

New Program Needs Analysis and Faculty Credentials

ESTABLISH A NEED FOR THE PROPOSED PROGRAM

Using the NCSE census, there has been a 57% increase in the number of interdisciplinary environmental science (IES) degrees offered nationwide. Environmental Studies programs comprise about one quarter of all (IES) degrees, and there is anecdotal evidence that specifically environmental *studies* programs have been growing faster than interdisciplinary environmental programs (which would include programs in environmental *sciences*) as a whole¹.

- a. Number and name of businesses involved in the sample

This is where we can use the letters written by representatives of some of the businesses and agencies we contact.

- b. Employment opportunities by job titles including:

- i. Number of job openings (due to growth)
- ii. Salary for these employees

One of the advantages of this interdisciplinary degree is that it would serve graduates for openings in a variety of occupations. The increase in demand for interdisciplinary environmental and sustainability education is aligned with strong job opportunities for graduates. In regard to directly applicable categories, the category “Environmental Scientists & Specialists, Including Health” used in the Ohio Occupational Employment* Projections Report, 2012-2022, shows employment at 2,560 in 2012 projected to increase to 2800 in 2022, a 9.4 percent increase. Nationally, there were 88,000 such jobs. In 2013, these jobs paid \$33.32 an hour. A related category – “Environmental Science & Protection Tech, Including Health” shows employment of 1,210 in 2012 to increase to 1,390 in 2020, a 14.9 percent increase. Nationally, there were 33,000 such jobs. These jobs paid \$19.29 an hour.

Based on her experiences in conducting external evaluations of 30 environmental studies programs over the last 5 years, Shirley Vincent, Director of the Center for Environmental Education Research at the National Council for Science and the Environment, says that the quality of students in environmental studies programs equals or exceeds the quality of average students in STEM related fields. Career placement is diverse but strong. Between a quarter and a third enter graduate programs and the rest are almost all employed immediately after graduation, most in careers directly related to their degrees. The categories discussed above cover just a sliver of the jobs available to somebody majoring in environmental studies. Environmental studies majors are also able to pursue careers in education, urban and regional planning, natural resource management, or archivists and curators.

The following letters from representatives of businesses and agencies attest to the demand for majors in this field:

¹ Information provided by the *Center for Environmental Education Research* <http://www.ncseonline.org/education-research-program> and from Interdisciplinary Environmental Education on the Nation’s Campuses: Elements of Field Identity and Curriculum Design

