Environmental Conservation Education
M.A.

Urban ecological conservation—the cutting-edge in environmental education in the heart of New York City.

Program Director: Dr. Mary Leou
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In 2050, 70% of the world’s population will live in urban areas. Our focus on empowering people to create sustainable urban landscapes puts us at the forefront of environmental education.

Our interdisciplinary graduate curriculum draws on theory and practice to help you understand the role of education in protecting our environment. It prepares you for environmental leadership in educational, nonprofit, and corporate settings in the United States and around the world.
Our Curriculum

- Our interdisciplinary perspective draws on politics, economics, philosophy, history, ecology, and sociology and provides the analytical skills you need to communicate effectively about the environment.

- Our emphasis on practice-based education, such as citizen science and participatory action research, helps you develop the practical tools needed to teach children, youth, and adults about their local environments.

- You benefit from small classes, a wide variety of electives, and flexible course offerings in the evenings and during intersession and summer. Study abroad options enable you to bring global perspectives to more local initiatives. You can study full or part time.

Degree Requirements

The 37-credit program requires the completion of core courses, electives, an internship, and courses in ecology/science. Full-time students typically complete the program in 3 semesters.

REQUIRED COURSES (15 CREDITS)
- Foundations of Environmental Thought
- Cities and Their Environments
- Environmental Politics
- Environmental Education: Theory and Practice

ELECTIVES (13 CREDITS MINIMUM)
Students may pursue courses in such areas as environmental justice, curriculum design, teacher education, ecology, wildlife education, non-profit management, youth education, policy, or sustainability.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS
- Internship
- Two courses in ecology or science
- Completion of a final project or thesis.

Our Urban Location

We confront some of our most urgent environmental challenges in our cities: climate change, extreme weather, clean air. At NYU, New York City is your laboratory. You gain experience in sustainability education through our extensive network of internships and affiliations. Internships often lead to jobs upon graduation, and may include:

- New York City Audubon Society
- Solar One
- Council on the Environment of New York City
- Jane Goodall Institute
- New York City Soil and Water Conservation District
- The United Nations
- New York League of Conservation Voters
- Mayor’s Office of Environmental Coordination
- Wildlife Conservation Society
- Harbor School
- American Museum of Natural History
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- Wave Hill

You can also take advantage of affiliations with Steinhardt’s Science Education program, NYU’s Wagner School for Public Service, the Wallerstein Collaborative for Urban Environmental Education, and the Black Rock Forest Consortium, a 3,800-acre forest preserve in Cornwall, New York.
Our Students

We invite you to join a community of ambitious and visionary students committed to protecting our environment and helping people create sustainable cities. Our students come from rich and varied educational and professional backgrounds across the country and around the globe. They bring with them an imagination that knows no bounds.

MEET TWO OF OUR FORMER STUDENTS:

“Passion for the natural world begins on the outside, grows deeply inside, then takes hold of you forever,” says Danielle Bunch. Danielle, who loves to connect people to nature, works as a wildlife conservation educator. Danielle has brought live animal programs to Georgia state legislators in the Gold Dome, organized storytelling presentations at the International Crane Foundation in Wisconsin, and chaperoned underprivileged children at Wilderness Works in Atlanta. For her final project she designed an experiential-based secondary school curriculum with a wildlife conservation focus that meets the Common Core and Next Generation Science standards.

“Community-based media has the potential to empower the world’s oppressed to confront the challenges of the coming decades,” says Grady Walker, who grew up in Nepal. He came to the United States to study film and discovered the power of the medium for intervention in environmental and humanitarian crises around the world. As a master’s student, he interned with the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre and worked on films for the Red Cross in Africa. His latest documentary project, ITESO!, focuses on the Uganda Red Cross Society’s efforts to assist local communities in Teso, Uganda to adapt to climate change. Grady is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Queensland in Australia and hopes to continue to raise awareness of and support for critical global environmental issues through participatory journalism.

Special Projects

The Wallerstein Collaborative for Urban Environmental Education

Established in 2000, the Wallerstein Collaborative for Urban Environmental Education at NYU Steinhardt offers a year-round program of instruction for public school teachers in the metropolitan New York City region seeking to incorporate environmental education into their classrooms. The Collaborative also provides environmental education opportunities for teachers-in-training by providing them with resources, materials, strategies, and the direct experiences needed to successfully implement environmental education across all grade levels and curriculum areas.

The Collaborative has partnerships with a wide range of science institutions, environmental organizations, and government agencies. Among the Collaborative’s ongoing projects are the Jane Wallerstein Children and Nature Project and the Hudson River Teacher Program.

Summer Youth STEM Program

SYSTEM is a summer program for urban high school students developed by the NYU Wallerstein Collaborative in partnership with the Greenpoint YMCA. Funded by ExxonMobil and Broadway Stages, this six-week summer program uses a place-based approach to learning to introduce participants to environmental science, green technology, environmental stewardship, and green careers.
Our Faculty

Mary Leou, Ed.D., Program Director
Mary Leou is a clinical associate professor of environmental conservation education and founding director of the Wallerstein Collaborative for Urban Environmental Education. Since 2001, she has received more than $1.5 million in grants and gifts for developing environmental education programs at NYU serving teachers, K-12 schools, and non-formal organizations. Dr. Leou has received numerous awards for her work, including two Environmental Quality Awards from the Environmental Protection Agency for leadership in environmental education. In 2012, she was recognized by the National Audubon Society as a “Woman Greening the City.”

Raul Lejano, Ph.D., D.Env.
Raul Lejano is an associate professor of environmental conservation education and a policy scholar whose foremost interests involve understanding people’s deep engagements with community and environment. In his first book, Frameworks for Policy Analysis: Merging Text and Context (Routledge), he developed approaches for integrating multiple analytical perspectives in interpreting environmental situations. In his latest co-authored book, The Power of Narrative in Environmental Networks (MIT Press), he advances a theory about the unique nature of narrative to capture complex human motivations.

Robert L. Chapman, Ph.D.
Robert Chapman is a professor of philosophy and environmental studies at Pace University where he also directs the Institute for Environmental and Regional Studies. He teaches and writes about ethics, bio-diversity, ecological economics, environmental restoration, concepts of wilderness, and nature and culture. He has authored numerous scholarly articles and presented his theories at conferences around the world.

Michelle Land, J.D.
Michelle Land is an environmental leader whose expertise spans the areas of environmental law and policy, wildlife biology, interdisciplinary education, and campus sustainability. Land offers a unique national voice for the emerging role of colleges and universities in environmental affairs. Land’s research interests focus on the intersection of animal welfare and conservation policy.

Terryanne Maenza-Gmelch, Ph.D.
Terryanne Maenza-Gmelch is a palynologist whose research interests include paleoecology, pollen and seed morphology, fire ecology, phytogeography, forest succession, climate change, and the effects of habitat fragmentation on bird and amphibian populations. Her publications have focused on the late-glacial and Holocene vegetation, climate, and fire of the Hudson Highlands, southeastern New York, and other sites in the northeastern United States.

How to Apply
Visit steinhardt.nyu.edu/application to apply or contact the Office of Graduate Admissions at 212 998 5030.

The application deadline is February 1 for fall admission.

The NYU Energy Watch Fellowship supports M.A. students in Environmental Conservation Education who have strong leadership skills and a vision of how they will apply their academic training towards the solution of environmental problems. No separate scholarship application required.

Further Information
Visit steinhardt.nyu.edu/teachlearn/environmental, call 212 998 5474, or email steinhardt.ee@nyu.edu.