

San José State University
Department of Environmental Studies

ENVS 181 – Sections 01, 02, and 03
Environmental Resource Center (ERC)
Spring 2025



Course and Contact Information

Faculty Advisor:	Amy Petersen
Email:	amy.petersen@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Monday 1:00pm – 2:00pm
Class Days/Time:	T/Th 1:30pm – 2:45pm
Classroom:	WSQ 111

ERC Directors: Simon Jan Maranguis and Kaili Mallari

Treasurer: Malvika Malhotra

Contact Information: simonjan.maranguis@sjsu.edu, malvika.malhotra@sjsu.edu
kaili.mallari@sjsu.edu

ERC Class Meeting Location: WSQ 111

* The ERC also has an office in Room 115 of WSQ, which may be used for office hours.

This course has a Canvas site. Please visit it regularly (i.e., at least three times a week) for materials, instructions, and assignments.

Course Description

Catalog Description - Supervised projects that support the Environmental Resource Center, a source of sustainability information and events for the campus and community; projects help students take personal action toward achieving and sharing approaches to a sustainable lifestyle and developing environmental leadership. This course is Credit/No Credit.

The ERC and ENVS 181

The Environmental Resource Center (ERC) is a student-run organization, connected to the Department of Environmental Studies and funded by Associated Students and Student Involvement, depending on the projects we do. The ERC was established in 1967 and soon became the student activist wing of the Environmental Studies Department. Since the early 1970s, the ERC has served SJSU with an annual Earth Day celebration and has implemented numerous other projects that promote sustainability. Students in the ERC started the campus recycling program and an alternative commute planning program that ultimately became Transportation Solutions, which is now a permanent department of Associated Students. ERC students also began an urban farm non-profit organization called Veggielution, now a highly successful organization.

To serve the student body and our supporting organizations, we undertake a range of projects each year. The projects are undertaken by students registered for ENVS 181, The ERC, a course that students take for 1, 2 or 3 units of credit. The ERC is run by student directors and supervised by a faculty advisor. In addition to promoting changes to attitudes and behaviors via on campus events, the ERC is working to move our campus towards sustainable use of water, energy, and materials.

Directors and Faculty Advisor Roles

The ERC directors guide the projects and provide volunteer and community action opportunities. They oversee all activities of the ERC. They participate in the events, are present to evaluate and assist the team members, manage finances, and lead the classes. Amy Petersen, the Faculty Advisor, will be at class meetings to help groups move along with their projects. She supports the ERC Directors in their duties and is responsible for assigning credit/no credit evaluations to each student.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Students learn leadership, service, project management, and communication skills by undertaking sustainability projects on campus and in the local community. This course requires active participation and independent work. The hours you work will be comprised of class attendance, group meetings and other activities, including volunteering, helping at events, and work associated with your group.

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Communicate to a range of people the definition of sustainability and how individuals can promote sustainability in their everyday lives along with their campuses
2. Lead a group, collaborate with peers, manage responsibilities in a timely manner, and contribute significantly to completing a sustainability project
3. Initiate actions that promote environmental justice in all sustainability endeavors

Required Readings

There is no textbook required for this course. Readings will be assigned and available via the class Canvas website.

Class Groups

Each student will participate in two of the class groups. Each group will be working on different aspects of the Earth Day event and related activities, but some groups may have more work at the beginning of the semester while others will have more work later on. This allows students to work in multiple groups over the semester. Each group will have an ERC Director Facilitator. While each group will have some specific tasks, all groups will also be required to help with logistics on the day of the event itself and other ED-related tasks during the semester (e.g. budget, promotional video).

Earth Day Event Budget & Fundraising (Lead: Simon Jan Maranguis): While all the groups will create a sub-budget for their own activities (as relevant or needed), this group will be in charge of putting all the numbers and justifications together and submitting a formal budget request to Associated Students and attending a Zoom meeting with the A.S. Finance Committee.

