MA in Environmental Leadership

The MA in Environmental Leadership prepares the next generation of innovative leaders to transform and guide communities and organizations toward an environmentally just and sustainable society. Employing an integrated, living-systems perspective and infused with insights from ecopsychology and contemplative traditions, the program offers a balance of theory, skills, inner development and experiential application. The two-year 39-credit residential program is composed of semester-long courses and an eight-day summer field course that includes a three-day wilderness solo. In the final year, students apply their leadership skills to a substantial project in collaboration with an organization or community group. Most classes are scheduled in the late afternoon and evening and on occasional weekends to accommodate working students.

MA Completion

This is a professional skill-based degree, which does not require a thesis. Students volunteer and work in an organization, and demonstrate competency by completing documentation, presentation, and formal assessment of their applied leadership project.

Degree Requirements

MA Environmental Leadership

First year, fall

- ENV600 Inner Work for Environmental Leaders I (3)
- ENV610 Groups as Living Systems I (2)
- ENV630 Transforming Systems (3)
- ENV710 Sustainability: Policy and Practice (3)

SUBTOTAL 11

First year, spring

- ENV611 Groups as Living Systems II (1)
- ENV637 Multicultural Perspectives of Environmental Leaders (3)
- ENV645 The New Science and Its Cultural Applications (3)
- ENV650 Inner Work for Environmental Leaders II (3)

SUBTOTAL 10

First year, summer

- ENV665 Wilderness Solo (3)
- ENV701e Nonprofit Management & Social Entrepreneurship (3)

SUBTOTAL 6

Second year, fall

- ENV705 Leadership Skills Seminar (3)
- ENV725 Applied Environmental Leadership Project (3)

SUBTOTAL 6

Second year, spring

- ENV750 Application of Contemplative Practices & Perspectives: Going Forth (2)
- ENV775 Professional Coaching (1)
- ENV785 Environmental Leadership Capstone Seminar (3)

SUBTOTAL 6

TOTAL CREDITS 39

Course Listings

ENV600

Inner Work for Environmental Leaders I (3)

This course introduces mindfulness training through sitting and walking meditation as a ground for developing wakefulness and trust in ourselves and the phenomenal world, as well as nature-based ecopsychological practices that explore the relationship between nature, psyche and spirit. Emphasis is on bringing the nonduality of wilderness mind back home and applying it to our daily activities and relationships. Experiencing mind without analysis, reinforcement or rejection clears the way to relate directly with others and develop skills for a new kind of leadership. The course includes an introductory two-day retreat. Course fee. Required for EL MA.

ENV610

Groups as Living Systems I (2)

This course introduces both the concepts and principles of groups as living systems and an experiential approach to working with groups based on the Matrix Leadership model. The course utilizes emerging new principles in science, spirituality and psychology to conceptualize and support the growth and development of healthy, high functioning groups, while meeting the needs of the individual. Students learn by experientially and analytically engaging the three stages of group life: inclusion, conflict and mutual connection. Students develop a number of key tools for generating and maintaining creative and functional groups that are applicable in any organizational or community setting. Required for EL MA.

ENV611

Groups as Living Systems II (1)

This course continues working with both the concepts and principles of groups as living systems and an experiential approach to working with groups based on the Matrix Leadership model. The course utilizes emerging new principles in science, spirituality and psychology to conceptualize and support the growth and development of healthy, high functioning groups, while meeting the needs of the individual. Students learn by experientially and analytically engaging the three stages of group life: inclusion, conflict and mutual connection. Students develop a number of key tools for generating and maintaining creative and functional groups that are applicable in any organizational or community setting. Prerequisite: ENV 610. Required for EL MA.
ENV630
Transforming Systems (3)
An introduction to general and living systems theory as an effective paradigm for engaging in change processes at different scales in both biological and social domains. Particular attention is given to how systems of all scales transform into new systems, leading to an exploration of environmental, social and cultural change processes. The course provides interwoven strands of information, theory and application from the sociocultural, ecological, spiritual, political, economic and personal/contemplative spheres. Theory is anchored in lived experience through personal and group work, field learning in the social and natural sciences and problem-solving. Required for EL MA.

ENV637
Multicultural Perspectives for Environmental Leaders (3)
This course is designed to provide multicultural perspectives for environmental leaders. The key focus is to examine the ways race, culture, history, class, and other socio-economic conditions, geography, and gender affect environmental issues. This is examined at both a global and national level, through the fields of political ecology and environmental justice. The course also has a strong focus on understanding and healing. The class is highly interactive and requires a deep level of research, presentation, and discussion by all participants. As a result of this course, students have a heightened capacity to bring these issues to their work and service to the world. Course fee alternates years with ENV650.

