minor will enable us to collaborate all the more closely with faculty members in other humanities disciplines who are also interested in environmental approaches.

[Liz Miller]
Chair, English

6)

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to write this short letter as indication of support of the proposal for an Environmental Humanities Minor, as articulated by our colleague Michael Ziser. I believe that this curricular structure will be attractive and beneficial to our students, and will further the mission of the Division, College and University, notably as it concerns the fostering of critical thinking as a pertinent embodiment of the Humanities.

Sincerely,

Eric Louis Russell

Director, Humanities Program

Director, Davis Language Center

Associate Professor, French & Italian

7)

Dear Mike,

Here is my blurb for the history department:

The history department strongly supports the creation of a new minor in environmental humanities. History professors teach many courses relevant to the minor, including global environmental history and U.S. environmental history. Our faculty are excited about the interdisciplinary coordination envisioned under the plan.

Let me know if you need anything else.

Best,

Kathy Olmsted

Professor and chair

History department

8)

Dear Professor Ziser,

Thank you for sharing with me your proposal for a minor in Environmental Humanities. I support this excellent idea. I would like to point out that Art History faculty teach courses relevant to the minor: your proposal lists AHI 130 Landscape, Nature and Art; but other courses we teach also cover issues of landscape design, perceptions of nature and landscape, and the relationship of human societies to the natural and built environment, including for example: AHI 25 Understanding Architecture, AHI 120A/HMR 120A: Art, Architecture and HUMAN RIGHTS; 188A THE AMERICAN HOME, and 187 Contemporary Architecture. I look forward to remaining in touch with you as you develop this project further, as many art historians on our campus are keenly interested in issues of landscape, heritage and architecture in various historical contexts. Thank you again, best wishes,

Heghnar Watenpaugh

--

Heghnar Watenpaugh, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Art History
Co-Chair, Department of Art and Art History

9)

Hi Mike,

For my "anthro" blurb, feel free to adapt any language you want from the STS statement I sent you. In addition, a number of faculty in the sociocultural wing have expertise and teach courses about ecology and politics, the anthropology of science, the politics of nature and nature/culture, questions of cultural and ontological difference, the technopolitics of expertise, alter-articulations of environmental and other politics. Faculty are working on the cultural, technical, and conceptual issues raised by mining, crude oil, air pollution, and other environmental issues, including the implications of encounters between environmentalist and other ways of knowing and being.

Hope this helps!

[Tim Choy]
for Li Zhang, Chair, Anthropology

10)

Hi Mike—

Sorry to be late on this, but Medieval and Early Modern Studies would be happy to support the creation of an Environmental Humanities Minor. MST 130 has recent been taught as an environmental-humanities course by Carlee Arnett of German and I think it's quite likely it will be again; we also have grad students with interests in EH who might sometimes offer summer courses or similar. So we'd be happy to contribute what we could to the historical span of the minor. :) (There's your emoticon!)

Best,
Claire [Waters]
Program Director, Medieval and Early Modern Studies

11)

Dear Michael, sorry not to have responded to this sooner.

My colleague, Tom Beamish, teaches a course that is always well enrolled: Sociology of the Environment. It attracts students from across the campus. My impression is that there is a lot of interest in sociology of environment, environmental science and policy, and more. The concentration you propose seems very promising.

[Vicki Smith]
[Chair, Sociology]

Pasted below is the text of a letter from undergraduate students to Environmental Studies faculty detailing a felt absence of broader social context in the ESP curriculum. Though the focus is on Environmental Justice here, the students' concerns would be significantly addressed by courses envisioned under the Environmental Humanities minor.

MZ

To: ESP Department
Subject: EPAP: What's Missing?

Dear Professor Handy and the ESP Faculty,

As students in the EPAP major (many of whom have successfully completed the EPAP program), we are writing this letter to provide feedback on what we feel are some significant shortcomings with our education in environmental policy. We have taken the initiative to write this letter because students who go through the EPAP major *are the future*. We want to improve our major so that future EPAP students will graduate better prepared to tackle the complex environmental problems facing our world.

We have broken this letter into two parts. First, we have a list of key critiques of the major which are based on the curriculum and the main foundational ideology of our classes. Second, we have a list of proposed actions the department could take to address these critiques and improve the quality of the major.

Curriculum Critique

These are the main deficiencies we see in the course requirements and options for the EPAP major.

