

ENVS 470 – Internship in Environmental Studies

Syllabus

Contents

ENVS 470 – Internship in Environmental Studies.....	1
Syllabus.....	1
Course Information.....	2
Instructor Information.....	2
Textbook and Course Materials.....	2
Course Description.....	2
Credit Hours.....	2
Prerequisites and/or Co-requisites.....	2
Learning Outcomes.....	2
Course Format and Design.....	2
University Information and Policies.....	3
University Mission Statement.....	3
Special Needs and Accommodations.....	3
Honor Code.....	3
Student Handbook.....	3
Technology Requirements.....	3
Instructional Technology.....	4
Learning Center.....	4
Hofheimer Library.....	4
Nondiscrimination Statement.....	4
Diversity Statement.....	4
Course Policies.....	5
Participation.....	5
Late Work.....	5
Makeup Work.....	5
Extra Credit.....	5
Netiquette Guide.....	5
Strategies for Success.....	5
Course Grades and Assignments.....	7
Grade Allocation.....	7
Grading.....	7
Assignment Descriptions.....	7
Course Schedule.....	8
Collaborative Learning.....	9
Hints for Success in Your Online Course.....	9

Course Information

Instructor Information

See the online course in Blackboard for instructor contact information and availability.

Textbook and Course Materials

Articles included in the Blackboard course page.

Course Description

This course offers hands-on internship opportunities that are directly relevant to the environmental fields, such as an education internship at the VA aquarium, field data collection at Mackay Island NWR or Back bay NWR, LEED accounting at Hourigan Construction, field sampling or GIS experience with an environmental consulting firm, grassroots environmental work at the Brock Environmental Center or with the Elizabeth River Project, etc. Students are expected to coordinate their internship placement with the supervising faculty member at least 2 months prior to placement.

Credit Hours

2 credits, may be repeated for additional credit

Prerequisites and/or Co-requisites

Jr. or Sr. Status, G.P.A. of at least 2.5 in all ENVS courses, a major or minor in ENVS or the natural sciences, or consent.

Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Develop and analyze complex questions related to their internship, considering multiple perspectives.
- Connect disciplinary theory and content, and relate this to the internship in practice, in order to gain new insight.
- Reflect on the significance of their internship experiences for their personal growth, the scholarly and/or professional communities, and wider society.

Course Format and Design

This course is offered fully online in modular format. The course is designed to provide students with a variety of learning experiences and equip students with learning resources and activities that enable learning outcomes.

Students will complete at least 80 hours of work at an internship site and will reflect on their experiences through a series of discussion board posts, essays, and a longer reflective paper.

University Information and Policies

University Mission Statement

Prepare each student for a meaningful life and career

The mission of Virginia Wesleyan University is to engage students of diverse ages, religions, ethnic origins, and backgrounds in a rigorous liberal arts education that will prepare them to meet the challenges of life and career in a complex and rapidly changing world. In this endeavor, the university employs a wide range of approaches to teaching and learning and provides opportunities to connect the study of the liberal arts with practical learning experiences on campus, in the Hampton Roads region, and throughout the world. In accord with our United Methodist heritage, Virginia Wesleyan aspires to be a supportive community that is committed to social responsibility, ethical conduct, higher learning, and religious freedom.

Special Needs and Accommodations

Virginia Wesleyan University is committed to giving all students the opportunity of academic success. If you are a student who is requesting accommodations based on the academic impact of a disability, speak to your instructor about your accommodations letter and specific needs. If you do not have an accommodations letter for this course, you will need to visit or call for an appointment with a disability support specialist to coordinate reasonable accommodations. Visit [Virginia Wesleyan University Disability Support Services](#) on the Web.

Honor Code

As a liberal arts university, Virginia Wesleyan is committed to values of citizenship and social responsibility fundamental to a community of scholars. People who join this academic community agree to maintain academic honesty and, therefore, not to cheat, lie, falsify data, or commit plagiarism or academic theft. Refer to the [Virginia Wesleyan Honor Code](#) for definitions, rights, responsibilities, and procedures.

Student Handbook

All students are expected to uphold the university's mission statement and abide by the university's honor code, the Virginia Wesleyan Creed, and all other standards that govern the conduct and behavior of students. For more information, refer to the [student handbook](#).

Technology Requirements

Online courses require that you have access to a computer with a reliable Internet connection (high-speed access recommended). A backup plan is recommended in the event of an Internet outage.