Earth Day Week Calendar & Events Promotion (Lead: Kaili Mallari): This group will be in charge of creating and disseminating a calendar of events that lists all Earth Day-related events happening at SJSU for Earth Day week, in collaboration with the Office of Sustainability. This requires reaching out to various departments and campus groups to find out if they are planning teach-ins or other events, and getting all the info needed to be able to share these events with the larger community and allow them to participate (e.g. time, location/zoom info, etc.). This group will also be in charge of creating promotional material for ERC and for the ED event (videos, flyers, etc.), and designing and ordering ED t-shirts to be delivered in the first week of April.

Earth Day Stage, Music, and Equipment (Lead: Malvika Malhotra): This group will be in charge of scheduling, confirming, and managing all ED activities occurring on the main stage/lawn, and securing music (DJ or live band) for the event. These activities will likely include a yoga class, speeches by campus leaders, a sustainable fashion show, a dance performance, and more. This group will be responsible for making sure that the stage and proper sound equipment have been secured for the event, coordinating the various groups performing/using the stage, introducing speakers, and making sure things run smoothly and according to schedule.

Course Requirements, Grading Information, Project Groups and ERC Expectations

This course is a credit/no credit. Students must meet the following three criteria to receive credit:

1. Attend Class:

In-class participation is essential for teams to coordinate, to learn about other team projects, and to advance the goals of the course. Groups will regularly report on their progress during class. Individual participation points are also earned during class time. **Students cannot receive credit if more than 2 class meetings are missed without a valid excuse.** Also, being late to class (tardies) two times will be counted as an absence. **** In person participation is evaluated in each class. ****

2. Complete Unit Hours:

To receive credit, students must work the minimum required hours based on units enrolled:

1-unit student = 25 hours

2-unit student = 55 hours

3-unit student = 100 hours

To receive credit for your hours, fill out your timesheet and provide write-ups! *Keep track of your ERC hours regularly to make sure you receive credit.*

Update time-sheets and write-ups every Sunday by midnight.

****Directors will check them every week.****

What is a Write-up? In order to track your work outside class, complete a detailed write-up with photos of you doing the work. Write ups are required to be sent to the directors within a week of doing the hours. If they are not submitted within a week, those hours will not count or be accepted.

Total required hours are based on the number of units you are taking and divided as follows:

Hours Categories	1 unit = 25 hours	2 units = 55 hours	3 units = 100 hours
<i>Outside Hours.</i> Hours earned outside of class from independent and group work, as well as volunteering	20	45	85
Garden Hours/Spartan Eats	3	6	9
Earth Day Hours (<i>day of the event</i>)	2	4	6
<i>TOTAL</i>	25	55	100

Outside Hours. Hours Earned outside of class doing Independent and Group Work

Group meeting hours and hours you spend working on your group projects outside of class count in this category. Write ups are required to document these hours. Hours are also earned through volunteering for or participating in activities identified by the ERC directors, such as volunteering for environmental groups, attending environmental talks and seminars on campus, and completing other activities as identified by the ERC Directors.

To get credit for your hours, you must record your hours each week in your timesheet and provide a write up. Include travel time for any off-campus event you attend on your timesheet.

There are a number of volunteer organizations with multiple and recurring events. We recommend you find such a group that you might enjoy volunteering with multiple times over the semester. Be sure to regularly check the listed hours opportunities as they will be updated by the directors.

Here is a list of groups that often meet throughout the semester:

- [Keep Coyote Creek Beautiful](#)
- [Spartan Food Pantry](#)
- [South Bay Clean Creeks Coalition](#)
- [Guadalupe River Park Conservancy](#)
- [Amah Mutsun Land Trust](#)
- [San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory](#)
- [Open Space Authority](#)

If you find a group that you would like to volunteer with during the semester, please let Amy Petersen know what that group is so that she can approve it.

