

COASTAL AND OCEAN STUDIES MINOR

Campus: NYC, Westchester

Our Watery Context

Pace University's Lower Manhattan campus is surrounded by water and Westchester campuses are located in the valley of a great tidal estuary. We teach in a city that is an archipelago, impacted by ocean pollution and rising seas, but also with a rich history of connections to the world through its waters, including international trade and immigration. Many of the oceanfront communities in New York City are among its most marginal, including areas like Rockaway and Staten Island that have been neglected by public policy. Coastal and ocean issues in New York City and Westchester intersect with many discussions of environmental justice and marginalization. Pace has a long history of engagement with the Hudson River, through partnerships with environmental institutions like The Riverkeeper.

While so much of conceptions of the humanities, social sciences and sciences are focused on events and processes on land, it is a limited area of the world's surface. The realities of climate change have drawn attention to our need to preserve our global commons, including our atmosphere and oceans, which are governed collectively as the "common heritage of humankind" rather than any one government. Thinking about the arts and sciences, particularly in New York City specifically, from the point of view of the sea creates a very different way of thinking about how the world works.

Approach and Objectives of a New Minor in Coastal and Ocean Studies

The Political Science and Environmental Studies and Science departments offer a minor in Coastal and Ocean Studies that is interdisciplinary, place-based, and focused on addressing the challenges posed by climate change. In particular, the minor:

- Builds students' climate resiliency by cultivating place-based knowledge, skills and attitudes useful for addressing the climate change-related challenges faced by coastal and maritime communities;
- Prepares students to contribute to environmental justice policymaking, advocacy and activism in coastal and maritime communities;
- Nurtures students' appreciation for multiple and inter-disciplinary ways of knowing about coasts and oceans from across the liberal arts curriculum, including the arts, humanities, social sciences and sciences;
- Prepares students for possible careers in environmental conservation; ocean policy; coastal and ocean tourism; maritime shipping, trade and transportation; marine resources; and the "Blue Economy";
- Enables further partnerships between Pace and coastal and ocean-related institutions in the region.