You will need to have access to and be able to use the following:

- A Web browser (Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox is recommended.)
- Adobe Acrobat Reader ([Get Adobe Acrobat Reader free.](#))
- Microsoft Office 365 ([Get Office 365 free.](#))
- A Virginia Wesleyan e-mail account

For assistance with passwords and user IDs, contact the [Virginia Wesleyan Help Desk.](#)

For assistance with Blackboard, please contact [the Help Center.](#)

Instructional Technology

For information, support, and training in the academic software of the university, refer to the university's department of [Instructional Technology.](#)

Learning Center

Contact the [Learning Center](#) for the following services:

- Academic advocacy and communication
- Academic planning and workshops
- Academic tutoring
- Computers and assistive technology
- Disability support services
- Individualized writing assistance
- Speech lab

Hofheimer Library

The Hofheimer Library supports the Virginia Wesleyan community by providing services, resources, and facilities that advance the academic program. Visit the [Hofheimer Library](#) on the Web for information, resources, services, and hours.

Nondiscrimination Statement

Virginia Wesleyan University does not discriminate against students of any race, religion, color, creed, gender, national and ethnic origin, age, marital status, covered veteran status, handicap, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected status in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other university-administered programs and facilities.

Diversity Statement

Virginia Wesleyan University values the benefits of its diversity. We are committed to educating the campus community about issues of diversity. The campus promotes freedom of thought and opinion in the spirit of mutual respect. Our campus community is enriched through programs, activities, and interactions by celebrating our uniqueness as well as our commonalities.

This commitment to diversity links programs and services that support the distinctiveness of individuals regardless of racial and ethnic backgrounds, physical and cognitive abilities, family status, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, age, and religious and spiritual values.

An essential feature of this community is an environment in which all students, faculty, administrators, and staff are able to study and work free from bias and harassment. Such an environment contributes to the growth and development of each member of the community.

Course Policies

Participation

Students are expected to log into the course at least every 2-3 days, with submissions required 1-2 times per week. Regular course participation is expected, especially for discussion board postings. It is difficult to catch up if you get behind, so please be in the regular habit of logging into the course and working on the course materials.

Late Work

This course is offered in a shortened time frame (7-7.5 weeks total), so it is critical that all work be submitted on time. Assignments and discussion board postings that are submitted late will have 10% deducted from the grade per day, up to a maximum of 50% off for items submitted 5 or more days late. Items submitted more than 1 week late will typically not be accepted.

Please keep your log of hours up to date. Essays will not be accepted after the due date.

Makeup Work

The course instructor may allow makeup work under extenuating circumstances, on a case by case basis, and only for legitimate emergencies. Please contact your course instructor to discuss the particulars of your case, as soon as possible.

Extra Credit

This course does not include any opportunities for extra credit. Please make the most of your opportunities to earn regular course credit by submitting your work on time.

Netiquette Guide

- Ask questions - If you find something confusing or want to know more, do not hesitate to ask questions. Make sure to post your questions in the appropriate thread.
- Participate - Do not hide in the background; it is not fair to lurk and let others do all the work. Contribute to discussions to get as much as possible from the course and to maintain your participation grade.

- Do not dominate a discussion - Share your knowledge, but not to the point of excluding others. If you have something to offer, please share it, but allow everyone to contribute equally to a discussion.
- Be intellectually rigorous - Do not excuse sloppy or illogical thinking. Challenge yourself and one another.
- Be tactful - Be critical of ideas, but remember there are other people involved. Be tactful and kind. You can hurt the feelings of a person reading your post.
- Forgive other students' mistakes - Do not correct others, even if you follow the rules of netiquette and use good manners. Just because you do not agree with a student's post does not mean that he or she is wrong. Instead, offer a different perspective to encourage further discussion.
- Read the whole thread before posting - Read all the posts in a thread before responding so you don't repeat what others have already said. Try to contribute clarifying information or a new idea to a discussion.
- Be concise - Do not waste people's time by posting basic, repetitive information. Make your point clearly and quickly.
- Reread and check your posts - Practice professionalism. Be mindful of what you say online; others will likely judge the tone and quality of your writing. Reread your posts and edit for clarity and mechanics.
- Cite your sources - When you use a source, cite it properly. Give credit where credit is due. Include links where appropriate. For lab posters, sources must be cited to receive credit for the background research you have done.
- Maintain confidentiality - Respect your classmates' privacy. Do not repeat the personal information that others share.
- Report technical problems - If the platform is not working properly, please let your instructor know as soon as possible

Strategies for Success

The most important things in this course are to a) NOT put everything off until the last minute, b) reflect on your experience and how you are learning from it, and c) work hard in your internship, even if it not all you expected. You will get out of this course what you put into it.

Course Grades and Assignments

Grade Allocation

All of these must be met to receive a passing grade.