1) *There is no requirement (or even option) for learning about environmental justice*

The future of the environmental movement and solving environmental problems lies in emphasizing the connection between social and environmental justice. The environmental justice movement plays an important role in shaping environmental policy within California, yet we do not have a single class that truly helps EPAP students understand what Environmental Justice is and how this movement has influenced the direction of environmental policy. Even the American Studies and Community and Regional Development departments at UC Davis have classes on Environmental Justice, but the ESP Department does not.

2) *There is no class where we think critically about the interconnection of society and the environment*

Critical analysis of society and human interaction with the environment is essential to understanding the root of environmental problems. This could happen through the study of environmental history, political ecology or environmental ethics and philosophy. The Department of Environmental Science, Policy, and Management at UC Berkeley offers courses on all of these topics but our department does not have a single class where we study this connection in depth. We feel that not having this type of course in the requirements for our major creates a gap in the way students learn to analyze and understand environmental problems and solutions. Understanding the context for and history of environmental problems is essential to being able to solve them.

3) *There is not enough environmental science where we study earth systems or ecology*

The lower division “Environmental Science” requirement is some of our only true environmental science. ESP 110 is our only upper division “environmental science” class, but this class focuses on flows of pollution and how to measure them. Although this is a reality of our world and important to cover, we are surprised that we don’t have a class where we have to learn the physical, chemical, and biological processes that make up our world and influence ecosystem function. We believe it is important that all EPAP students understand the carbon cycle, soil nutrients, and water cycles, as well as general ecology principles, no matter what track they are specializing in.

4) *There is not enough flexibility in the courses EPAP students can take to meet their major requirements*

Environmental policy encompasses a broad range of issues. We feel that the upper division requirements (especially) are so specific that students have limited ability to shape their education to their interests within environmental policy. We also noticed that the new requirements have even less flexibility than the old requirements. Not only does having less flexibility in course options limit students ability to tailor the major to their interests, it also makes it much harder for us to schedule our classes and complete all the requirements on time (given how many courses are only offered once per year or during alternating years). Many other majors (both at Davis and at schools such as UC Berkeley) have substantially more flexibility in which classes students can take to meet their major requirements.

5) *There is no option for doing a thesis (honors or regular) or capstone project*

While many majors at UC Davis clearly present students the option of doing a senior thesis or a senior capstone project that allows students to apply their education to produce a tangible original product, the EPAP major does not officially offer this. This is a shortcoming in the opportunities provided by EPAP and would be especially valuable for students who are interested in going on to do research in graduate school.

Ideological Critique

Although our department may not explicitly think of itself as teaching a specific ideology, as students who have gone through the EPAP program, we have come to feel that we are taught a fairly narrow system of ideas and ideals within the intellectual arena of environmental policy. The types of economic and political theory we are exposed to within this major are not as broad as they could be. As students trying to understand the world and how to solve environmental issues, we would appreciate a greater variety of options for approaching and framing environmental problems.

6) *We are taught how to evaluate problems within a very narrow framework*

In ESP classes, environmental problems are largely presented in isolation from other factors that contribute to environmental and social problems. Sometimes it is acknowledged that other issues exist, but these are almost always considered as unchanging and hence we use a narrow framework for analysis. We are taught how to place policy band-aids instead of how to fundamentally critique or challenge systemic problems. We learn a few ideas over and over with limited perspective on these ideas and not enough comparative study between how we do things here in the US and how other countries do things. We are taught to evaluate individual policies but not how to place environmental breakdown and devastation within the larger framework of our increasingly globalized economic system. Given the complexity of environmental problems in this day and age, we need more from our education

7) *We do not criticize our assumptions or think critically about the broader structures that lead to the environmental problems*

None of our ESP classes fundamentally challenged how we (or the dominant society) frames environmental problems. We hardly even unpack what the “environment” even is. We barely critique the assumptions of the economic theory we are taught. We do not learn to think critically about how the dominant economic and political systems contribute to environmental destruction. The classes in our major often feel like they are afraid of being critical of our political system, our economic system, or industrial production system--essentially everything that matters for how society (and hence the environment) is shaped.

8) It often feels like we are being taught how to be technocratic bureaucrats

We are taught a technocratic approach to policy evaluation instead of thinking deeply and creatively about environmental problems. While it is important to learn how to understand numbers and technical jargon, the predominance of this type of framing of environmental problems works against the passion that brought many of us to the major.

