

Guidance for Directed Studies – ES 490

Directed studies are a unique opportunity to undertake a research project or inquiry with the support and direction of a faculty member from the School of Environmental Studies. It's recommended to work with a professor you have worked with in the past, or with one who has a special expertise in your topic. The best approach to arranging a directed study is to contact the professor you want to work with directly and arrange a meeting to discuss your ideas. If you are wondering which professors might be best suited to help with your study, have a look at the ES website, or you can talk to me about it.

It's helpful to come to the professor having done some background research on your study and having thought it through to some extent. I advise taking some time to think through and write up the answers to the following questions before you contact the professor:

1. What is the central question(s) you want to explore?
2. Why is this topic interesting/important to you?
3. How do you see the directed study supporting or enriching your education?
4. What outcomes are you hoping for from the experience?
5. What resources/methods do you want to draw on?

Directed studies require a good amount of self-discipline and motivation; they should definitely be undertaken around a topic that you are passionate about and that you know you will have the motivation to follow through with. They are also very self-guided. You will meet with your professor a few times for general direction, but the onus and the work of staying motivated is on you.

It's important to note that professors take on directed studies students on top of their normal teaching and workload; there may be semesters when a professor simply does not have the time to take on a directed study because of their other obligations or teaching loads.

Prerequisites for undertaking a directed study are:

- [ES 200](#); and
- minimum sessional GPA of 6.5 in the previous session; and
- minimum fourth-year standing; and
- declared Major or Minor in Environmental Studies; or
- permission of the school.

Once you come to an agreement with a supervising professor, you will complete a pro-forma course registration with them. The form requires three signatures, one from each of:

1. Your supervising instructor

2. The Director of the School of Environmental Studies, and
3. The Dean of Social Sciences

Generally the Director will arrange to get the Dean's signature. Once these are acquired, you will submit the pro-forma to Academic Advising and then you will be registered for the course. See form below:

<https://www.uvic.ca/registrar/assets/docs/record-forms/pro-forma.pdf>

If you have any other questions about the process, please don't hesitate to be in touch.

Contact: Laurel Currie, UG Advisor, esadvise@uvic.ca