

What is it?

Water connects society and the environment through energy, food, climate, ecological, health, and economic systems and is therefore vital for sustaining human life. Issues such as drought, flooding, sanitation, and contamination exist on every continent and touch every citizen on the planet. Sustainably managing water resources is a complex challenge that requires knowledge from a wide range of academic disciplines. The Blue Planet minor is an interdisciplinary program that includes courses from ten departments across Virginia Tech, ensuring that students **gain the necessary perspective required to solve the myriad of water problems being confronted by diverse societies.**



Why do it?



Students **gain interdisciplinary exposure to the technical, societal, and political systems concerning water and sustainability.** Students take courses in forest resources and environmental conservation, geography, agricultural and applied economics, landscape architecture, history, environmental science, geosciences, mathematics, English, and urban affairs and planning. Students learn about the interconnectedness of water policy, planning, science, and sustainability, orienting them to a diversity of perspectives for solving water issues.

Who is it for?

The Blue Planet minor will appeal to **students from a wide range of disciplines.** The water in society specialization will appeal primarily to STEM students and majors, while the science of water specialization will appeal to non-STEM students and majors.

Pathways Core Concepts*

- 1a - Advanced Discourse
- 2 - Critical Thinking in the Humanities
- 3 - Reasoning in the Social Sciences
- 4 - Reasoning in the Natural Sciences
- 5 - Quantitative and Computational Thinking
- 7 - Critical Analysis of Identity and Equity in the United States

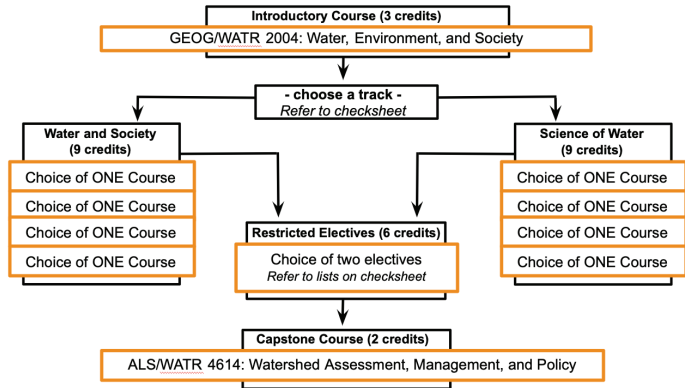
Pathways Integrative Concepts

- Ethical Reasoning
- Intercultural and Global Awareness

*At least three of these core concepts will be completed, but concepts will vary depending on elective choices.

Requirements

The 20-credit hour minor in Blue Planet includes a 3-hour introductory course, 12 hours of one specialization in either water and society or the science of water, 3 hours of elective courses selected from a list, and a 2-hour capstone course on watershed assessment, management, and policy.



Required courses

GEOG/WATR 2004: Water, Environment, and Society
ALS/WATR 4614: Watershed Assessment, Management, and Policy

Elective courses

Students select 3 credit hours of elective courses, with topics such as environmental law, climate science, seeking sustainability, oceanography, and forest soil and watershed management. For a complete list of elective courses, consult the checksheet at <https://registrar.vt.edu/graduation-multi-brief/index1.html>.



- Explore and understand water as a complex integral component of our natural, social, and built environments.
- Choose from interdisciplinary course options as part of a customizable experience, with specializations like water in society and the science of water.
- Collaborate with team members in the capstone course to solve problems facing real-world watersheds with respect to assessment, management, and policy.
- Integrate scientific, engineering, and technological advances with socio-economic factors to identify problems and discuss practical solutions to water supply and quality.

www.pathways.prov.vt.edu/minors

Contact: Melissa Cumbia (mcumbia@vt.edu)

Contact: Liz Sharp (lizsharp@vt.edu)