

Initial Guidance for Cascades Natural Resource Majors

We have put together this package to provide Natural Resources students at OSU-Cascades Campus with information that will facilitate planning and execution of their degree program. Please read through it carefully and keep it handy. Using the information contained herein will make life easier for both students and advisors.

1. The Natural Resources (NR) Check Sheet. The key to our approach to advising is the NR check sheet, the purpose of which is allow both student and advisor to look at exactly the same information when preparing and discussing schedules for future courses. Included in this package are a sample Natural Resources Check Sheet and Instructions for Using the Natural Resources Check Sheet. Once you are an enrolled as a degree-seeking student, we will send you the working version of the check sheet as an e-mail attachment. What we are asking you to do is to use this Check Sheet both to plan out your schedule of future courses and to track your progress of completed requirements. As the number of courses and the number of students continue to increase, it has become increasingly difficult simply to select courses one term at a time. It has also become impossible to keep everyone's individual program and desires straight without having them down on paper.
 - a. Laying out a long-term schedule does *not* preclude changes over time. What it does do is:
 - (1) put you in charge of your own program;
 - (2) ensure you do not get to a term and find there are insufficient courses available;
 - (3) prevent registering for a course before you have taken its prerequisites; and
 - (4) make it easier to see quickly the implications of substituting one course for another.
 - b. Tracking your course completion progress in a format both you and your advisor can see becomes particularly important to ensure both of you are using courses in the same slot that might be used in one of two or three places (for example, FW 323, which can be used to meet Breadth/FW or S.O. 4b or SO 4c but not in both).
 - c. The master lists "OSU-Cascades NR Courses . . ." and "OSU Ecampus Courses a/o . . ." (to be updated as necessary) provide guidance on where each course fits into the program, when it is offered, and any prerequisites. Course descriptions can be found on the Cascades online catalog or the Ecampus web site. Using this information and the advising guide you have received, you should update the check sheet prior to meeting with your advisor for registration advice each term. Again, a sample form is included in this package.
2. Some policies to keep in mind as you plan your schedule.
 - a. If you graduated from high school in 1997 or after, you will need to complete the foreign language requirement.
 - b. Students who entered the program after Fall 2002 must achieve at least a "C-" in all upper division NR Core and Breadth courses. This requirement also applies to any courses taken prior to entering the OSU program. (This means, for example, if you want to substitute a resource economics course for AREC 351, you must have received at least a "C-" in that course.)

- c. We can double-count between the Bacc Core and NR Core/Breadth/S.O., but not among NR Core/Breadth/S.O. For example, we can use AREC 351 to meet NR Core/Res Econ and Bacc Core/Synthesis/CGI, but we can't use RNG 355 to meet both NR Core/Water Science and Breadth/Land&Water.
- d. COCC has increased the number of offerings for MTH 243 and 244. If you intend to take MTH 244 from COCC to meet the statistics requirement, you *must* take MTH 243 first. Students who choose to meet the Statistics requirement via distance can take the Ecampus self-paced ST 201 and 209 courses the same term.
- e. Any student wanting to take a MATH course from Ecampus *must* complete the online form at <http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu/dceforms/idlrequest.aspx>. Failure to do so will mean you are *not* enrolled even if you think you are.
- f. When you fill out your long-term schedule, begin with those courses offered only a year and place them appropriately, then fill in around them.
 - Watch for courses that have prerequisites. Sometimes, these are not absolutely required and can be waived by consent of the course instructor. Others are firm because the instructor assumes students have an adequate background on material she will not cover but with which she will expect students to be familiar. The prerequisites listed on the OSU-Cascades master NR Course list are 1 year biology for BI 370 (can take third term concurrently with BI 370), 1 term chemistry for CSS 305, BI 370 for FOR 445 and FW 479, MTH 111 for MTH 243, MTH 243 for MTH 244, 1 year biology for RNG 348 (can take third term concurrently with RNG 348), RNG 355 for RNG 455, MTH 244 for RNG 441, Junior standing where indicated.
 - Other logical sequences, although not required are: RNG 355, RNG 455 and FW 251 prior to FW 326; BI 370 prior to FW 321 and FOR/FW/RNG 446; GEOG 209 and Earth Science (Geology from somewhere or CSS 205) early on, NR 455 and FW/HSTS 470 closer to the end rather than the beginning of your program. Generally, although not always, 400-level courses are more advanced and difficult than 300-level ones.

f. To repeat, setting down a long-term schedule does not lock you into specific courses as long as you fulfill the program requirements.

