SOIL AND WATER SCIENCES

Soil and Water Sciences involves managing land and water resources across a wide range of ecosystems, including agricultural, forested, range, urban and wetlands. Soil and Water Sciences students have a strong science and math background and study biology, calculus, microbiology, chemistry, physics, and ecology.

About this Program

- **College**: Agricultural and Life Sciences
- **School**: Natural Resources and Environment
- **Degree**: Bachelor of Science
- **Specializations**: Soil Science | Water Science
- **Credits for Degree**: 120
- **More Info**: Soil Science | Water Science

To graduate with this major, students must complete all university, college, and major requirements.

Department Information

The Soil, Water, and Ecosystem Sciences Department researches and teaches about soil, water, and environmental sciences in urban, agricultural, and natural ecosystems. Since its origins over 100 years ago, the department has made significant contributions to improving the productivity of Florida's agriculture, helping protect the state's unique ecosystems, and contributing to soil and water science at national and international levels.

Website

CONTACT

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2181 MCCARTY HALL A
GAINESVILLE FL 32611-0290

Map

Curriculum

- Interdisciplinary Studies - Environmental Management in Agriculture and Natural Resources UF Online
- Combination Degrees
- Environmental Management in Agriculture and Natural Resources | Interdisciplinary Studies
- Soil and Water Sciences
- Soil and Water Sciences Minor

Students are trained in managing land and water resources in a wide range of ecosystems, including agricultural, forested, range, urban and wetlands through different degree programs. Specializations within this degree program are designed to give the student a strong background in soil and water sciences with a core of required courses taken during their junior and senior years. Beyond the core courses, students can select from several groups of electives that provide flexibility in their program.

Students may also prepare for professional schools by selecting appropriate elective courses.

Soil Science

Areas of study include soil and land use (with an emphasis on natural resources and the environment), environmental management (with an emphasis on agricultural and other applied aspects of soil sciences), physical and biological sciences (with an emphasis on physics, microbiology, botany and/or other biological sciences) and business (with an emphasis on policy, economics, business administration or entrepreneurship).

Water Science

Water's abundance, quality, distribution and properties are essential to all people. Understanding water's role in the environment and in our lives is integral to the future of this important resource. Water science is an interdisciplinary specialization that provides students with opportunities to develop skills essential for a diversity of careers in both government and private sectors. Students will work closely with advisors to develop a course of study tailored to their professional goals.
Soil and Water Sciences

**Academic Learning Compact**

The soil and water sciences major enables students to identify and to describe the morphology of soils, to differentiate soils according to soil taxonomy and to distinguish soil forming factors. Students will use this knowledge to assess properties of soils in relation to plant growth and environmental uses and to apply this knowledge to different soil uses in agriculture, natural resources and urban settings.

**Before Graduating Students Must**

- Pass the soil and water sciences competency exam, given in four parts. One part will be given in each of these required courses:
  - SWS 3022 Soils in the Environment
  - SWS 4451 Soil and Water Chemistry
  - SWS 4602C Soil Physics
  - SWS 4715C Environmental Pedology
- Satisfactorily complete an approved research project in SWS 4905 or SWS 4941.
- Achieve minimum grades of C in AEC 3030C and AEC 3033C. These courses are graded using rubrics developed by a faculty team.
- Complete requirements for the baccalaureate degree, as determined by faculty.

**Students in the Major Will Learn to**

**Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**

**Content**

1. Apply fundamental principles of chemistry and physics in relation to critical zone processes in the pedosphere and hydrosphere.
2. Classify fundamental biological processes and differentiate basic organism function in soil and hydrologic systems.
3. Utilize field observations, case study evidence and experimental data to describe soil formation, morphology and interactions of the varied components of the hydrologic cycle.

**Critical Thinking**

4. Critically evaluate the sustainability of water resources in relation to human needs and natural ecosystem function.
5. Demonstrate quantitative problem-solving abilities by applying, analyzing and synthesizing content knowledge related to soil and water chemistry and physics.

**Communication**

6. Create, interpret and analyze written text, oral messages and multimedia presentations used in agricultural and life sciences.

**Curriculum Map**

$I = Introduced; \ R = Reinforced; \ A = Assessed$

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**Assessment Types**

- Case studies
- Field studies
- Lab assignments and reports
- Written analysis
- Exams