

To: All ES faculty
From: Steve Trombulak *Steve Trombulak*
Date: 21 September 1990
Subject: ES Working Group for 1990-91

Now that the semester is marginally under control I would like to begin our year's efforts to improve the ES program. Before I lay out my agenda for the year, I'd like to welcome to the Program three new faculty members. Chris Klyza joins the Political Science Department as an Assistant Professor and a natural resource policy specialist. This year he is teaching PS 211 (Environmental and Natural Resources Policy), PS 421 (Perspectives on the Environmental Movement), and PS 310 (American Public Policy). He also intends to teach a Winter Term course on environmental movements and activist philosophies. Tom Carr joins the Economics Department as a Visiting Assistant Professor, replacing Neil Leary for the year. Tom will teach EC 465 (Special Topics in Environmental Economics) and EC 365 (Environmental Economics), as well as a Winter Term course on Energy Economics. His specific area of scholarly interest is the economics of nonrenewable energy. Barbara Rusmore joins Environmental Studies as a Visiting Instructor, in what I believe is the first ever ES appointment at Middlebury, and will teach ES 401 this Fall and Winter Term. Welcome to all of you, and believe me when I say how glad we are that you're here.

Now to the dirty work. As you may be aware, there is a tremendous increase in interest in environmental education on campus among the students, faculty, and administration. This is due, I think, to several things, including Earth Day 1990, the recent Spirit and Nature Conference, and the general flavor of the times. As the only formal structure for environmental education on campus, much of this attention is focusing on us. For example, we now have 42 majors in the junior and senior classes combined (as of the start of the semester), and 60 freshmen attended the introduction to the ES major during Freshman Orientation Week. If this interest among the students continues for only a few more years, it is entirely likely that we will be servicing over 100 students among the four classes.

As a Program, however, we are not prepared to deal with this increased attention. With the exception of ES 401, our entire curriculum is dependent on the courses offered by other departments. This was an acceptable situation for both the departments and the Program when there were only 20 ES majors in all, but we are now putting such an enrollment burden on departments that they are rethinking their involvement in the Program and, as a result, our requirements are unstable and subject to constant and unpredictable changes.

Two recent examples: Geography has asked us to remove GG 260 (Social Aspects of Environmental Issues) as a core requirement for the major, and Geology has asked us to allow GL 170 as an alternative option for GL 112 as a core requirement.

So once again, the requirements for the ES major change for the new academic year, and once again, the requirements do not coincide with what is in the catalog, radically increasing the advising load.

Along the same vein, we are finding it increasingly difficult to staff ES 401 among ourselves. At last spring's ES meeting Neil organized us to request to TRC a temporary faculty position to teach ES 401 this year. This request resulted in Barbara Rusmore's joining us as the Instructor of ES 401 for this Fall and Winter Term. Our agreement with TRC does not extend beyond this year, however, and we need to discuss the staffing of this course again to achieve what I hope will be a more permanent solution.

These issues, the stability of the core courses, our susceptibility to changes in departments, and the staffing of ES 401, are all related. I see our major agenda for this year being to come up with a plan to offer our own core sequence that (1) is not at the mercy of other departments, (2) is not offered at the expense of our collective mental and physical health, and (3) has a chance of remaining unchanged for at least 2 years. I have spoken with folks in the administration about our needs and they seem interested in working with us to achieve the stability we need.

I anticipate that other items will creep into our agenda for the year, but I see these as secondary to the major issue of curriculum stability.

As I did 2 years ago, I would like to form a Working Group in order to do the work necessary to achieve our goals. I expect the Group will meet at least once a month. As before, ANYONE interested in playing an intimate role in shaping environmental education and the Program at Midd is welcome to participate. My only hope is that there will be representatives from each of the divisions (Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences) that participate in the Program.

Don't fear that if you can't fit participation in the Working Group into your schedule that you'll be cut out of the Program or information about anything we want to propose. All proposed changes in the Program will be communicated to and approved by all faculty in the Program.

(cut here and return to Steve Trombulak, Biology, Science Center)

Name: _____

Yes, I want to be part of this year's Working Group. Count me in and let's get going!

Days of the week when you can make a 12:15 meeting this fall

M T W Th F (Circle all that are possible)