3. Where to Go and Whom to Contact for Information or Assistance with Problems:

While providing assistance when necessary is an important function of an advisor, it is not an efficient use of time when the information is readily available elsewhere. Accordingly, we have put together the following information to assist in determining where to find answers to many of your questions. When these sources cannot provide an answer, by all means contact your advisor. Please do not do so, however, until you have tried the following.

a) Class status (Sr., Jr., etc.)

- Go to your online transcript and scroll to the most current completed term and find the number of Earned Hours/Overall.
- Breakdown is as follows:

Senior: at least 135 cr hrs	Sophomore: 45 -89 cr hrs
Junior: 90 – 134 cr hrs	Freshman: less than 45 cr hrs
- If you have taken non-OSU courses since being admitted to OSU and have not submitted an official transcript that provides the information on these courses, they will not be included in your total hours. Unless you think submitting an updated official transcript would help you register earlier, it would be cheaper to wait until you have completed all the courses you intend to take from that school before asking them to send an official transcript. Two caveats to this: (1) Don't forget to have it sent eventually; (2) keep your advisor informed as you complete non-OSU courses so we can keep your records up-to-date.

b) How to review your Advanced Standing Report and Transcript.

- Go to <http://oregonstate.edu/students/onlineservices/>. Click on Online Services Quick Login. Log in with your OSU ID and GAP. Then click on appropriate headings.

c) Problems with Ecampus? The first step when you have a question about distance education courses is to click on “Enrollment and Services” located in the upper right of the Ecampus home page. This site contains a wealth of useful information on getting syllabi, ordering books/videos, contacting instructors, etc.

The FAQs on the Ecampus page (under “Welcome”) also contain good information.

d) How to find out what Ecampus courses are available each term and their CRN's:

- 1) Go to OSU Home page -> [click on] Student Online Services -> Catalogs and Schedules -> Courses & Schedules -> Undergraduate Schedules by Subject; and the OnLine Catalog comes up. Make sure the term in the box is correct; use pull-down menu at Campus and select Ecampus – Dist Ed; pull down for appropriate course level (All u-grad, lower div, upper div); -> Search -> Depart. Name (e.g., Rangeland Resources); scroll down to specific course: Will tell you CRN, section number, instructor, max number of slots and how many remain, prerequisites and other specific information. Clicking on the course name will give you the course description.
- 2) Go to Ecampus home page [<http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu/>] and click on “Schedule of Classes” along the top row. Then click on the appropriate term in the left-hand column. Then click on Alphabetical List of All courses and scroll to appropriate course. The display will give you CRN and instructor name. Clicking on the course name will give you the course description and other information. [Caution: the Status

information here is not always as current as on the Online Catalog site mentioned above].

f. How to find out what Bacc Core Courses are available at Cascades.

- 1) For OSU courses, check the printed schedule or the online schedule.
- 2) You can find out what COCC courses meet what OSU Bacc Core requirements by going to the following web site:
http://oregonstate.edu/dept/admindb/arttable/scr1140_003188.htm

g. How to find out what Bacc Core Courses are available from Ecampus.

We don't include all Bacc Core-only courses on the list we send out. Ecampus maintains a list by term. Go to Ecampus home page [<http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu/>] -> Distance Education and scroll to Schedule of Classes -> appropriate term [e.g., Spring 2003] ; under "For all Terms" -> Bacc Core Courses.

4. Other Useful Information

a. Ordering books and videos from the OSU bookstore for Ecampus courses.