Assignment	Requirement
Log of hours, including a journal of activities (80 hours or more—minimum requirement for 2 credits)	Required to receive a passing grade. If your log of hours totals less than 75 hours, you will receive a failing grade or an Incomplete, at the discretion of the course instructor.
Final written report (2-3 pages)	Required to receive a passing grade
Discussion Board Posts, Shorter Reflective Essays, Photo and Video reflections	You may miss no more than: 1 reflective essay OR 2 discussion board posts OR 1 photo/video reflection during the course, to receive a passing score on this portion of your grade. If you miss more than this (i.e., 1 essay AND 1 other reflective piece missing), you will receive a failing grade or an Incomplete, at the discretion of the course instructor.
Optional on-site evaluation by instructor	Optional, and depends on proximity to the course instructor. This is combined with the on-site supervisor's review and can only help your grade.
Evaluation by on-site supervisor	A positive or neutral evaluation by your site supervisor is required to receive a passing grade

Grading

Pass/Fail, requires successfully completion of all portions of the grade.

Assignment Descriptions

Log of Hours and Journal

Students are expected to put in at least 12-15 hours per week at the internship site. A total of 80 hours or more (for 2 credits) are expected for full credit, but some internships may require more. Students will be expected to keep a log documenting the amount of time spent each week at the internship site. This log should record the time spent on site each day and should include a brief journal entry (1 short paragraph) describing your activities that day. Students will be required to log a minimum of 80 hours on site to earn a passing grade in the course. Students logging fewer than 75 hours will automatically fail the course.

Note - certain positions will require an additional number of hours. For example, internships at the VA Aquarium require a minimum of 160 hours, but the stranding team internship requires a minimum of 300 hours. These hours may be spread over an entire semester (15 weeks), and can be used for two iterations of this 2-credit class. If you are choosing a particular internship, it is your responsibility to meet the expectations of that particular program and select a time period during which you can effectively complete the internship. If additional hours are required for that particular internship, you must meet the minimum required hours for that site in order to pass this course.

On-Site Evaluations

On-site evaluations will be conducted by the on-site supervisor. The course instructor will also maintain regular correspondence with the on-site supervisor in order to ensure good performance by the student.

Written Report

Students are expected to turn in a 2-3 page essay summarizing their internship experience. This report should include a description of the regular work duties, any outstanding experiences, and what you feel you gained from the internship. This report is due the last week of the term.

Course Schedule

Refer to the [academic calendar](#) for important university dates. The instructor reserves the right to make necessary changes, additions, deletions, and revisions to the course schedule as needed.

Prior to the start of the course, you should identify a site where you would like to conduct an internship and discuss the particulars of the position with the instructor. For some internships awarded on a competitive basis, it may be necessary to apply several months in advance. Students applying for competitive internships must coordinate their application with the faculty member currently supervising the internships.

Module	Activities	Assignments Due
1	Discuss internship expectations with instructor; Begin internship	Log of Hours Discussion Board Post
2	Continue Internship and log of hours Short essay reflection	Log of Hours Short Reflective Essay Photos from the internship site
3	Continue Internship and log of hours Read 2 short web articles	Log of Hours Discussion Board Post
4	Continue Internship and log of hours Video and essay reflections	Log of Hours Short Reflective Essay Reflective Video from the internship

Module	Activities	Assignments Due
5	Read: Connecting the Classroom with Real-World Experiences through Summer Internships By: Lisa Gavigan Continue Internship and log of hours	Log of Hours Discussion Board Post
6	Continue Internship and log of hours	Log of Hours Discussion Board Post Reflective Video from the internship
7	Finish up internship hours Complete your log of hours Write final reflective essay	Final Log of Hours 2-3 page (1000-1500 word) reflective essay due

Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning, through engagement of other students, is a key ingredient of participatory learning. Students can expect each online course to have some degree of collaborative learning. The type of collaboration may be minimal and take the form of weekly discussions.

In this course, the type of collaboration may include a team project at the internship site, that requires weekly and substantive participation from all members (including those not taking this for VWU credit). Regardless of the type of collaborative learning, all students are expected to participate in a timely, substantive, on-subject, professional, and complete manner.

Hints for Success in Your Online Course

1. Be sure you have access to proper computer equipment, Internet service, and software as listed above.
2. Designate certain times each week to work on your course. Plan ahead, avoid procrastination, even out your workload, and absorb material before moving on.
3. Have a specific achievement goal for each log-on session to help you accomplish what you need to get done and avoid distractions.
4. Actively participate in discussions. Meaningful interchange will lead to better understanding of various aspects of the course and also contribute to the personality and warmth of the online class community.
5. If assigned to an online team or study group, work with your team members actively from the start. Thus, team members will benefit from the other group members' ideas and experiences and can depend on one another to complete assigned tasks.
6. Practice an informal but organized, concise, and clear writing style that aids online communication.

7. Venture beyond the classroom. The Internet medium of the online classroom gives ready access to electronic libraries and to pertinent websites that offer a significant advantage in understanding graduate-level material.
8. Your class may occasionally use short multimedia components to enrich the learning environment. Follow the instructions provided.