Proposed Actions for Improving EPAP

Because we are writing this letter in the hope that the ESP department might take steps to change aspects of the major, we spent considerable time brainstorming ways that the department might address some of these critiques.

1) Ways to address the lack of environmental justice:

- Create an Environmental Justice 101 type class within the ESP department
- Create a requirement for Environmental Justice
 - If it existed, students could take a class within ESP otherwise there are the following classes which could be made options:
 - CRD 149 (Community Development Perspectives on Environmental Justice)
 - Taught by Jonathan London in Spring
 - AMS 101G (A special topics class on Environmental Justice)
 - Taught by Julie Sze in Winter
- Create an environmental justice track
- Include more discussion of environmental justice issues in existing ESP classes
- Hire a professor who specializes in issues of environmental justice
- Bring guest speakers who specialize in environmental justice into ESP classes

2) Ways to address lack of critical analysis of the connection between environment and society:

- Create an ESP class that helps to develop students' ability to analyze and interpret social causes and consequences of environmental problems (See Appendix I for examples of this type of course from UC Berkeley's Environmental Science, Policy and Management Department)
- Have a depth requirement titled “Environment and Society” with 2-3 classes to choose from such as HIS 109A (Global Environmental History), HIS 172 (American Environmental History), CRD 142 (Rural Change in the Industrialized World) or an ESP specific class
 - Bring back ESP 101 (Ecology, Nature and Society), which is listed in the UC Davis catalog but no longer offered

3) Ways to strengthen the environmental science component of the major:

- Change some of the options available to us for meeting the lower division (“preparatory subject matter”) environmental science requirement:

- ANS 1 (Domestic Animals and People) has very little to do with our major. We are puzzled why this is an option when there are much more relevant classes that exist at Davis but are not listed as options.
- Existing Davis courses that are good candidates for the lower division environmental science requirement:
 - ATM 5 (Global Climate Change)
 - EVE 11 (Principles of Ecology)
 - ESP 30 (World Ecosystems & Geography)
 - GEL 10 (Modern and Ancient Global Environmental Change)
- Instead of requiring ESP 110, have two options for meeting the upper division Environmental Science requirement
 - The second option could be an ecology and earth systems class where we learn about how the earth works
 - ESM 120 (Global Environmental Interactions) is a fantastic class

4) Ways to address the rigidity of major requirements:

- Have greater class options for meeting requirements
 - See the attached sheet on how the Environmental Science, Policy and Management Department at UC Berkeley structures its Society & Environment Major for an example of greater flexibility in course choice
 - The Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Major at Davis also provides an example of how a major can have greater flexibility in course choice
- Have requirements be more shapeable to peoples varied interests
 - For example: some enjoy focusing on economics, whereas others want to focus more on governance and legal systems and others want to focus more on technical skills such as GIS. We would appreciate having greater options to tailor our course choices to our interests. We feel that people would have a higher satisfaction with the major if this were the case.

5) Ways to address the lack of a thesis or capstone:

- Create course for doing a senior thesis and make this option known to students (should not be required, but available)
- Have an optional capstone project class
 - The UC Davis Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems major has an innovative capstone project class which could serve as a model

Some ways to address our ideological critiques

We acknowledge that our proposals to change the ideas we are taught are not as specific as our ideas for the curriculum itself. However, we hope to spark a conversation about the material that is being taught in ESP courses. As students we feel that there are a range of intellectual ideas within the arena of environmental thought that are left out of our education.

A) Change the course content of existing ESP courses to incorporate a wider range of ideas about environmental problems and protection

- Not only changing some of the material taught in lecture, but also assigning reading with different views and ideological foundations (for example, how indigenous scholars or how environmental justice scholars view environmental problems). Too often only one side is presented, or if multiple views are presented, we are not given the strongest sources that support differing views

B) Change the curriculum (per above) to increase the intellectual breadth of the major by incorporating classes that promote critical thinking about our society and the root causes of environmental problems

- Classes such as environmental justice, political ecology, or environmental history

C) Create a ESP 190 (Workshops on Environmental Problems) style seminar where a broader range of ideas are incorporated than in core classes

- This course could provide an opportunity to thoroughly explore one or more current environmental problems. Additionally, this course could provide an opportunity for professors to present their personal views, especially those that are more contentious or radical, or invite in other professors or guest speakers to do so.

