

Interdisciplinary Major Proposal: International Development and Sustainability
Jasmine Zandi, Class of 2020

The United Nations defines sustainable development as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It calls for a concerted effort towards building an inclusive, sustainable, and resilient future for people and the environment. The UN outlines three core elements for sustainable development to be achieved as: economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection. I am intrigued with how people, the environment, and socio-cultural factors combine to affect each other. Climate change is already impacting public health, food and water security, migration, peace, and security. This is why tackling climate change and fostering sustainable development are “two mutually reinforcing sides of the same coin,” according to the UN. As such, I am bringing them together for my major.

My original plan at Hendrix was to double major in Environmental Studies and International Relations. Over time, I realized that double majoring would not leave very much leeway in terms of being able to take very many electives, explore other interests, or the possibility of studying abroad for the entirety of my junior year. In the end, I know that these are all important aspects of my college career that I am greatly looking forward to as components of the liberal arts experience. Consequently, I have decided to take socio-cultural components from Environmental Studies and the policy and development related classes from Politics and International Relations and put them together to create an International Development and Sustainability major. An Interdisciplinary Studies major also gives me the opportunity to continue my language studies and minor in French. The committee for my major will include Dr. Gess (advisor), Dr. Kolev, and Dr. Capek.

An Interdisciplinary Studies major in International Development and Sustainability will give me the background I need in order to pursue a career bringing sustainability to international development strategies. For example, I can imagine working for Heifer International someday, a nonprofit organization that uses social, cultural, economic, political, and ecological methods in poverty-ridden communities to create a system of plant and animal production practices that satisfy human needs as well as the needs of the environment. I am also thinking of possibly going to law school to strengthen my literacy skills and perhaps doing something with environmental law. I also have a strong interest in environmental policy, which I may pursue in graduate school or otherwise.

In all, my proposed International Development and Sustainability major holds 13 courses and a capstone. This is in line with other interdisciplinary studies proposals I have looked at. In order to complete it, I will need to take four more classes over the next two years, and complete my senior capstone. For my capstone, I anticipate writing a thesis paper and presenting it. I will be taking my capstone class in the Politics/IR Department, and ensuring it holds an environmental sustainability focus. Through combining these two departments, there is also an opportunity to gain valuable technical and analytical skills. This is why I have included *Geographic Information Systems* and a statistics component to the major.

Major Requirements:

1 of the following Introductory Courses:

- POLI 100 Issues in Politics (**Completed**)
- EVST 110 Introduction to Environmental Studies (**Completed**)

Environmental Studies:

1 of the following Policy Courses:

- POLI 235 Public Policy
- POLI 365 Environmental Policy and Management (**Completing Spring 2018**)

1 of the following English Courses:

- ENGF 275 Film and the Environment
- ENGL 273 American Literature and the Environment (**Completed**)
- ENGC 306 Exploring Nature Writing

1 of the following Statistics Courses:

- PSYC 290 Principles of Statistics
- BUSI 250 Principles of Statistics
- MATH 215 Statistical Analysis (**Completed**)

ANTH 335 Geographic Information Science (**Completed**)

ECON 340 Environmental Economics (**Completing Spring 2018**)

1 Additional Course from the following:

- ANTH 330 Human Impact on the Ancient Environments
- ANTH 360 Globalization and Transnationalism
- HIST 308 Ecology in American Indian History
- PHIL 270 Environmental Philosophy
- RELI 270 Ecotheology
- SOCI 300 The Urban Community
- SOCI 340 Food, Culture, and Nature (**Completed**)
- SOCI 362 Images of the City
- SOCI 375 Environmental Sociology

International Relations:

1 of the following:

POLI 250 History of the International System or POLI 273 Contemporary Global Issues

1 of the following Advanced Courses:

- POLI 355 Advanced International Relations
- POLI 376 Democracy, Development, and Violence

1 of the following Research Methods:

- POLI 201 Normative Research Methods
- POLI 202 Empirical Research Methods (**Completing Spring 2018**)

1 of the following Institutions and Governance Courses:

- POLI 283 Model United Nations
- POLI 325 International Law & Organizations
- POLI 326 International Human Rights

1 of the following Foreign Policy/Security Studies Courses:

- POLI 281 U.S. Foreign Policy
- POLI 282 Foreign Policy Analysis
- POLI 330 Contemporary Security Studies
- POLI 370 U.S. National Security State

POLI 497 Capstone: Thesis and Presentation

As the International Relations department holds a study abroad component, and the Environmental Studies department holds an internship component, they will both be included as

required components in my International Development and Sustainability major. I hope to receive some of the above remaining credits from coursework abroad, if possible.

Committee Members:



Dr. Peter Gess (Advisor)



Dr. Kiril Kolev



Dr. Stella Capek