

ENVR 491 Independent Project in Environment (1 cr) -- Course Outline

Calendar Description

(Prerequisite: Permission of instructor). (Restrictions: Normally open only to U3 MSE students.) Proposed topic and method of evaluation must be approved by the Director one month before the beginning of term. Contact the Program Advisor for information. Interdisciplinary research projects related to environment, enabling independent study under guidance of qualified Bieler School of Environment faculty in areas outside the scope of individual departments.

Guidelines

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see the **Handbook on Student Rights and Responsibilities**: www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest for more information). If you are unsure how to cite your research sources, please see your supervisor for guidance.

This course is intended to allow students the opportunity to undertake an independent project under the supervision of a McGill Faculty member. The research should be of an interdisciplinary nature, and should not be something that could be carried out in any one department at McGill. Disciplinary research should instead be undertaken as an independent study within the relevant department.

You are expected to have a *strong base of knowledge in your chosen research area before you undertake the independent project course*, therefore, normally this course is restricted to U3 students. You will work independently but with strong direction from a Faculty Member who has agreed, before you begin your work, to supervise you.

Since this is a 1 credit course, you are expected to do approximately 40 hours of work, including work in the field, lab and/or library, and writing. In addition to any other requirements agreed upon by you and your Supervisor, a gradable written report must be submitted. In the case where more than one student collaborates in a study, each student must have an independent research question or set of objectives and each must submit an independent report for evaluation.

Instructions for the Student

1. Find a McGill Faculty Member who is willing to supervise your project. This person does not have to be in the Bieler School of Environment. A good place to start your search is with the research interests and contact information for Bieler School of Environment faculty and Associate Faculty Members, which is available at www.mcgill.ca/environment - click on "People". You may work with a non-McGill organization as long as you secure a primary Supervisor from McGill as well. Before you ask someone to supervise you, have a clear idea of your project, at least in principle. A one-page outline is recommended. If funding is required (e.g. for travel), be prepared to find your own source(s).

2. With your Supervisor, complete and sign the Supervisor-Student Agreement below, and return it to the Bieler School Program Adviser **no later than one month before the first day of classes** of the term in which you plan to start your independent project.
3. Attach any Ethical Review statements, if required (see the Guidelines below.)
4. Ensure that your work is submitted to your Supervisor by the agreed upon date, in order that your grade can be submitted in time (particularly important if you are graduating!)
5. **Submit your final written report (hardcopy AND e-copy) to the Bieler School Program Adviser.**

Responsibility of the Supervisor

The Bieler School of Environment greatly appreciates the effort and time required to supervise a student in an independent project.

The Supervisor must be a McGill Faculty Member. Depending on the nature of the work involved in the project (fieldwork, analysis of existing data, laboratory work, literature review and analysis), supervisors are responsible for providing or approving data sets, field protocols, access to laboratory facilities and guidance with relevant literature. Supervisors oversee the progress of the project, comment on first drafts of the report and evaluate the completed project and report.

All projects must conform to the McGill Policy on the Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Human Subjects. Research projects and/or research instruments which directly involve the participation of **human subjects** must be reviewed by the McGill University Ethics Committee. This includes survey questionnaires.

This course should only be used where the research project cannot be carried out as part of a departmental independent study (too interdisciplinary, no such departmental course, or the departmental course is restricted to departmental students).

The **Supervisor submits the student's grade** on Minerva, according to Faculty of Science grade submission deadlines.

ENVR 491 Independent Project in Environment (1 cr) -- Supervisor-Student Agreement

This form needs to be submitted to the Bieler School Program Adviser **no later than one month before the first day of classes** of the term in which you plan to start your independent project.

Student Name:

ID number:

Faculty:

Domain:

Minor (if student has one):

Registering for Term (eg. Fall 2015):

Email:

Signature:

Date:

Supervisor Name:

Affiliation (department):

Email:

Supervisor Signature:

Date:

Independent Project Title:

Project description (approx. 50 - 100 words)

Please describe the research aims and the research methodology to be used, as well as the location where the project will take place. Include justification why this project cannot be undertaken in a departmental independent study course. Attach any ethical review statements, if needed. Note that a 1 cr course requires about 40 hours of work total.

Method of Evaluation:

Please provide a breakdown of the grading system to be used, being as specific as possible about the evaluation criteria and weights. There must be more than one component to the grade (ie. the final report cannot be worth 100%).

** ENVR grade submissions follow Faculty of Science deadlines. **Supervisors submit the student's grade** on Minerva.