

Northern Kentucky University

Name of Program: Environmental Education

Certification Level:

Advanced; Certification Only

Program Codes:

KEV (390)

Modes of Delivery: Online

2016-17 Catalog URL: <http://nku.catalog.acalog.com/index.php?catoid=7>

Environmental Education

The environmental education endorsement program at NKU is committed to the building educators' environmental literacy and stewardship through the construction of knowledge, the development of skills, and the practice of professional dispositions that enhance the development of all learners. The environmental education endorsement program has defined the content knowledge that its graduates must possess through the courses they are required to take and the grade point average they are required to maintain. These course requirements and their experiences are consistent with the essential knowledge of environmental educators as defined by the **North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) Standards**.

The endorsement in Environmental Education is an option in the Master of Arts in Education- Teacher as Leader and Rank I (30 hours beyond the M.A.) programs at Northern Kentucky University. The endorsement can also be completed separate from these degree programs. Elementary, middle grades or secondary education teachers may complete the environmental education endorsement. Other certified teachers and candidates in the MAT program are also eligible for this endorsement as an extended area of study. This 12 hour graduate endorsement program is based on the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) *Guidelines for the Initial Preparation of Environmental Educators Standards*.

Candidates must meet minimum requirements for admission to the selected graduate program as defined by the appropriate catalog and outlined on the program's curriculum contract. Twelve (12) semester hours are required with advisor's prior approval and in accordance with the environmental education endorsements to meet the *NAAEE Guidelines for the Initial Preparation of Environmental Educators Standards*.

Candidates are required to sign their curriculum contracts, as well as the College of Education and Human Services Educators' Code of Ethics and state of Kentucky's Code of Ethics, during their first semester of enrollment in a graduate program. These signed documents are then placed in the candidate's advising file as verification of their agreement with the information stated in each form.

Because candidates in the Environmental Education endorsement program may also be in the MAED-Teacher as Leader or Rank I programs, refer to the MAED- Teacher as Leader program for additional information.

Successful completion of the environmental education endorsement program consists of four courses for a total of 12-credit hours. All students must complete EDU 545 & EDU 546. These courses provide a foundation of knowledge, skills and dispositions to continue to build upon in subsequent courses. Students also choose two additional courses from those listed in the Endorsement For Environmental Education Curriculum Contract See below for full course descriptions. These courses vary in topics and

areas of specialization. This allows students to choose content that is most applicable to their teaching and/or interests. The topics courses, EDU 594 & EDG 693, vary in content as well to help ensure that the content is current and relevant for teachers, as our environment is a complex and ever changing entity.

Course Descriptions:

EDG 545 – Fundamentals of Environmental Education, 3 credit hours: A web-based course that provides an introduction to the field of environmental education, including the basic history and philosophy, methodologies, state initiatives, national standards, and current trends in the field.

EDU 546 – Teaching Environmental Education, 3 credit hours: Principles and goals, curriculum models, teaching strategies, classroom and community resources, outdoor education, and research.

EDG 544/BIO 644 - Aquatic Ecology for Teachers (Cross-listed courses), 3 credit hours: The sciences of biology, geology, meteorology, chemistry, and physical sciences are integrated to teach about water quality through a field-based investigation of the Ohio River and streams. Students apply the content and skills learned during the course to the State/School District Science Standards and a classroom-based project. Curriculum and community resources related to water resources are emphasized; required field trips.

ENV 578 – Environmental Issues for Educators, 3 credit hours: A laboratory, field and classroom course that provides information about local and global environmental issues and the application of these issues for classroom teachers and other educators. The topics covered in the classroom are reinforced with field trips that identify examples of global environmental issues in our local communities.

EDU 594 – Topics: Education, 1-3 credit hours: Various advanced topics in education. May be repeated as topic varies. Repeatable up to 6 hours.

EDG 693 – Selected Topics in Education, 1-3 credit hours: Special topics in education based on the Kentucky Teacher Standards as well as current trends and issues. May be repeated for credit when topic varies. Repeatable up to 6 hours.

Environmental Education Endorsement Program Changes:

The environmental education endorsement program has undergone several changes in the past three years that we believe will better meet the needs of our students. The changes to the program were based on anecdotal evidence and feedback provided by educators who attend the semi-annual Teacher Education Advisory Council Meetings. Based on enrollment numbers and feedback, the following changes were made to the program:

- Enrollment numbers have been a concern for the program for a number of years. One way to address this issue was making a change to the course number. Courses in the program were changed from 600-level (graduate only) to 500-level (undergraduate and graduate). This change allows undergraduate students an opportunity to experience the courses prior to graduation. Allowing undergraduate students to enroll in the courses makes the program more accessible to a broader audience. Students are encouraged to continue the endorsement program after graduation and share their experience in

environmental education with their future colleagues. The end result being higher enrollment numbers over time.

- A 500-level topics course was added as well (EDU 594). The addition of a topics course allows both undergraduate and graduate students to participate in courses that can easily be adapted over time to address the most current and relevant topics in environmental education. Varied topics will also attract a broader audience over time.
- As graduate level courses in our teacher education programs continue the trend towards an online format, it was decided to offer all courses during the fall and spring semesters online and in a condensed format. The decision to offer courses in a condensed 8-week format stemmed from feedback provided by practicing teachers and current graduate students during a Teacher Education Advisory Council Meeting. Feedback suggested that being able to take two courses during a semester back-to-back rather than simultaneously was a very appealing option. This new format would also allow students to complete the environmental education endorsement program in one academic year. The new format was implemented Fall 2016 with EDU 545 in Session 1 and EDU 546 in Session 2. This format resulted in higher retention of students from one class to the next.

The Environmental Education endorsement program can be combined with the MAED- Teacher as Leader Degree, the Educational Specialist in Teaching and Learning Degree, and the Planned Program Rank 1 Non-Degree 6th Year programs. Please refer to those programs for additional information.

<https://inside.nku.edu/coehs/collegeaccreditation/caep/EPsBProgramSubmissions.html>

Each curriculum contract states the admission and exit criteria, the curriculum criteria, required courses, and other information about the program. The curriculum contracts for the Environmental Education program options are at this link:

<https://inside.nku.edu/coehs/collegeaccreditation/caep/EPsBProgramSubmissions/EnvironmentalEducation/EECCX.html>