
What is Environmental Science?

Environmental Science is an interdisciplinary major that integrates many fields of science including biology, chemistry, physics, earth and space sciences, and more to effectively study the health of the environment. A major end goal of environmental science is the protection of the environment, as well as finding and implementing solutions to environmental problems.

What can I do with Environmental Science?

Environmental Science majors use a multidisciplinary approach to study and protect the environment. Environmental Scientists may work to reclaim polluted lands, assess environmental risk due to construction, or provide research and data towards implementing government regulations meant to protect the environment.

There are several types of environmental scientists such as environmental health specialists, environmental protection specialists, and environmental chemists (for more information see WOIS.org → Occupations → Environmental Scientists).

Related Majors

Environmental Studies	Earth Science
Geology	Conservation Science
Biology	Environmental Physics
Wildlife Ecology	Forestry
Ecology and Evolutionary Bio	Entomology
Landscape Architecture	Soil Science

Where can I study Environmental Science?

There are a number of schools in Washington State where you might study Environmental Science including UW (Seattle, Bothell, and Tacoma campuses), Seattle University, WSU, and WWU, among others. You might also consider an **Environmental Studies** program, also offered at many schools. Even some community colleges offer bachelor's degrees in environment-related fields.

How do I get started?

At Bellevue College, we are here to help you get started on your path to studying Environmental Science. Your main goals at BC are to both graduate with a transferable associates degree and to complete most or all of your major prerequisites. Below are some steps that you can take to help you successfully transfer to your dream school as an Environmental Science major.

Step One: Research

Making an informed decision about a major requires active research. Here are steps that students should complete while determining whether an Environmental Science major is the best fit for their goals:

- Make a list of things you want out of your education: What goals do you have when it comes to what you study in college?
- Log on to WOIS.org to check out potential occupations and what life after college may look like for you. Specifically look at what type of background is necessary for your dream job and if/how your studies in Environmental Science helps you meet those goals. If you have more questions please visit the BC Center for Career Connections on the 2nd floor of the B building. You can also visit the O*NET (onetonline.org) which will give you information about your profession on a national level.
- Read the Environmental Science department websites of your top transfer schools. Take notes of what you like and dislike about each school, paying special attention to the types of internships, educational opportunities, and courses offered.
- Every university and major concentration **may require different prerequisite courses** to be completed prior to enrolling in their Environmental Science program. Contact a departmental representative at your potential transfer university.

Step Two: Pick a BC Degree

As a transfer student, you not only have the responsibility of researching the prerequisite courses required for your major and university, but you also need to pick a degree to pursue at BC. We offer several transferable associate degrees at BC, but two in particular are especially well-suited for prospective Environmental Science students.

BC Degree	Key aspects of this degree:	This degree is ideal for:
Associate in Arts and Sciences (AAS-DTA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most flexible degree at BC • Has lower math requirements than AS I/II • Has a larger electives distribution that a student may use for other classes • Useful for exploratory students to take a variety of classes 	New students looking to explore more and learn about the sciences. If you have a limited background in math and science this is a great place to start your exposure to these subjects.
Associate of Science Track 1 (AS 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires students to complete three major science sequences • Requires students to complete a minimum of two quarters of calculus • Requires less written communication courses than other BC degrees • Limits the amount of general education coursework a student must complete 	Students who have completed or plan to start with Calculus 1, have experience in chemistry, biology, and/or physics, and would enjoy doing more science coursework upfront at BC.

Step Three: Make a Plan

The table below has a list of common prerequisite courses required for Environmental Science programs across our state. While some programs have similar prerequisites, it is still important to research individual Environmental Science programs at your school of choice. The prerequisites can be highly varied depending on which program and school you plan to pursue.

Math	Chemistry and Biology	Physics; Environmental and Earth Sciences	Other Prerequisites
Up to Calculus I or II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math 141/142 • Math 151^{1,2} • Math 152¹ • Statistics¹ 	General Chemistry and Biology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chem 161, 162, 163^{1,2} • Bio 211, 212, 213¹ • Chem 121, 131 (instead of Gen Chem series; at some schools) 	Algebra-based physics, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physics 114¹, 115 • Environment Science/Studies¹ • Earth Science/Geology¹ • Oceanography/Meteorology 	Dependent on school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENGL 101/Technical Writing • Microeconomics • Communications (Public speak or Intro Comm) • Political Science

¹ These courses/series are required for admission into the Environmental Science programs at most schools.

² These classes/series are recommended to be taken during the first year of study at Bellevue College.

You might also consider an **Environmental Studies** program which is offered at many universities. These programs typically require fewer science sequences and lower-level math classes for admission, however still require introductory science courses, environmental and earth science courses, pre-calculus, as well as political science, economics, and sustainability courses, among others.

Now that you've had a chance to review your prerequisites, as well as the degrees offered at BC, a great next step is to meet with an adviser. Environmental Science is part of the Science Division (located in L200) and you can make an appointment to meet with the science adviser by visiting there or by calling 425-564-2321. For general appointments please call: 425-564-2212.

Additionally please note we can help answer clarifying questions via email: scienceadvising@bellevuecollege.edu

This is an unofficial guide only and is designed to prepare students for entry into Washington state Environmental Science programs. It is the student's responsibility to research and communicate with all community college and university programs to which he/she intends to apply.