

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

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Graduate Program Description

The Natural Resource and Environmental Policy Program (NREPP) at Utah State University and the Shipley Group, Inc. have formed a partnership to provide a graduate-level certificate program that offers training related to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NEPA is an important environmental law that requires analysis of impacts, alternatives, and mitigation measures for all major federal actions affecting the environment, both within the territorial boundaries of the U.S. and at foreign military installations. Government agencies, private businesses, public interest organizations, and other groups involved in the NEPA process need individuals who have been trained in decision-making, analysis, and documentation aspects of NEPA, as well as in the accompanying Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations and various agencies' NEPA implementing procedures.

The NEPA Certificate Program was designed to prepare natural resource and environmental professionals to meet the challenges of complying with the act and working effectively on NEPA documents. Participants who successfully complete the program should have a solid understanding of both the spirit and the letter of the law, and will be more effective members of interdisciplinary teams responsible for developing NEPA documents.

Certificate

Students who complete the program will receive a graduate-level certificate in the National Environmental Policy Act. Their Utah State University transcript will list the courses they attended to complete the program.

Admission Requirements

To apply and gain acceptance into the program, a person must complete and submit a NEPA Certificate Program application form to the Natural Resource and Environmental Policy Program (NREPP) at USU, as well as provide a transcript documenting the completion of a bachelor's degree. Students pursuing the NEPA Certificate are not required to be enrolled in a graduate degree program. However, credits obtained from the program may be applied toward a graduate degree.

Course Requirements

To receive the certificate, a participant must complete the following set of requirements:

1. apply and be accepted into the NEPA Certificate Program;
2. register for and successfully complete seven graduate-level courses taken for grades (four required courses and three elective courses);
3. undertake an individual capstone experience for graduate credit that involves a negotiated project;
4. maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA for program courses (grades below C will not be accepted);
5. abide by the *Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State University*.

NEPA Certificate Program Courses

Courses for the program will be offered at USU and at other locations around the country. Courses will be offered on a short-course basis through Continuing Education. A two-credit course requires a minimum of three full days in class; a one-credit course requires two full days in class. To receive graduate credit that can be applied toward completion of the certificate, all NEPA courses must be taken for a letter grade, which requires completion of a written examination in addition to class attendance. All courses offered as part of the NEPA Certificate Program may be taken for University graduate credit, whether or not a participant in the course is enrolled in the NEPA Certificate Program.

Curriculum

Students must complete four core courses (2 credits each), three elective courses (1 credit each), and a capstone experience (1 credit) in order to fulfill the requirements for the NEPA Certificate.

Core Courses

Participants are required to take four of the following courses. The first three listed are required. However, participants may choose between the last two courses to fulfill the core course requirements.

NEPA 6200	How to Manage the NEPA Process and Write Effective NEPA Documents	(2)
NEPA 6210	Clear Writing for NEPA Specialists	(2)
NEPA 6220	Reviewing NEPA Documents	(2)
NEPA 6230	Risk Communication for NEPA Specialists: Strategies and Implementation	(2)
NEPA 6260	Cultural and Natural Resource Management	(2)

Elective Courses

Participants are required to take three courses of their choosing from the following list.

- NEPA 6270 Environmental Compliance Overview (1)

- NEPA 6280 Interdisciplinary Team Building (1)

- NEPA 6300 Effective Environmental Contracting (1)

- NEPA 6310 NEPA Writing for Technical Specialists (1)

- NEPA 6320 NEPA: Cumulative Impacts (1)

- NEPA 6330 Conflict Management in the NEPA Process (1)

- NEPA 6340 Content Analysis and
 Public Response Management (1)

- NEPA 6350 Socio-economic Impact Analysis
 for NEPA Specialists (1)

- NEPA 6360 Overview of the Endangered Species Act (1)

Capstone Experience

After completing the coursework, participants are required to complete a NEPA Capstone Experience (NEPA 6370) before being awarded the NEPA Certificate. This experience will be individualized for each participant, will consist of a project that has been negotiated between the participant and the program faculty, and may be subject to oversight from the NEPA Certificate Program Advisory Board.

Course Descriptions

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