

## **Elementary Education with Honors in Environmental Education**

### **Department of Curriculum and Instruction**

The Honors-in-the-Major in environmental education for elementary education (EEhEE) majors is designed for pre-service teachers who are passionate about nature, animals, or environmental issues. The program shows students how environmental education can be integrated into classroom instruction. The program has a strong undergraduate research theme and introduces students to inquiry tools that allow them to examine their own practice and contribute to an exciting new body of research in education, health, and social science.

The EEhEE program includes honors enrichment that highlights environmental science content themes and environmental education pedagogies directly applicable to science instruction from grades K-8. Coursework and experiences are centered around northern Palm Beach and Martin counties, with many high-quality natural sites and community expertise. In addition to learning how to teach in their own schoolyards, EEhEE students learn how to effectively integrate visits to, and from, community partners like local nature centers, gardens, wildlife rehabilitation clinics, and parks (city, county, state, and national). Whenever possible, student teaching placements are set in Palm Beach or Martin County green schools.

#### **Eligibility Criteria**

1. Students must have been admitted to the College of Education as an Elementary Education major, with a minimum GPA of 3.0;
2. Students must have completed at least 60 credits with at least a 3.0 overall GPA (this eligibility requirement is higher than the 2.5 GPA required for admission to the Elementary Education major);

#### **Selection Criteria**

1. A 500+ word essay describing students' interest in integrating environmental education into their teaching career;
2. Willingness to take the honors section of SCE 4350 on the FAU Jupiter campus;
3. Willingness and ability to travel to potential school-based placements outside of home radius.

#### **Standards to Remain in the Program**

1. Maintain a 3.0 GPA in the major;
2. Meet the requirements of honors compacts in SCE 4113, EDG 3324, and student teaching;
3. Take the honors-enriched version of SCE 4350 (Jupiter campus);
4. Attend occasional workshops.

#### **Honors Enrichment**

1. The program begins with an honors compact in SCE 4113 Science Content and Standards for K-6 Teachers that includes becoming familiar with the Palm Beach County school district Field Research Ranger Program;
2. An honors section of 4350 Principles and Methods: K-9 School Science, typically taught by the environmental education coordinator, with an emphasis on better links to community

partners, the use of outdoor classrooms within school grounds, and other nature, place, and outdoor-based pedagogies;

3. Placement in district Green Schools during EDG 3324 Effective Teaching Practices, and collaboration with cohort peers and faculty mentoring to take CITI Institutional Research Board training focusing on educational research;

4. A capstone during EDE 4943 Student Teaching or the Accelerated Introduction into Teaching (AIT), where students will work with their coordinating teacher and the honors faculty to develop, implement, and communicate a research project related to their environmental education practice. This will include a paper and presentation based on their project.

Note: students who are otherwise passing their required courses may leave the EEhEE program and continue with their Bachelor's in Elementary Education without penalty.

For more information, see:

<https://www.fau.edu/education/academicdepartments/tl/environmental-education/> or contact:

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