Students Get Environmental at Canyon Country Campus

Beginning this fall, the College of the Canyons Canyon Country campus will give students the chance to delve into the ongoing worldwide environmental movement and begin preparing for careers in this rapidly growing industry, with a new course in the field of Environmental Science.

“The Canyon Country Campus is ideally suited for students interested in studying the environment and natural resources,” said Dr. Dena Maloney, Vice President of the Canyon Country Campus and Economic Development. “The new Environmental Science program will offer wonderful opportunities for students who wish to pursue careers in these new and emerging fields.”

The college’s Environmental Science program will prepare students for transfer to four-year schools by providing a broad base of natural science course work, paired with a well-rounded selection of general education courses.

Throughout the course students will be provided with the instruction and background needed to obtain advanced degrees and eventually pursue careers in the solar technology, bio-fuel technology and environmental surveying industries — along with a multitude of environmentally inspired consultancy positions.

“The completion of an advanced degree in this discipline can lead to a variety of environmental positions with firms and organizations, both commercial and governmental,” said Jeannie Chari, associate professor of the Earth, Space and Environmental Sciences department.

During the fall 2011 semester the course Environmental Science (ENVRMT) 103: Introduction to Environmental Science will debut at the college’s Canyon Country campus. Including a laboratory and field studies component, a portion of the class hours will be conducted at the Camp Tahquitz Outdoor Education Center, located in the San Bernardino Mountains near Big Bear Lake.

The course will familiarize students with the Earth’s natural processes, while providing an understanding of the environmental processes associated with today’s society. Course instructors will emphasize use of the scientific method through a series of semester-long research projects, experiments and field activities that will allow students to develop the skills needed to thrive in any environmentally related career field.

“Over the next decade jobs within the environmental sector will be among the fastest growing, not just in California but in the world,” said Vincent Devlahovich, chair and associate professor of the college’s Earth, Space and Environmental Sciences department. “It’s important that we present students at the community college level with the training needed to obtain a degree, start a career and eventually begin serving as leaders of the worldwide movement toward conservation and sustainability.”

In fact, the presence of a field studies component in the curriculum of both courses has positioned College of the Canyons as one of the only community colleges in the state to offer an Environmental Science program that includes both a lab and field studies component.

“The field studies component will be revolutionary in terms of the breadth of knowledge and well rounded approach it provides,” Chari said. “It will allow our students to apply what they’ve learned in both the lecture and lab setting, in a more natural environment.”

For students looking to compliment their experience in ENVRMT 103, the course Environmental Studies (ENVRMT) 101: Introduction to Environmental Studies will introduce students to the use of earth’s natural resources by human civilizations and the roles that economics, ethics, law, history, politics, culture and gender inequity have continually played in resource use and distribution.
ENVRMT 101 will be offered at the college’s Valencia campus during the fall 2011 semester, with a portion of the course hours again being conducted at the Camp Tahquitz Outdoor Education Center.

“Companies and organizations will soon be looking to hire scientists who are content experts in these fields,” said Omar Torres, dean of the college’s Mathematics, Science and Engineering Division. “I’m hopeful these courses will give our students more opportunities to investigate some of the environmental issues they’re interested in, while simultaneously completing the necessary credits to transfer and achieve their career goals.”

For more information about the College of the Canyons Environmental Science and Environmental Studies courses visit www.canyons.edu/departments/ESES/ or contact Omar Torres at (661) 362-3135.