- We are aware of the delays in receiving books and videos. Sometimes such delays are the result of instructors opening a class to more than the scheduled number of students. In this case, even if you registered early but neglected to order in a timely manner, you may face a delay. Many of you are dependent on financial aid to pay for your books. If you have a credit card on which you could put your order, that would help. Additionally, ***you can order your books/videos and place them on reserve pending the bookstore's receipt of your remittance.*** This would at least ensure the materials were available to be sent as soon as possible. Unfortunately, the bookstore will not debit your OSU account. We have tried to change that policy, but
- We have been working with Ecampus to encourage faculty members to post their syllabi several weeks before the end of the previous term so students can order materials in a timely fashion.

b. **Organize your education materials.**

Everyone has their own method to organize things. We strongly urge you to establish *some sort* of organization. It will, we assure you, make your life—and possibly ours—at least a little easier.

c. **Keep us advised** when you make changes to your course schedule. We frequently learn only when registration for the next term begins that individuals have not taken the courses we had discussed. Thus, we may wind up making suggestions that are not appropriate. You should e-mail your advisor when you change the courses you have discussed with him, including dropping a course after the term is underway.

- The Natural Resources Check sheet is intended alleviate such lapses in information exchange. You should bring a current copy of your check sheet when you meet with your advisor for each upcoming term.

d. **E-mail**. Please, please, please let your advisor know if you change your e-mail. We know it's hard to remember to do this, but we can't get information out to you if we don't have your current e-mail address. You also need to change your designated forwarding e-mail address for your onid account if you are having onid e-mails forwarded to another address. ***Important:*** If you have not already done so, you should create an ONID e-mail account. Instructions on how to do this are located on the Ecampus web site. This is the vehicle OSU-Cascades uses to pass along information such as scholarship deadlines, student activities, and the like. You can instruct the system to have e-mails that come to your ONID account sent automatically to whatever other e-mail address you prefer.

e. **Registration**. ***Do not delay***—REPEAT: DO NOT DELAY—when your time for registration comes around. The priority system is set up to ensure students get the courses they need to graduate. This only works, however, if seniors, juniors and post-baccs (listed as Grads on the priority list) don't wait to register. This is not a problem with OSU-Cascades courses, but it can be a big problem with COCC and Ecampus courses. Priority dates are listed in E-News for each term. You can find out your class status by going to the web site listed in para 3a) above. Waiting until the last moment and finding courses unavailable, then frantically asking for assistance, may trigger an old Air Force response from your advisor: "Your failure to plan ahead does not constitute a crisis on my part."

f. **Dropping a Course**. If you decide, for whatever reason, to drop a course, *make sure you complete the appropriate paperwork* (or electronic-work, as the case may be).

g. **Incompletes**.

- 1) If you need to take an Incomplete in a course, clear this with the instructor before the end of the term. Most instructors are sympathetic to the other demands students have on their lives. On the other hand, continuing to accept, grade and return materials in a course an instructor is not teaching in a given term constitutes an extra demand on her or his time. While the rules state an "I" grade is cast in stone after a year, departments have the discretion to allow less time than this—as some folks have learned to their chagrin.

2. Except for short-term situations, think carefully before you take an incomplete. If you think you don't have time to complete a course in that term, what makes you think—realistically—you will have more time the next term? Maybe you will, but at least ask the question. Solutions? At least a partial one is not to take more courses a term than you can reasonably expect to handle. A second solution is to let your instructor know as soon as possible and get his or her okay; then, complete the coursework as quickly as possible.
 - h. Course requirements. We've had some major problems in this area lately. Admittedly, it is more difficult to get squared away with course requirements from a distance and not all instructors are so diligent or clear as they should be. Nevertheless, at the risk of igniting a firestorm of rebuttals, we'll point out the first step on the student's part is to **READ THE SYLLABUS**. Switching from the advisor to the instructor role, we can tell you it is really frustrating to have students ask for information that is clearly laid out in the syllabus.
 - i. A repeat: ***Keep in touch with your instructors***; do not pop up the last week after being non-existent for two months and ask for mercy because you have not been able to complete the course requirements.
5. We have tried to make this information as well as the Instructions for the Check Sheet as clear as possible. Undoubtedly, however, we have not always been so clear as we thought. Do not hesitate to contact your advisor if you do have questions. We are not trying to brush anyone off or shirk our responsibilities as advisers—advising is, actually, one of the real pleasures of the job. On the other hand, given all the other demands on our time, we are trying to be as efficient and effective as possible.