D) Hire professors who are willing to put forth more radical (yet pragmatic) viewpoints

- Professors who are “organic intellectuals” as Antonio Gramsci put it, meaning they are willing to advance intellectual theories that critique the dominant power structures within society. This is about challenging students to think differently and come at problems from different angles. Most importantly, a university education should involve teaching students to be free thinkers who can think critically about everything from the EPA to the Endangered Species Act to the Tragedy of the Commons.

We hope this letter helps to spark more conversation as well as real action to address some of the issues we have raised.

Sincerely,

Alicia Halpern
Class of 2014
Major: EPAP

Phillip Tran
Class of 2014
Major: EPAP

Tanzi Jackson
Class of 2014
Major: EPAP
Minor: Geology

Melissa Gjerde
Class of 2015
Major: EPAP
Minor: Soil Science

Matthew Fairris
Class of 2014
Major: EPAP

Naftali Moed

Class of 2016
Major: EPAP
Minor: Landscape Restoration

Elaine Swiedler
Class of 2015
Double Major: EPAP and Economics

Tiffany Hsieh
Class of 2014
Major: Environmental Science and Management
Minor: EPAP

Jessie Chen
Class of 2015
Double Major: EPAP and Economics

Appendix I: Course Examples from UC Berkeley's Environmental Science, Policy, and Management Department for a "Society & Environment" Course Option at UC Davis

51. Society, Environment, and Culture. (4) Three hours of lecture and one and one-half hours of discussion per week. Issues, concepts, and processes pertaining to the diverse approaches to understanding the relationship between human society, culture, and the environment. Core ideas in and approaches to science, nature, culture, feminism, indigeneity, and postcolonialism as they pertain to the environment and society. Critical analysis and discussion of fundamental and contemporary issues and texts in the field.

160AC. American Environmental and Cultural History. (4) Three hours of lecture and one and one-half hours of discussion per week. History of the American environment and the ways in which different cultural groups have perceived, used, managed, and conserved it from colonial times to the present. Cultures include American Indians and European and African Americans. Natural resources development includes gathering-hunting-fishing; farming, mining, ranching, forestry, and urbanization. Changes in attitudes and behaviors toward nature and past and present conservation and environmental movements are also examined.

161. Environmental Philosophy and Ethics. (4) Two hours of lecture and one and one-half hours of discussion per week. A critical analysis of human environments as physical, social-economic, and technocultural ecosystems with emphasis on the role of ideologies, beliefs, attitudes, and behavior. An examination of contemporary environmental literature and the philosophies embodied therein.

163AC. Environmental Justice: Race, Class, Equity, and the Environment. (4) Two hours of lecture, 1 hour of discussion, and one hour of service learning. Overview of the field of environmental justice, analyzing the implications of race, class, labor, and equity on environmental degradation and regulation. Environmental justice movements and struggles within poor and people of color communities in the U.S., including: African Americans, Latino Americans, and Native American Indians. Frameworks and methods for analyzing race, class, and labor. Cases of environmental injustice, community and government responses, and future strategies for achieving environmental and labor justice.

166. Natural Resource Policy and Indigenous Peoples. (4) Three hours of lecture and one hour of discussion per week. Critical analysis of the historical transformation of indigenous peoples and their environments in North America and the Third World. The origins and specific patterns of socio-economic problems in these areas, existing and alternative future development policies and their effects.

C167. Environmental Health and Development. (4) Students will receive no credit for C167 after taking 167. Students may remove a deficient grade in 167 by taking C167. Three hours of lecture and one hour of discussion per week. The health effects of environmental alterations caused by development programs and other human activities in both developing and developed areas. Case studies will contextualize methodological information and incorporate a global perspective on environmentally mediated diseases in diverse populations. Topics include water management; population change; toxics; energy development; air pollution; climate change; chemical use, etc.

168. Political Ecology. (4) Three hours of lecture and one hour of discussion per week. Analysis of environmental problems in an international context with a focus on political and economic processes, resource access, and representations of nature. Discussion of the ways in which film, literature, and the news media reflect and influence environmental politics. Approaches to policy analysis arising from recent social theory.

The following are individual opinions that seek to supplement the jointly written and signed letter.

