

Unlike many other majors at Wells and disciplines in general, the field of Sustainability is fairly new. There is not yet a canon that defines what is core to the discipline. The creation of this major and this assessment plan is therefore very much a work in progress.

To set about the work of writing this assessment plan, I had IT create a list serve of the faculty who teach in the major and using that asked everyone to suggest the goals of the major. We also met in person. The faculty teaching in the major are: Kent Klitgaard, Milene Morfei, Ernie Olson, Tukumbi Mumumba-Kasongo, Erinn Ryenn, Laura McClusky, Niamh O'Leary, Jackie Schnurr, Dan Renfrow, and Tina Limpert. Marion Brown, Directory of Sustainability has also been a part of this discussion.

Each of those teaching in the major have primary duties beyond this major. In an effort to make our commitment to the major more recognizable we have inquired of the Provost what would be required to change our titles to reflect our participation in the major. This would signal to ourselves, the institution, current student and prospective students that we have a commitment to this major and the growing field of sustainability.

We need to spend much more time in the following year to discuss, as a group, what our strengths are as individual faculty so that we know, as a collective, that we can offer our students everything we feel they need to gain from a major in this newly established field. We have faced several challenges so far in defining essential skills. There is a balance that must be struck between offering a major that takes about 1/3 of the students' credits, with mastering basic skills plus having the depth of knowledge necessary for even addressing the issues of sustainability. Until we can agree, as a group, on this balance, we will not have curriculum that satisfies any of us. Our plan, therefore includes holding several discussions to address this.

Mission Statement: The Sustainability major allows students to examine the environment as a physical, social, economic, cultural and psychological entity that humans have imperiled. From both a global and a local perspective, we provide students with the knowledge and skills to understand the origins of the problems the environment faces, we direct them to thinking about multi-faceted solutions, and we help them to develop possible personal and societal adaptations to a changing world.

Sustainability Program Goals and Measurement: At this point in assessment, we are simply listing our goals and pointing out obvious places where these goals can be met and measured. This report is basically a mapping of the curriculum. With further discussion, we can become more detailed in both recognizing where in the curriculum our goals currently are being met, exactly how they are being met and what gaps we might be able to fill and how.

Goal 1: Students will have a foundation of knowledge about the issues of sustainability from several disciplines, and will develop a basic understanding of how these disciplines can work together to create a more sustainable world.

The structure of the major requires students take courses in several disciplines, this assures at least exposure to ideas and concepts important to sustainability. By passing these courses, students will have built the foundation for understanding the issues of sustainability. SUS 101 is the entry level course exposes students to the issues that courses in psychology, environmental studies, anthropology, economics and political science will develop in depth, and will provide a basic foundation for understanding the interconnections.

The capstone SUS 401 is another place where purposeful discussions of interdisciplinary approaches take place. Currently the capstone is working under the model of a thesis writing course, this may change when we have students who reach that level. Ideally, the capstone will remain a course in which the content is student driven.

As the major grows, we hope to propose a team-taught course at the 200 or 300-level that also directly helps the student recognize productive connections between disciplines. This course might be related to an OCS program so students can get practical experience. We have had some preliminary discussion about such a program in Tanzania, and another in Belize.

Measurement: Marion Brown has her students in SUS 101 take a national test of knowledge of sustainability. This same test can be given in the capstone to see if students have changed their understanding and their behavior. A meta-approach might also be taken, where the student is asked to critique the test itself, perhaps being asked to improve on it given the knowledge s/he has gained in the past four years.

Objective 1: Students will have basic scientific understanding of ecosystems and the limits of these systems.

The major currently requires students to take ENVR 101: Introduction to Environmental Science. This objective might be added to in greater depth depending on the areas of specialization that requires them to take BIOL 119.

Measurement: At this time passing the class indicates that students have met this objective.

Objective 2: Students will have an understanding of economic systems, the problems of capitalism and the necessary strain it puts on ecosystems.

Students must take and pass ECON 101 Macroeconomics and ECON 102 Microeconomics to build basic knowledge of the economic system we live in. This objective is continued if the student continues along the area of specialization that allow them to take the following classes: ECON 325 Ecological Economics, ECON 326 Energy and the Economy OR ECON 209 Introduction to Political Economy.

Measurement: At this time passing these classes indicates that students have met this objective.

Objective 3: Students will have a cross-cultural or trans-national comparative understanding of how humans interact with the environment in ways that both put undo strain on the environment, and ways that are less harmful to the environment. Included in this is a critical analysis of “the good life.”

At this time students meet this objective by taking electives in the major such as RELG 330 Native Americans and the Environment, ANTH 359 The Pacific and Cultural Survival, ANTH 230 Culture and Gardens, ANTH 270 The Social Science of Food, SC 101 Water and Culture, PSY 335 Psychology of Environmental Sustainability, SOC 277 Social Inequalities, WGS 285 Gender, the Environment and Sustainability. McClusky, during her 2015-2016 sabbatical, will develop a course titled, The Anthropology of the Good Life.

Measurement: At this time passing any of these classes indicates this objective is met.

Objective 4: Students will be knowledgeable of both domestic and international public policy as it pertains to environmental issues.

Students must take and pass INTL 350 Comparative Policy analysis. This objective might be added to in greater depth depending on the areas of specialization the student follows.

Measurement: At this time passing this class indicates that students have met this objective.

Objective 5: Students will understand the individual psychological benefits of being aware of nature, how individual awareness creates a more healthy society and how we can persuade others to examine their relationship to building a healthy planet.

Students must take and pass PSY 335 Psychology of Environmental Sustainability. This objective might be added to in greater depth depending on the areas of specialization the student follows.

Measurement: At this time passing this class indicates that students have met this objective

Objective 6: Students will understand how issues of equity and diversity, in the social sphere, are related to issues of sustainability.

At this time student can meet this objective by taking electives in the major such as: WGS 285 Gender, the Environment and Sustainability, SOC 277 Social Inequalities, ECON 209 Introduction to Political Economy and SOC 200 Human and Animal Interaction.

Measurement: At this time passing any of these classes indicates this objective is met.

Goal 2: Students will understand the complex ways human behavior has led to an unsustainable world.

Courses that allow students insight into this goal are: ANTH 270 The Social Science of Food, PSY 335 Psychology of Environmental Sustainability, SOC 277 Social Inequality, WGS 285 Gender, the Environment and Sustainability

Goal 3: Students will understand the complex ways human behavior can lead to a more equitable and sustainable world.

Courses that allow students insight into this goal are: ANTH 270 The Social Science of Food, PSY 335 Psychology of Environmental Sustainability, SOC 277 Social Inequality, WGS 285 Gender, the Environment and Sustainability

Goal 4: Students will be prepared to think about psychological, social and cultural adaptations that are necessary to survive in a changing climate.

Courses that allow students insight into this goal are: RELG 330 Native Americans and the Environment, ANTH 359 The Pacific and Cultural Survival, PSY 335 Psychology of Environmental Sustainability, SOC 277 Social Inequality, SC 101 Water and Culture.

Goal 5: To take a personal inventory of one's own contribution to the problems and the solutions of sustainability.

Courses that require this are: ANTH 270 The Social Science of Food, PSY 335 Psychology of Environmental Sustainability, WGS 285 Gender, the Environment and Sustainability,

Goal 6: To learn basic organizing skills to help build a movement around issues of sustainability.

Courses that help student develop these skills include: PSY 335 Psychology of Environmental Sustainability, WGS 285 Gender, the Environment and Sustainability.

SEJ 250 Introduction to Community Organizing (not part of the major at the moment, need to discuss if it should be added.)