Earth and Planetary Sciences Major
Requirements (B.A.)
(Also see Requirements for a Bachelor’s Degree. (https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/arts-sciences/full-time-residential-programs/undergraduate-policies/academic-policies/requirements-for-a-bachelors-degree/))

The Bachelor of Arts in Earth and Planetary Sciences is for undergraduates interested in the study of the physical, chemical, and biological processes that shape the Earth and the other planets, drawing on the disciplines of geology, geochemistry, geophysics, hydrology, ecology, geobiology, oceanography, and atmospheric science.

Students should design a specific plan of appropriate courses in consultation with their advisor and the EPS Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS). Those who wish to be majors may proceed directly to the introductory courses at the 200-level, but depending on the student’s background, it may be appropriate initially to take a freshman seminar or 100-level course designed for the non-major. Our courses provide a broad educational base in the Earth, planetary, and environmental sciences and enable exploration of a set of electives at the 300- and 400-level, depending on the area of interest. Students who plan to attend graduate school are strongly encouraged to engage in undergraduate research and complete a senior thesis under the supervision of a department faculty member.

The department requires a total of 9-11 credits at the 100-level or above and 12 credits at the 300-level or above in Earth, planetary, and environmental sciences (numbered AS.270.xxx), as well as science and math foundation courses from other departments. No more than one environmental studies course numbered AS.271.xxx may apply towards the EPS major. Courses taken at another institution that are not directly equivalent to a JHU course may not apply towards these EPS elective course requirements without permission of the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

To earn honors in the major, students must meet the following criteria:

- Earn a GPA of 3.50 or higher in the major requirements by the end of the senior year.
- Complete a total of 6 credits of AS.270.510 Senior Thesis taken over two or more semesters. A grade of B or better must be earned for the
first 3 credits to register for additional thesis credits. A grade of B+ or better must be earned in the final semester in order to qualify for honors.

• Complete a senior thesis research project rated very good or excellent by the student’s thesis committee.
• Present the results of the thesis orally in the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences.