

# Environmental Sciences, BA

## Honors

### Honors in the Major

Students have the opportunity to graduate with honors in the major. Honors study provides students with opportunities to engage in independent research under the guidance of a faculty sponsor chosen from affiliated faculty of the Environmental Sciences Program. The program draws faculty members from the departments of Anthropology, Biology, Chemistry, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Earth and Environmental Sciences, and Geographical and Sustainability Sciences. Honors students learn how to write the results of their research in the format of a scientific paper, and they have the experience of formally presenting their research as either a short seminar or a poster.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences requires that students who earn honors in the major maintain a minimum University of Iowa cumulative grade-point average (GPA) of 3.33. Additional GPA standards and requirements are set by each department or program.

Students must fulfill the following requirements:

- complete a BA with a major in environmental sciences with a GPA of at least 3.33 in all work for the major;
- submit a research proposal to the honors director within two months of the beginning of the semester in which the research is initiated;
- complete a minimum of 6 s.h. of honors research taken over two semesters in BIOL:4999 Honors Research in Biology, CHEM:3994 Undergraduate Research, EES:3190 Directed Study, or GEOG:3992 Undergraduate Research, depending on the departmental affiliation of the faculty sponsor;
- prepare a thesis presenting the research in the format of a scientific paper with abstract, introduction, methods, results, discussion, and conclusions; the thesis must include a title page and an abstract formatted according to the specifications of the honors research advisor and must be submitted to the honors coordinator; and
- present either a short seminar or a poster about the research at a professional meeting and/or at the University of Iowa.

Beginning in their sophomore or junior year, students should identify potential faculty sponsors by conducting a web-based survey of the research interests of the program's affiliated faculty. The student should contact potential sponsors to determine who would be willing to sponsor an honors student and what research projects the student might undertake. Students who choose a sponsor whose faculty appointment is not in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) must choose a cosponsor who has a faculty appointment in CLAS.

After the student has identified a sponsor and they have agreed on a project, the sponsor guides the student in the preparation of a research proposal that identifies the background, goals, methods, and significance of the research project. The proposal serves as the foundation of the honors thesis, which the student prepares under the sponsor's supervision upon completion of the research. Once the thesis

is nearing completion or is completed, the student presents a short seminar or a poster detailing the purpose of the research.

### University of Iowa Honors Program

In addition to honors in the major, students have opportunities for honors study and activities through membership in the University of Iowa Honors Program. Visit Honors at Iowa to learn about the university's honors program.

Membership in the UI Honors Program is not required to earn honors in the environmental sciences major.