Department: Environmental Studies
Assessment Coordinator: Gene Meyers

Departmental Mission: The Environmental Studies Department fosters excellence in applied interdisciplinary environmental problem solving by providing undergraduate and graduate students with learning and leadership challenges at crucial human interfaces with natural/ecological systems. The department pursues its goals through partnerships with, and service to, non-governmental organizations, businesses, governmental agencies, civil society and other institutions at the local, state, regional, national and international levels.

Department Student Learning Objectives: Upon graduation, Environmental Studies students will be able to:

- **ENVS 1**: ethically evaluate social priorities and their risks in the context of environmental problem solving.
- **ENVS 2**: apply an integrative approach towards understanding human-environment interactions.
- **ENVS 3**: work collaboratively to identify and analyze complex environmental problems, recognize diverse stakeholder perspectives, and synthesize creative solutions.
- **ENVS 4**: transfer academic learning to a real-world context of constraints and opportunities.
- **ENVS 5**: produce, interpret and apply research in a solution-oriented context. (See EE 2, 4 and 6)
- **ENVS 6**: analyze and communicate ideas effectively in oral, written, and visual forms (See EE 5)

GUR Student Learning Outcomes (list two for each GUR, taken from the eleven GUR competencies found on the last page of this document):

- Graduates are good communicators.
- Graduates possess skills needed for entry into environmental professions or advanced study.

Student Learning Outcomes Assessed This Year

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Measures</th>
<th>SLOs Assessed</th>
<th>Results</th>
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<tr>
<td>Scoring and analyzed all final essays for the winter term class.</td>
<td><strong>ENVS 1</strong></td>
<td>Results showed that 91% of students identified an environmental ethical issue, or aspect of the given issue. Only one student completely failed to identify or employ ethical content even implicitly, allowing another kind of analysis to govern the essay. Further, 80% used language denoting explicitly ethical concepts in the context of the problem. Finally 61% went further to analyze the issue by applying explicitly ethical concepts, such prioritizing or weighing different judgments in ethical terms.</td>
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Changes based on assessment findings:

The point of most concern is the third criteria, which is admittedly the most demanding and even problematic. Nonetheless, both the second and third criteria will be the focus of more attention next year. To improve this aspect of instruction, instructors will undertake methods such as:

- Direct instruction on ethical concepts and their application
- Pointing out when ethical arguments about an issue are being constructed and discussed, and how this is being done
- Explicit unpacking of a variety of examples of applied ethical concepts
- And other methods as instructors determine