



ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

» What do cricket frogs in the Francis Marion forest have to do with climate change? How do property rights affect economic policy? And what effect do antibacterial products have on soil and marsh sediments? These questions and others fall within the realm of environmental studies – an undeniably broad area that enhances our understanding of how political, social, cultural and economic activities relate to the physical world.

At the College of Charleston, our environmental studies program can help you make sense of important issues that confront society, and that knowledge can give you an edge in the professional world or graduate school. By combining courses in the natural sciences (geology, physics, biology and chemistry) with those in the social sciences (anthropology, psychology, political science, sociology and philosophy) – as well as studies in economics, art history and math – this program offers insight into the inter-relatedness of events and an appreciation for environmental issues on a local, national and international scale.

The opportunities for hands-on research are unlimited. Projects our students have done include:

- » investigating the affects of coastal erosion on the wildlife habitat of nearby barrier islands.
- » undertaking energy audits of the College's entire campus.
- » studying the ecological benefits of small-scale refinements in mass-transit systems.

The faculty who teach our environmental studies courses represent a cross section of expertise, spanning areas as diverse as ethnobotany, natural disasters, environmental justice and the documentation of cultural landscapes.

And, in this program, internships are key. Recently, our students interned with:

- » the City of Charleston's planning department (helping develop its 180-page sustainability plan).
- » an environmental engineering firm (learning the basic operations).
- » a local municipal water works (helping to assess water quality).

So, what is it that those cricket frogs have to do with climate change? Check out our environmental studies program and find out.

"The environmental studies minor strikes a balance between the sciences and the humanities. But it isn't just about the courses, it's also about making connections within the campus environmental community and in Charleston.

The program is both a tool for getting informed and a conduit for joining the efforts of others."

– Carly Sothoron '08