March 23, 2021

Hello Environmental Science Majors:

As most of you already know, Fall registration enrollment begins on April 5th for rising seniors, so it is time to get organized around planning for next semester. Although nothing has been officially announced yet, we are expecting that classes will be offered in the traditional in-person format in the Fall.

Some Important Dates you need to know:

- The last day to Withdraw from a Spring 2021 class (with a W on your transcript) is Monday, March 29th.
- The Fall 2021 Class Schedule will be visible on SPIRE no later than Monday, March 29th.
- Fall 2021 enrollment begins on April 5th and different student populations are gradually ramped onto the enrollment system through the end of April. (see detailed breakdown below)
- The last day to elect Pass/Fail for up to three of your spring 2021 classes is the last day of classes on May 4th. (see below for important details about Pass/Fail that are NEW this semester!)

Spring 2021 Elective Pass/Fail (EPF) Rules:

For this semester, the normal EPF rules are suspended, and the university is allowing you to elect up to three (3) of your courses to be graded elective pass/fail. Furthermore, you are allowed to use these EPF graded classes to fulfill any graduation requirement (including GenEd, major, minor, certificate, etc. requirements). NEW THIS SEMESTER is a ruling that will allow departments to look “behind” the PASS grade to see what your actual letter grade was, and they can use this information to ensure that you have met the minimum grade requirement for prerequisite courses in a sequence. Biology is choosing not to do this, so you will be able to advance to BIOL 152 1nd 153 with a “P” grade in BIOL 151. However – CHEMISTRY will be checking to see that you have earned at least a C-minus in CHEM 111 to advance you to CHEM 112, and so on for the entire CHEM sequence (111, 112, 261, 262, etc.) even when you have selected P/F grading.

Planning for Fall 2021 Course Registration

Every EnviSci major has an assigned faculty advisor. You must meet with your assigned faculty advisor before enrolling in Fall classes.

Not sure WHO is your academic advisor? Check the lower right-hand corner of your SPIRE Student Service Center page.

Not sure WHEN you will be able to start registering for classes? Look on your Student Service Center page on the right hand side (in the middle block – just above the advisor information) and you will find your “Enrollment Appointment”. This lists the day (and time) when you can start to register. Be sure to click on the “Details” link to access the specific time of day that you will be able to start registering in classes.
Make sure that all your HOLDS are cleared on SPIRE!! HOLDS are listed on your Student Service Center Page on the right hand side of the page in the upper-most block. Everyone who has ENVSCI as their primary major will have a Registration HOLD. This hold can be lifted by your academic advisor when you “meet” over the next few weeks. IMPORTANT: If your Student Service Center Page lists MORE THAN ONE Enrollment HOLD, you have other hold(s) that will prevent you from registering. Check this out NOW and see if you have additional holds (from bursar, health services, NSO, dean of students, etc.) Follow the links in SPIRE to learn how to follow-up and get these other holds taken care of.

Your academic advisor should be reaching out to you this week to let you know how to set up an appointment with them. Many advisors are planning to use Zoom to have virtual advising meetings. You may be asked to sign-up using Navigate, YouCanBook.Me, shared Google Sheet, etc.

Please prepare for your “meeting” with your advisor as follows:

1. Review your Academic Requirement Report (ARR) in SPIRE. Make a list of remaining requirements and check the typical course sequence sheet (attached to this email) to see what courses should be coming up next for you. Also note what Gen Eds you still need.

2. The Fall 2021 class schedule will soon be available on SPIRE, (3/29 at the latest) so check out the days/times for the courses that you think you need next term. Create a list of potential electives you are interested in taking. (See list of possibilities attached to this email.)

3. Using the Curriculum Planning Worksheet (attached to this email), try to plan out your coursework for at least the next two semesters (Fall 2021 and Spring 2022). If you are a rising junior, you should try to plan out all four terms that you have left! Send your completed Curriculum Planning Worksheet to your advisor prior to your scheduled meeting.

4. Using the Schedule Builder Tool (link to this in SPIRE), prepare a draft of your Fall 2021 schedule and make sure that the classes all fit together.

5. Make a list of questions that you may have, especially as they pertain to summer internships, jobs, domestic exchange, international programs, study abroad, the honors college, etc. Faculty advisors can’t always answer all of these questions, but they can point you in the right direction to talk to someone who can.

It is your responsibility make an advising appointment once you are contacted by your advisor. If you do not hear from your advisor this coming week, please reach out directly to your advisor, and then let me know if you do not hear anything back within a few days. Please understand that faculty are juggling quite a bit (just as you are) and they are doing their best to teach their classes under atypical conditions and carry out their research activities, while preparing for remote advising as many of them also juggle complicated family and childcare situations (just as many of you are).

Remember: before you can enroll in Fall classes, all of your holds must be removed AND your enrollment appointment period must have begun. Check SPIRE (Student Center page) for your specific details regarding your Holds, your enrollment appointment, and your advisor’s name.
IE Courses Available for Fall 2021:
If you are a rising junior or senior, you should be planning to take an IE course in the coming year.
The IE offerings for this Fall include: ENVIRSCI 445 (2 sections); GEOL 494LI; and NRC 494GI. This last course is brand new and not yet listed on your ARR but it WILL count as an IE for you!

NOTE: If you are a current senior and you expect to be enrolled here at UMASS Amherst in Summer 2021 or Fall 2021, you will not have an Enrollment Appointment scheduled in SPIRE until you request a change in your expected graduation date. This can be done on SPIRE.

NOTE to MY ADVISEES: I am scheduling half-hour Zoom advising appointments starting on March 29th and continuing through the end of April. I am contacting all of my advisees using Navigate, and will be using this platform to schedule appointments. The first week (3/29-4/2) is restricted to current juniors (rising seniors), and the second week is being reserved for rising juniors. I will be opening up additional unrestricted appointment slots (4/12-4/30) on Navigate after my assigned students have had a chance to sign up for their appointments.

Please hang-in there. And be sure to let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Best wishes,

Deb

Deborah Henson, PhD
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Chief Academic Advisor & Program Manager

Attachments:
- Typical Course Sequence for ENVSCI
- List of Major Requirements
- List of Popular Available Courses for Fall 2021
- Schedule Grid with Freshmen/Sophomore Class meeting times for Fall 2021
- Schedule Grid with Junior/Senior Class meeting times for Fall 2021
- Curriculum Planning Worksheet