Here are additional ways to earn hours for this category:

- ***Hiking Hours:*** Complete and document a hike in a park each month. You can count up to 5 hours of hiking each month toward your unit hours if you are taking the class for 2 or 3 units; 2.5 hours for one- unit students.
- ***Garden Hours:*** Hours earned volunteering at the Caesar Chavez Community Action Center campus community garden located at 372 E. San Salvador Street. See above table for the maximum hours you can volunteer.
- ***Earth Day Event Hours:*** All students in the class are required to participate in the Earth Day event which will occur in April
- ***Assignment Points:*** To receive credit for the course, you must participate productively by earning in person participation points. Here is how these points are assigned:

Assignments	1 unit	2 units	3 units	Due Date
In-class Participation (Individual)	15 points	15 points	15 points	various
Weekly Check In	30 points	30 points	30 points	various
Group e-Portfolio	10 points	20 points	30 points	5/6
Group Final Presentation	20 points	30 points	40 points	5/6

Here is a description of each element required for participation points:

Introductory Presentation: Give us a brief informal self-introduction presentation in class. Follow the example that one of the directors gives in class.

In-class Participation: These points will be earned through participating in class discussions, breakout groups, group reports and other in-class activities.

Group Projects: Group members will work together on a specific campaign to promote sustainability on campus. This semester, each group will undertake sustainability actions to advance their group's mission and organize tabling events that engages with the campus community to provide information on the group's goals, describes the group's activities and encourages sustainability actions. Assignments for the project and developing the website are listed below and each assignment is described on the Canvas site. Groups will report on their activities in class.

Groups will also present a ***Final Group Presentation on May 6th***. Each group will make a PowerPoint presentation that summaries their collective work and learning.

** Assessed by Amy Petersen, your student director, and the group's OOS contact at the end of the semester based on work completed relative to the Project Action Plan.

Group e-Portfolio - Due May 6th: This document will be a complete record of the work completed during the semester. **A previous group's portfolio from a past semester will be shared with you, as a model.** Your portfolio not only documents your group's activities and achievements but should also be designed as a **reference to assist future ERC students.**

Your group's portfolio should include the following:

- Portfolio outline, with a list of all materials in the portfolio
- Descriptive summary of your group's work and achievements
- Action plan and recommendations for students next semester to advance the work of your group
- Personal contacts with titles and a description of their importance to your group's work, an example of this would be partners from your events
- All materials and documents generated by your group's project, including meeting dates and summaries, correspondence, press releases, posters, photos, etc.
- 2-and 3-unit students: Provide a summary demonstrating student involvement and recommendations for the ERC and SJSU

ERC Member Expectations

All ERC students should have a professional approach to the ERC. You are representing a non-profit organization that works towards improving sustainability by educating the campus community. Here are expectations for all ERC members:

- **Take your commitments seriously.** Your group members are relying on you to do your part.
- **Behave in a professional manner.** You are representing the ERC, the Environmental Studies Department, and SJSU, so please act and dress accordingly.
- **Ask questions.** If you have a problem, please ask for help from other ERC students, ERC directors, or the faculty advisor. We are a team, and we are here to support each other.
- **Respect the diversity and opinions of others.** Please be respectful to others and be professional both in the ERC class and at ERC events.
- **Show pride in the ERC and be a positive and collaborative group member.**

University Policies

All university policies are found on the Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](#). Be sure to go to this site and familiarize yourself with these policies. They are important to you.

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the land on which SJSU rests as the traditional home of the Puichon Ohlone-speaking people and the present day Muwekma Ohlone Tribe. The Muwekma Ohlone Tribe is composed of all known surviving Native American lineages aboriginal to the San Francisco Bay region who trace their ancestry through the Missions San Jose, Santa Clara, and Dolores and the historic federally recognized Verona Band of Alameda County. In the Muwekma Ohlone language, *Cocenyó* means “the people.” We take this opportunity to thank the original caretakers of this land.