The Natural Resources and Environmental Science (NRES) interdisciplinary major offers a comprehensive range of academic enrichment experiences to its undergraduates. The unique curriculum provides students with experiential learning opportunities both in and out of class.

**Major Requirements**

Half of the first 14 courses required for the major contain field work of some variety, whether it is going outside to study plants, sample water, or monitor wildlife. These major requirements are just the beginning; once a student moves farther into the curriculum and chooses an area of focus, there are even more field, lab, and hands on courses to be taken. Major requirement classes include: FOR 230, FOR 340, FOR 460, NRE 301, NRE 320, NRE 395 or NRE 399, NRE 471.

**Pre-Professional Experiential Learning Requirement**

All NRES majors are required to complete a pre-professional experiential learning requirement to give students exposure to real world natural resource work. This can be satisfied through an independent study research project (NRE 395) or an internship (NRE 399). Most NRES majors complete an internship, and a 38-page Experiential Learning Guide has been created to help students choose and obtain a position. Each year in October, NRES hosts an Internship Forum where that year’s students from NRE 395 and NRE 399 create and present a poster based on their experiences. This brings the learning full circle and gives them exposure to peers and faculty in a professional setting.

**NRES Summer Camp**

NRES Summer Camp (NRE 320) is one of the best opportunities for hands on, experiential learning. Held each May, students spend 15-days in cabins at Robinson Forest, UK’s 14,800-acre research forest. Here students learn by doing, rain or shine, they are outside in this field methods course. Topics covered at camp include aquatic ecology, soil classification, water quality, wildlife assessment, mining and reclamation, taxonomy of forest vegetation, stream restoration and more. In 2013 and 2014 NRES offered two summer camps, one in Robinson Forest and one in Costa Rica.
MAMMOTH CAVE FIELD TRIP AND SERVICE LEARNING

In NRE 301, Natural Resources and Environmental Science, students participate in an overnight field trip to Mammoth Cave National Park. This class and trip is taken early in the NRES program and is imperative to student bonding. They participate in two days of activities revolving around karst topography and take part in a service learning activity to give back to Mammoth Cave National Park. Meals are all cooked communally and the non-academic benefits of this trip are almost as important as the academic benefits.

CAPSTONE COURSE

Senior year, all NRES students take NRE 471, Senior Problem in Natural Resources. This course is a culmination of everything they have learned in the NRES program, integrating their classroom instruction, summer camp, internship and applied research experiences. In this course, students examine in detail a natural resource or environmental problem in Kentucky. Through a team-approach, students conduct extensive field work, research, analysis, and prepare a report which includes recommendations to address the targeted problem. Their work culminates in one or more publications and an oral presentation to other UK students, faculty, and off-campus stakeholders. The capstone course gives students the opportunity to work closely with natural resource professionals and community stakeholders in a pre-professional context, providing a bridge between the classroom and the workplace. During this experience, NRES students enhance their workplace skills, professionalism, teamwork, and technical expertise.

EDUCATION ABROAD

An exciting option for NRES students is to Study Abroad. Students broaden their knowledge base by using what they've learned in an international, real-world setting. In 2013 and 2014, NRES offered NRE 320 Summer Camp in Costa Rica where NRES students and two faculty members spent 15 days in the field. In addition, in 2013, two students went to Indonesia, one to Thailand, and one to Germany for the fall semester. In 2012, one student went to Costa Rica for the fall semester. In 2011 one student went to Belize, while another went as far as Thailand. In 2010, a student studied in Kenya. There are numerous study abroad and internship abroad opportunities that have an environmental focus. NRES is working closely with the Education Abroad Office to bring these opportunities to its students.
**Hands-on Training Courses**

NRES supplements the curriculum by bringing in outside training opportunities for students. In January 2012 and 2014 NRES teamed with UK Outdoor Pursuits to offer a Wilderness First Responder Course through The National Outdoor Leadership School’s Wilderness Medicine Institute. Wilderness medicine certification is required for a wide variety of outdoor jobs worldwide. The 9-day course included a comprehensive wilderness medicine curriculum that focused on extended care and unique wilderness therapies. See the video here:  
https://tinyurl.com/NRESWFR

In 2011, 2012, and 2013 NRES also offered a Wildland Fire Training Course for students. This course was taught online and in-person.

**Environmental Science Club**

In 2011, a group of NRES students got together and formed the UK Environmental Science Club. Each year they have plans for academic, service learning, and social events. With over 20 NRES students in the club, as well as other majors, this provides an additional venue for exploration outside of the classroom.

**Additional Information**

You can watch the video, “Becoming a Natural Resources and Environmental Science Student” for an overview of the major here:  
http://tinyurl.com/becomingNRES.

Website: http://nres.ca.uky.edu

Facebook: “UK Natural Resources and Environmental Science” (www.facebook.com/KentuckyNRES),

Instagram: @kentuckynres