History

ESPP was established in 2003 in order to:

Build graduate education programs that are innovative, interdisciplinary, and campus wide;
Facilitate interdisciplinary environmental research at MSU and, in particular, link MSU research with national and global research priorities; and
Make MSU’s areas of excellence better connected with and more visible in national and global efforts.

Tom Dietz, professor of Sociology, founded ESPP and served as its first director until 2008. Dietz, an ecologist by training, is also MSU’s assistant vice president for environmental research.

George Leroi served as the program’s interim director for the 2008-09 academic year. A chemist by training, Leroi is the former dean of MSU’s College of Natural Science and is currently involved in the project Promoting Rigorous Outcomes in Math and Science Education.

ESPP’s newest director, Jinhua Zhao, was appointed in Summer 2010. Zhao has a background in environmental economics and is a professor in the Departments of Economics and Agriculture, Food, and Resource Economics at MSU.

For more information

Contact the program or visit online at http://www.environment.msu.edu/

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MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer
Building on a tradition of strength, the Environmental Science and Policy Program (ESPP) at Michigan State University (MSU) draws flexibility, creativity, and knowledge from many fields to build the pathways that create better policy.

ESPP offers:

- A graduate education that combines interdisciplinary breadth with disciplinary depth.
- A curriculum that emphasizes both global and local impacts.
- World-class experts in environmental issues united under one initiative.

Any faculty member at MSU can affiliate with ESPP and any graduate student can take classes. Along with a director, ESPP’s Faculty Advisory Council helps set priorities.

ESPP has 180 affiliated faculty from throughout the university. They represent 40 departments and 12 colleges.

Signature research programs focus on:
- Animal studies
- Environmental monitoring and analysis
- Bioeconomy
- Environmental communication and literacy
- Biogeochemistry
- Invasive species
- Business and the environment
- Land
- Global climate change
- Risk, values, and decision making
- Coupled human and natural systems
- Sustainability science
- Ecosystems and ecosystem services
- Sustainable agriculture and food systems
- Environment and human health
- Water

Travel funding open to all graduate students to attend interdisciplinary environmental conferences

Tuition fellowships awarded to incoming ESPP students

Student seminar series to discuss these issues within an interdisciplinary setting

Professional development workshops

A chance to connect across disciplines with both students and faculty

The Doctoral Specialization in ESPP offers courses designed to show how different disciplines conceptualize environmental issues and how scientific information can inform environmental decision-making and environmental policy. The program is open to any student pursuing an existing doctoral program that has an environmental focus.

Beginning in Fall 2010, the program was revised to provide more flexibility to the curriculum.

The ESPP website is an evolving hub for communications and resources related to environmental work at MSU. The website includes a faculty expertise database and information about funding opportunities, campus events, and MSU courses.