

Every semester we ask the faculty in environmental studies the following question:

“What modules *in addition to those offered by the environmental studies programme* should ES majors (or potential majors) consider when planning their schedule for next semester?”

Read on for their replies for courses offered in Semester One of AY 2017-18! You can read last semester’s responses at our listserv archive at https://groups.google.com/forum/?hl=en#!topic/esync_2017/vJqKlcy0unk)

1. Marvin Montefrio offers the following advice:

Yale-NUS Courses

YSS2209 Anthropological Imagination

This module will provide a unique perspective that often challenges and complicates commonly accepted social science concepts. This would be a good theoretical toolkit to add to your understanding of socio-ecological problems.

YSS2220 Introduction to Urban Studies

If your interest is an overlap between environmental and urban studies, you then need to take this module. Intro to Urban Studies provides the foundational theories and concepts needed in making sense of urban issues. It would enrich what you learn from Intro to ES and most likely provide good grounding for urban-related ES majors.

YSS2224 Introduction to Global Affairs

This module is a good introduction to the structure of international systems, mainstream theories in development, and approaches to resolving transboundary issues. This is where you learn about the roles of the UN, Bretton Woods institutions, and regional associations (e.g. ASEAN), which are all relevant to our understanding of contemporary environmental issues (e.g. climate change, SDGs, transboundary haze, etc.)

YHU2270 Contemporary Egalitarianism

Those who are interested in developing a specialization in environmental justice or political ecology (i.e. fields in environmental studies that directly deal with inequalities, equity, and justice), this would be a great course to take. There is always so much we can learn from philosophy to enrich our understanding of social-environmental issues.

YSS3202 Ethnography

Highly recommended for those who think they will be using participant observation in their

capstone project. Ethnography is a great addition to the methodological toolkit of any environmental scholar.

YSS3207 Advanced econometrics

Quite a few environmental scholars use statistical and econometric methods in their analysis. The application of this method in environmental studies is extensive, even if the area of inquiry is not directly related to economic concerns. For example, students can use econometric approaches in understanding how an individual's environmental values and belief systems influence actual environmental practices or biophysical changes, in relation to other social variables (e.g. class, ethnicity, gender, education).

YSS3203 Behavioral Economics

Behavioral economics is a fast evolving and developing area of scholarship that provides an alternative to mainstream economic approaches to policymaking. Currently, behavioral economics is being applied in a plethora of social concerns, including environmental problems. If your interest is in environmental policy and economics, this module is highly recommended.

YSS3243 Public Economics

Public Economics is the closest to environmental economics. If you are specializing in environmental policy, public economics pairs well with ecological economics (take note: ecological economics is a critique of public and environmental economics). In this module, you will learn about taxes, tariffs, subsidies, and how to deal with externalities, all related to market-based approaches to environmental governance.

YSS3255 International Development

If your interest is in global environmental governance and politics, you might want to bolster your knowledge of development that takes place in the international arena. This module will provide with a better understanding of how intergovernmental organizations and multilateral agreements work, how transnational non-profit organizations operate, how international aids flow, etc. As we all already know, "sustainable development" is part of the international development agenda.

NUS Courses

GE3235 Geographies of Development: A great course to introduce you to critical perspectives of development (including sustainable development). Ideal for those who want to specialize in political ecology and environmental politics/governance.

GE3226 Tourism Development: Eco-tourism is a popular development tool these days. If your interest has to do with tourism and environment, this module best provides the foundations to critical examine that relationship.

GE3210 Natural Resources: Policy and Practice: This is environmental policy but with more emphasis on issues of access and property regimes in relation to the exploitation of natural resources (fisheries, minerals, forests, etc.) The theoretical approach is more political ecology and environmental politics.

GE2215 Introduction to GIS and Remote Sensing: A must take if you foresee doing work on spatial analysis (either in the urban or rural setting) in the future. This is also a useful (and marketable) knowledge and skill to have.

GE4227 Geographies of Climate Change: A focus on learning about 1) the biophysical sciences of climate change, 2) socio-economic responses and analysis, such as vulnerability, risk, and uncertainty assessment, and 3) climate change communication.

GE4219 Development and Environment in Southeast Asia: A political ecology/political economy (i.e. critical) approach to understanding the intersections between development and environmental issues in the Southeast Asian perspective. Great course for those specializing in political ecology and/or Southeast Asian development.

GE4212 Environmental Modelling: A must module for those who plan to use formalist methods in environmental scholarship. This module provides the foundations for analytical, numerical, and biophysical modelling of social-ecological systems.

2. Professor Schneider-Mayerson adds these suggestions:

YHU3272 Literary Activism: Texts, Aesthetics, & Politics

Interesting course on the power of literature to influence politics. If you're interested in the way that discourse and narrative moves audiences, this could be a great choice.

YHU2202 Introduction to Creative Nonfiction

Learning to write well is one of the skills that will stay with students for the rest of their lives and will be critical to any career they might go into. Yale-NUS students are not getting enough writing instruction from the Common Curriculum, so a class in writing would be an excellent choice. Sign up early, this one fills up fast.

YHU2222 Digital Narratives

Conveying complicated information through digital narratives is a valuable skill! Learn how to do it here.

GEK2008, Environmental History (NUS)

Environmental history is a critical element of environmental studies that is not currently offered by Yale-NUS faculty.

GEK2031, Environmental Philosophy (NUS)

Environmental philosophy is a burgeoning subfield of philosophy. You might check with the instructor to make sure this will not repeat work you've already done for other ES courses.

SSA2215, The Biophysical Environment of Singapore (NUS)

Learn all about Singapore's geology, soils, river systems, water supply, natural reserves, green areas, land reclamation and coastal environments.

3. Michael Maniates chimes in with these ideas:

LKY School of Public Policy courses (<http://lkyspp.nus.edu.sg/admissions/graduate-programmes/electives/>)

PP 5149: Big Data, Official Statistics, and Public Policy. Worth checking out. Not sure if it's offered next semester. Prof. Maniates can check if you're interested.

PP5185: Energy Policy and Politics. Professor Valentine is a friend of our programme and is definitely offering this course in Semester One of AY 2017-18. He looks forward to working with Yale-NUS ES students!

PP5257: Water Policy and Governance. A great course, but not sure if it's offered next semester. If you're interested in it let Prof. Maniates know and he can check on when it is offered.

PP 5281: Business and the Environment. Another good course. Prof. Maniates can check on its availability if you're interested.

You may find other courses of interest at the LKY website. Please note that PP5163 The Economics and Governance of Climate Change is not recommended, as we cover this material via existing YNC ES courses.

Yale-NUS Courses not already mentioned

Just one course additional course: **YHU 3265: Democratic Theory** – Recommended for the same reasons that Prof. Montefrio provides in support for YHU 2270.

4. Brian McAdoo rounds out the field with these tips:

YHU3216. Intro to Photojournalism. Good skills for field documentation!

YHU3278. Globalization in Southeast Asian History. Globalisation has far-reaching implications on how both business and government make policies that affect the environment in any number of ways.

YSC2221. Introduction to Python. Good coding skills will go a long way, whether you code in Python, R, C++, Matlab or whatever comes your way. Data helps highlight many challenges we are facing in the environment, and having the coding skills to work with them is nothing but helpful.

That's it! Prof. Hsu reviewed this list and gives it two thumbs up. No replies from Profs. Sheridan or Van Breugel.