Incorporating Environmental Justice into EPAP

As a student and soon to be alumni of the EPAP major here at UC Davis, I felt privileged to go through such an amazing program. As I progressed through my college career, I have realized a few suggestions that I believe will add to the quality of the major and make students going through the program better equipped to understand the broad spectrum of Environmental Science. One suggestion in particular is the need for an environmental justice component. In today's world, the social justice movement and the environmental movement are often seen as two separate issues. The truth is that these two movements are often one of the same and as we proceed into the future, social justice and environmental issues will be intrinsically intertwined around each other. As the future environmental scholars of the future that are preparing to save the world, it is imperative that the students going through this program have a strong grasp of this field. Which is why I believe that an environmental justice component added to the EPAP curriculum, would further enhance the quality of the EPAP major.

Sincerely,
Phillip Tran
Class of 2014
Major: EPAP

A Letter on Why We Need Environmental Justice

As a recent graduate from UC Davis who majored in Environmental Science and Management and minored in Environmental Policy Analysis and Planning, I spent a great deal of my quarters

immersed in environmental courses. I started off my college career eager to take environmental courses so that I could become educated and develop the skills I needed to combat environmental issues once I graduated.

However, I slowly found myself losing passion for my major the more environmental science and policy courses I took. Thoughts of whether I chose the right major or if it was that I just lost passion for environmental issues ran through my head throughout my junior year. I began questioning the courses I was taking wondering how these classes would actually help prepare me for a career in the environmental field. What practical knowledge have I obtained that prepared me for the 'real world' and would help me make a difference in this world? Meanwhile I became more involved in campus climate and social justice issues and stumbled upon the issue of environmental justice.

As I did more independent research about environmental justice issues that have occurred locally, nationally, and internationally, I wondered why environmental justice is never addressed in our curriculum. I discovered that other majors such as American Studies and Community and Regional Development all have courses relating to environmental justice. Yet, the environmental majors did not offer any of these courses as electives.

Environmental justice is a major environmental issue and should no longer be neglected in our curriculum. Most of the current courses offered provide only an economic viewpoint of the costs and benefits of environmental decisions but never address the impacts it has on human lives. Students need to be aware that environmental decisions impact communities especially those that are underrepresented, low socio-economic status, and are minorities. Environmental injustice is a form of social injustice and impacts everyone in the world.

I had the opportunity to take an Environmental Justice course through the American Studies department and it was one of the most rewarding courses I have ever taken at UC Davis. It taught me how to critically think and forced me to realize that there is environmental injustice around the world. It taught me how to challenge the way I view the environment and examine different impacts of environmental decisions.

I propose that the EPAP and ESM major integrate an environmental justice course into its core curriculum and create an Environmental Justice track. It is absolutely imperative that students are aware and exposed to environmental justice issues so that when they graduate and become leaders in the environment field, they make executive decisions that protects the environment in a manner that is also socially just.

Sincerely,
Tiffany Hsieh
Class of 2014
Major: Environmental Science and Management
Minor: EPAP

Knowledge is Power

As a senior who is about to graduate from EPAP, I have been amazed at how classes within the ESP department teach a surprisingly limited ideology—especially when it comes to economic theory. Since almost every ESP class acknowledges the fact that many environmental policies fail to pass due to economic interests, it baffles me that we never think critically about our economic system. In all my ESP classes the current version of capitalism (globalized and with significant corporate power) has been accepted as a fact not worth questioning or thinking deeply and critically about.

Garrett Hardin's "Tragedy of the Commons" is an example that illustrates how ESP classes teach a limited version of environmental policy and economic theory. I have had to read Hardin's piece at least two times for ESP classes and it has been mentioned in many more classes than that. EPAP's core class, ESP 175, taught that without private ownership or central control, open access resources will be overexploited. It is one thing to teach this, it is another to not counterpose the fact that Hardin's fable is hardly inevitable and simply is not true throughout much of history and across the world.

Where is the mention of the fact that there are numerous and well-documented cases of how common pool resources are often closed access resources with successful and sustainable community governance structures in place (until enclosure and displacement takes place at least).¹ This fact is widely acknowledged across disciplines and even within economics with the ground-breaking work of Elinor Ostrom. Despite this, Hardin's idea is still taught in an incredibly uncritical manner in most of our classes. As Anthropologist Donald Nonini writes on the existence of natural resource commons throughout history, "[There is] a very large literature in human ecology, political ecology and policy studies, with hundreds of case studies of long-term stable arrangements for the use of common-pool resources, such as land, waterways and irrigation works, forest stands, fisheries and game and wild food plant areas." Where is the discussion of this literature in our ESP classes? No class in my EPAP experience went into any kind of depth on these alternative theories about the commons. This is but one example of how the ideas we are taught in EPAP are a ideologically limited version of environmental policy.