ENV645
The New Science and Its Cultural Applications (3)
In a synthesis of the old and new visions in Western science, this course develops understanding of the new material emerging in science regarding the earth as a living system; examines cosmology and Gaian science, as well as key principles of geophysics; and explores the significant cultural implications and applications. This material provides key tools and perspectives for environmental leaders, as well as insights useful for working with organizations and communities. Required for EL MA.

ENV650
Inner Work for Environmental Leaders II (3)
A continuation of Inner Work for Environmental Leaders I. In addition to mindfulness training and nature-based ecopsychological practices, the course introduces specific practices of loving kindness and cultivating compassion for oneself and others (metta and tonglen from the Buddhist tradition) and non-violent communication (NVC) as essential tools for environmental practitioners. Topics include working with strong emotions, transformative approaches to conflict, effective communication with others and caring for the activist. This course includes a nonresidential weekend intensive. Course fee alternates each year with ENV637. Required for EL MA.

ENV665
Wilderness Solo (3)
A nine-day field retreat held in September that includes a three-day wilderness solo.

ENV701E
Non-profit Management & Social Entrepreneurship (3)
This online course provides students with perspectives and practical tools for working in organizations, focusing on non-profit management and Social Entrepreneurship. Topics covered include practical tools such as strategic planning, fund-raising, and grant writing, as well as the visioning and inspiration that underlie this work. Case studies, models, and applications to the MA Applied Leadership Projects ground this class in real world examples and experience. Required for all MA ENV students.

ENV705
Leadership Skills Seminar (3)
In this seminar, students study and gain hands-on experience in essential, traditional leadership skills. Theory and practical applications of conflict resolution, mediation and other selected skills are presented. Students develop their understanding through case studies and research, and learn and apply these skills in the class. Required for EL MA.

ENV710
Sustainability (3)
Sustainability has emerged as a potentially unifying paradigm for work that simultaneously fosters human and planetary well-being. Students study the historical origins, theoretical frameworks and tools associated with the three-legged view (economy, environment, society) of current sustainability policies and practices, and use case-study methodologies to analyze and evaluate how sustainability policies and practices are being designed and implemented in a variety of organizations and communities. Students conduct an experiential exploration of the personal and spiritual dimension of sustainability practice. Required for EL MA.

ENV725
Applied Environmental Leadership Project (3)
Students are required to take a leadership role in a substantial project that leads to increased sustainability in an organizational or community setting. The project serves as demonstration of competence in the practical application of theory and skills learned in this degree program. This course is designed to support students through this process. Elements of project design and report writing are covered. Classes focus on coaching, feedback, analysis and presentation of the applied leadership projects. Required for EL MA, and restricted to EL MA students.

ENV750
Application of Contemplative Practices and Perspectives: Going Forth (2)
This course provides students with continuity and support for contemplative practices and perspectives gained in the first year. Students further their cohort/community relationships, acquire skills in group reflection and health, and provide opportunities to bring this understanding to their Applied Leadership Project as well as their evolving leadership style. They choose and apply a personal sustainability practice throughout the semester. This course serves as closure to the program and transition into the work world.
**ENV775**

**Professional Coaching (1)**
Training in and applications of professional coaching skills, this work gives students access to fresh perspectives and feedback, as well as a lifelong tool for their work as leaders. Students apply coaching skills to their work on the Applied Leadership Projects. Course required for all EL MA students.

**ENV785**

**Environmental Leadership Capstone Seminar (3)**
In this capstone course, the student is expected to synthesize and integrate the conceptual and theoretical knowledge and understanding as well as skills acquired in the curriculum through course work, internships, leadership development, research and other learning activities. The emphasis is on the student’s demonstrated development and competency of applied environmental leadership skills and written analytic material that can be utilized for individual student assessment and program assessment. Students are assessed on their professional report and formal presentation of their Applied Environmental Leadership Project during this semester. Prerequisite: completion of all other required courses in this major. Required for and restricted to EL MA students. Course fee.

**MAR500E**

**Authentic Leadership (6)**
Naropa University’s Authentic Leadership program is a transformative leadership course that integrates ancient wisdom with effective, modern approaches to management. The format encourages deep, personal learning in an environment that makes it possible to assimilate ideas and concepts at an accelerated pace. Executive coaching with experienced professionals is a central component. A wide variety of professionals from around the country attend this course along with Naropa students.