



**Widener University**  
Commonwealth Law School  
Law and Government Institute

**TO:** Interested Students

**FROM:** Robert F. Teplitz   
Director, Law & Government Institute

**DATE:** October 29, 2025

**RE:** New Environmental Law Certificate Requirements

The Environmental Law (EL) certificate is offered jointly by the Law & Government Institute and the Environmental Law & Sustainability Center. The faculty recently approved a revision to the certificate requirements developed by Professors Pappalardo, Pensley, and me. The new requirements will go into effect at the beginning of the Spring 2026 semester.

The new requirements create a similar structure for the EL certificate as the structure for the other three certificates offered by the Institute. This structure will allow EL certificate students to more easily pursue other certificates offered by the Institute while completing the necessary coursework, developing relevant experience, and receiving sufficient exposure to environmental law and policy to justify special recognition.

A chart comparing the old and new requirements is attached for your review. You may wish to consult it as you register for classes going forward. However, EL certificate students who have formally expressed their interest prior to the end of the Fall 2025 semester will be permitted to pursue their certificate under whichever set of requirements increases their ability to earn the certificate.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the directors of the Institute and/or the Center. We look forward to working with you as you pursue your interest in this area of the law.

cc: Chiara Pappalardo  
Assistant Professor of Law and Co-Director, Environmental Law & Sustainability Center

D.S. Pensley  
Assistant Professor of Law and Co-Director, Environmental Law & Sustainability Center

Jill E. Family  
Associate Dean for Faculty Research & Development, Professor of Law, and Faculty Advisor, Law & Government Institute

| <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>OLD REQUIREMENTS</u></b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>NEW REQUIREMENTS</u></b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>COURSE:</b> Government Law Colloquium</li> <li>2. <b>COURSE:</b> Environmental Law</li> <li>3. <b>ELECTIVE (at least one):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agricultural Law</li> <li>▪ Animal Law</li> <li>▪ Climate Change*</li> <li>▪ Energy Law</li> <li>▪ Land Use Planning</li> <li>▪ Medical Marijuana</li> <li>▪ Natural Resources Law</li> <li>▪ Oil &amp; Gas Law</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. <b>SEMINAR (at least one):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Climate Change*</li> <li>▪ International Environmental Law</li> <li>▪ Sustainability Law Practicum*</li> </ul> </li> <li>5. <b>EXPERIENTIAL (at least one):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contract Drafting (Legal Methods III)</li> <li>▪ Legislative Drafting (Legal Methods III)</li> <li>▪ Negotiation</li> <li>▪ Sustainability Law Practicum*</li> <li>▪ Trial Methods</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p><i>*The same subject matter, if offered in different forms (e.g., as both an elective and a seminar), cannot satisfy two course slots.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. <b>GPA:</b> Must earn at least a 2.6 in the above four courses; 3.25 for certificate with honors</li> <li>7. <b>WORK REQUIREMENT:</b> Must complete an environmental internship or externship</li> <li>8. <b>WRITING REQUIREMENT:</b> Must write an academic paper on an environmental law and policy topic</li> </ol> | <p><i>[courses can be taken in any order, subject to prerequisites established by the Registrar]</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>FOUNDATION:</b> Government Law Colloquium</li> <li>2. <b>CORE:</b> Environmental Law</li> <li>3. <b>ELECTIVE/SEMINAR (at least <u>two</u> of the following courses):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agricultural Law</li> <li>▪ Animal Law</li> <li>▪ Climate Change</li> <li>▪ Energy Law</li> <li>▪ Environmental Litigation</li> <li>▪ International Environmental Law</li> <li>▪ Land Use Planning</li> <li>▪ Natural Resources Law</li> <li>▪ Oil &amp; Gas Law</li> <li>▪ Sustainable Development</li> <li>▪ Other courses at the discretion of the Director of the Law &amp; Government Institute</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. <b>GPA:</b> Must earn at least a 2.6 in the above four courses; 3.25 for certificate with honors</li> <li>5. <b>WORK REQUIREMENT:</b> Must complete an internship, externship, or judicial clerkship that is approved in advance by the Director of the Law &amp; Government Institute</li> <li>6. <b>WRITING REQUIREMENT:</b> Must write an academic paper <u>on an environmental law and policy topic</u> that is approved in advance by the Director of the Law &amp; Government Institute</li> </ol> |