While I appreciate learning ideas such as Hardin's Tragedy of the Commons, and more broadly, neoclassical economic theory, I have issue with the fact that we are hardly taught anything beyond this nor are we taught to truly question these ideas. By limiting ourselves to this framework within our classes, it limits the bounds of not only the conversation and discussions we have, but also of the ideas most students leave this major understanding.

Additionally, I am in strong support of what both Phillip and Tiffany wrote about the need for environmental justice. Not only is understanding environmental racism and the response of environmental justice important, environmental justice has substantial influence in California. For example, the California Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32) is one of the laws that has come up in the majority of ESP classes I have taken. However, it wasn't until I took Environmental Justice that I learned that AB 32 almost did not pass because environmental justice groups were in opposition to market solutions such as cap-and-trade.² I don't think I ever learned in my ESP classes *why* certain parts of the environmental coalition are opposed to ideas such as cap-and-trade (or even that there *are* environmentalists opposed to solutions based on privatizing the commons, in this case the global commons of the atmosphere). The example of AB 32 speaks to my two key points in this letter. First, why it is important for EPAP students to understand the environmental justice movement given its growing power within California's environmental policy arena. Second, it shows again how we are almost exclusively taught a neoclassical version of environmental policy theory.

A university education is not simply about preparing students to get a job. It is about educating young people so we can better solve problems in this world. I believe knowledge is power. The EPAP major needs to increase the breadth of intellectual ideas that students are exposed to in order to truly empower the next generation of environmental leaders.

Sincerely,
Alicia Halpern
Class of 2014
Major: EPAP

¹I should note that in ESP 162, Prof. Springborn did talk about Ostrom's work, which I greatly appreciated. However, this was the extent of the sources used to discuss the fact that the Tragedy of the Commons does not always

happen. Additionally, it looks like this class is no longer a part of the EPAP major requirements so most students will be unlikely to even have this exposure to these ideas.

²For more on the environmental justice movement's role in AB 32 see: Sze, Julie, Gerardo Gambirazzio, Alex Karner, Dana Rowan, Jonathan London, and Deb Niemeier. "Best in show? Climate and environmental justice policy in California." *Environmental Justice* 2, no. 4 (2009): 179-184.

Where Are the Classes About the Environment?

I chose to attend Davis because of the opportunity I saw to explore my passion for the environment and understand the policy systems that shape it. As I near the completion of my second year, I feel as though my experience in EPAP has not been what I expected. While I have just now begun to take classes within the major, my experience in the highly regimented lower division classes required by the major has provided me with little opportunity to learn more about the environment. As I have trudged through chemistry, biology, calculus, and economics-I have yet to encounter a single course in ecology or even a humanities course dealing with the interactions between humans and in the environment and there is minimal flexibility to take classes related to my other interests. This absence of classes addressing environmental issues, (with the exception of ESP 1) has forced me to rely solely on knowledge I have gained outside my EPAP coursework in the upper division courses I have already taken and has failed to enable me to expand my understanding of the natural and social processes that define the environment. I sincerely hope that changes can be made to enable courses to be more flexible and to shift towards courses with a stronger emphasis on the environment and natural processes.

Sincerely,
Naftali Moed
Class of 2016
Major: EPAP
Minor: Landscape Restoration

A Poem About EPAP

Narrowness

That is the word that comes to mind
My major is narrow-minded
I didn't come to UC Davis to be narrow

Environmental Policy

What is considered environmental?
Who knows
We never define it

It has taught me to recognize supply and demand curves
To turn social problems into mathematical equations

How to monetize the trees and the whales
Put a dollar sign on life
How to discount future generations
Reduce our living planet to a collection of natural resources

Environmental and social problems are deeply entwined
Yeah? Not in my major they aren't
See all those people suffering,
being exploited for power and profit
Well it's separate from the exploitation of the earth
By never connecting the two
This is what my major tells me

Environmental Justice tells me otherwise
But there is no environmental justice class
In the ESP department
Because that might force us
To actually think deeper and broader
But we take a narrow view of the world

What about the history of our environmental problems?
History? You don't need that to get a degree in Environmental Policy
All you need is science, and economics and political theory
If we could just get everyone to understand the costs and benefits
Our problems would be solved

Something is missing here
Why does my major make me feel disempowered?
I'm not stupid,
I know the problems are vast.
And these solutions we discuss,
They seem to only scratch the surface.
A band-aid for wounds that go deep

I am sick of turning the planet into resources
To be consumed by industrial society
Of thinking that exploitation of the environment
Is unrelated to exploitation of people

I am sick of the neoliberal paradigm
Where we are taught

Private property is key
Markets are held up as an ideal
Community is replaced with individual responsibility
And growth growth growth
Economic growth is hardly questioned

Have I ever had a class that used the phrase neoliberal?

