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## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Many of the critical dilemmas that threaten our world today, such as global warming, oil depletion, pandemics and conflict over shrinking natural resources, have environmental underpinnings. Addressing such problems requires a truly interdisciplinary approach, calling upon understanding and tools from across the university. Environmental studies prepares students to tackle these issues through rigorous coursework in the natural and social sciences, including economics, law, policy, history, ecology and physical sciences.

### What makes the program distinctive?

We emphasize hands-on learning through field-based courses. Students work with community partners to address current issues facing local communities and are placed in individually tailored internships where they work alongside environmental professionals. Students also master research, report writing, oral

communication, geographic information systems (GIS) mapping, website development and problem-solving skills. Many students undertake field studies abroad or participate in an integrated study program such as the Environmental Field Semester or the Environmental Health and Justice summer program.

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## FAST FACTS

**Current number of majors and minors:** 64

**Number of faculty:** 17

**Can you minor in this program?** Yes

**Emphasis within the major:** experiential and community-engaged learning

**Popular second majors:** American studies, biology, international and global studies

**Website:** [brandeis.edu/programs/environmental](http://brandeis.edu/programs/environmental)

## ACADEMICS AND RESEARCH

### Multifaceted approach

Environmental studies faculty members are active researchers and practitioners in environmental history, conservation biology, sustainable farming and forestry, and environmental health and justice. Many of these activities are also integrated into coursework, internships and senior projects within the program. We balance fieldwork with rigorous classroom work, with an emphasis on strong writing skills — many of our courses are writing-intensive.

Environmental studies at Brandeis is also truly interdisciplinary, laying equal stress on natural and social sciences, and many of our faculty members are interdisciplinary in their own research and writing.

## BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

### Justice Brandeis Semester

The environmental studies program has two pioneering offerings within the Justice Brandeis Semester program, an engaging, immersive academic program in which small groups of students explore a thematic topic through inquiry-based courses linked to real-world experiential opportunities:

> The **Environmental Field Semester (EFS)** is an integrated five-course program that runs every other fall. Twelve to 15 students enroll in a roster of courses that forms a single, coherent semester-long program featuring classroom work, GIS training, field trips, work on a community farm, and guided field research on local conservation land. The EFS addresses the history, ecology, conservation and stewardship of land in New England. It is team-taught by Brian Donahue and Dan Perlman.

> **Environmental Health and Justice** is a hands-on, multidisciplinary, community-engaged learning program. Students collaborate with community organizations and government agencies to tackle environmental health problems facing low-income residents in the Waltham and Greater Boston communities. They spend much of the semester in the field, acquiring real skills to engage in environmental health issues: legal training, negotiation, advocacy, client interviewing and counseling, monitoring and assessment, sampling methodology and analysis. The program is taught by Professor Laura Goldin together with scientists from the Environmental Protection Agency.

### Internship offerings

The internship program is another hallmark of environmental studies at Brandeis. Internships offer students the opportunity to experience environmental challenges firsthand in government, nonprofit organizations, industry and business, and scientific research organizations. The internship program reaches beyond the campus to provide practical experience individually tailored to each student's academic goals and capabilities. We have an extensive network of partners who look to Brandeis for first-rate interns and who provide experiences that are challenging and meaningful.

### Student groups

Environmental studies students at Brandeis tend to be involved in a number of other groups and activities. These include the Brandeis Environmental Sustainability Team, a team of faculty, staff and students committed to "greening" every aspect of the university; the Campus Sustainability Initiative, a campus initiative that connects academics, student-led clubs and campus infrastructure to complete sustainability projects campuswide; and Students for Environmental Action, a student club that focuses on environmental issues.

## AFTER BRANDEIS

### Diverse career fields

Environmental studies majors have gone on to pursue a wide range of careers in environmental management, law, the sciences, education, medicine and other fields and are working in environmental agencies, schools, conservation and ecology organizations, consulting and law firms, among other settings. A number of students have gone on to earn graduate degrees in conservation biology, ecology, law, environmental management and forestry; others have studied architecture, economics, history, medicine, pharmacy, public health and veterinary medicine, often with an environmental bent.

*"This semester, my education was so much more a part of my life than it has ever been. I felt like I was always building something — developing an understanding of where I am, what is important to me and how I want to design my life in a way that is meaningful and healthy for me. I have never before had such a personal, holistic and comprehensive learning experience."*

*Environmental Field Semester student*



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