No.

Have I ever had a class where we thought critically about capitalism?

No.

Have I ever had a class that even mentioned the role of colonialism?

No.

Who knew

That by the time I was a senior

I would sit in my classes

and get frustrated

Writing notes in my notebook

about why I disagree with what I was being taught

Who knew

that I would learn equally as much from what my classes didn't teach me
as the material they taught.

-Anonymous

Environmental Humanities Minor
Program Description

The interdisciplinary minor in environmental humanities allows UC Davis students from across the campus to thoughtfully concentrate their studies around environmental issues from the perspectives of literature, history, philosophy, design, cultural anthropology, cultural studies, and the visual and other arts. Coursework in the minor examines the environment as a historically emergent and culturally variable category, a complex topic of philosophical discussion, a venue for political conflict and compromise, and an inspiration for and object of creative work in various media.

The minor is sponsored by the English Department.

Program Requirements:

	Units
Environmental Humanities	20 Total
1 course in environmental history, from the following:	4
HIS 172 American Environmental History	
HIS 108 Global Environmental History	
1 course in literature and the environment, from the following	4
ENL 184 Literature and the Environment	
COM 120 Writing Nature: 1750 to the Present	
1 course in environmental philosophy, from the following:	4
PHI 120 Environmental Ethics	
PHI 108 Philosophy of the Biological Sciences	
2 or more elective courses from the following list:	8
AMS 151 American Landscapes and Places	
AMS 157 Animals in American Culture	
ANT 101 Ecology, Nature, and Society (also listed as ESP 101)	
ANT 103 Indigenous Peoples and Resource Conservation	
ANT 104N Cultural Politics of the Environment	
ANT 131 Ecology and Politics	
ARTH 130 Landscape, Nature, and Art	
ARTS 121 Reinterpreting Landscape	
COM 120 Writing Nature: 1750 to the Present	
DES 127A Sustainable Design	

EDU 142 Introduction to Environmental Education

ENL 184 Literature and the Environment

ESP 101: Ecology, Nature, and Society (also listed as ANT 101)

HIS 108 Global Environmental History

HIS 109 Environmental Change, Disease, and Public Health

HIS 136 Scientific Revolution

HIS 172 American Environmental History

LDA 180A-P: Special Topics in Landscape Design (2 units)

NAS 161 California Indian Environmental Policy I

NAS 162 California Indian Environmental Policy II

PHI 108 Philosophy of the Biological
Sciences

PHI 120 Environmental Ethics

SOC 160 Sociology of the Environment

STS 131 Darwin

Additions and Restrictions

(A) Students may petition the minor adviser to accept other relevant coursework, including Special Topics courses and Capstone/Senior Seminars in fulfillment of the minor, as long as their course of study follows the minor's lower-division restriction and interdisciplinary requirements.

(B) Students may petition the minor adviser to accept up to four units of registered individual study, group study, or internship towards the minor program, as long as their course of study follows the minor's lower-division restriction and interdisciplinary requirements.

Advising

English Department, 177 Voorhies Hall (530) 752-7646

March 4, 2015

CHAIR STEVEN CARLIP

Letters and Science Executive Committee

RE: Environmental Studies Minor Proposal

Dear Chair Carlip,

As Associate Dean of Undergraduate Academic Programs in the Social Sciences, I am writing to provide my full support for the proposed minor in Environmental Studies. By combining course offerings that come not only from a handful of departments, but from departments in the humanities as well as the social sciences, I believe this minor will benefit undergraduates who plan to study the nuances of environmental concerns through the interdisciplinary application of the intellectual approaches provided by our core disciplines. The fact that the minor applies these modes of thought and disciplinary approaches to a topic of great public policy importance makes this an ideal setting for such a collaboration.

Sincerely,



Deborah Swenson
Associate Dean of Undergraduate Academic Programs
Professor of Economics
Division of Social Sciences

March 4, 2015

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Sincerely,



Deborah Swenson
Associate Dean of Undergraduate Academic Programs
Professor of Economics
Division of Social Sciences