

AASHE: Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education

STARS program: The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System
<https://stars.aashe.org/pages/about/stars-overview.html>

SRJC Sustainability director, Climate Corps Fellows, and other Sust. Comm. members have been working for at least a year on our STARS application; we are >70% complete. Once we receive our STARS rating, it will put SRJC on the national map re. Sustainability. Part of the STARS acknowledgement highlights curriculum as well as other dimensions of various campus operations.

CURRICULUM

AASHE's definitions:

Sustainability Courses

Sustainability courses are courses in which the *primary and explicit* focus is on sustainability and/or on understanding or solving one or more major sustainability challenge. This includes:

- A. **Foundational courses in which the primary and explicit focus is on sustainability** as an integrated concept having social, economic, and environmental dimensions. Obvious examples include Introduction to Sustainability, Sustainable Development, and Sustainability Science, however courses may also count if their course descriptions indicate a primary and explicit focus on sustainability.
- B. **Courses in which the primary and explicit focus is on the application of sustainability within a field.** As sustainability is an interdisciplinary topic, such courses generally incorporate insights from multiple disciplines. Obvious examples include Sustainable Agriculture, Architecture for Sustainability, and Sustainable Business, however courses may also count if their course descriptions indicate a primary and explicit focus on sustainability within a field.
- C. **Courses in which the primary focus is on providing skills and/or knowledge directly connected to understanding or solving one or more major sustainability challenges.** A course might provide knowledge and understanding of the problem or tools for solving it, for example Climate Change Science, Renewable Energy Policy, Environmental Justice, or Green Chemistry. Such courses do not necessarily cover "sustainability" as a concept, but should

address more than one of the three dimensions of sustainability (i.e., social wellbeing, economic prosperity, and environmental health).

Courses That Include Sustainability

A course that includes sustainability is primarily focused on a topic other than sustainability, but incorporates a unit or module on sustainability or a sustainability challenge, includes one or more sustainability-focused activities, or integrates sustainability issues throughout the course. To count, these units/modules, activities or issues should be documented in course descriptions or syllabi.

While a foundational course such as chemistry or sociology might provide knowledge that is useful to practitioners of sustainability, it would not be considered to be inclusive of sustainability unless the concept of sustainability or a sustainability challenge is specifically integrated into the course. Likewise, although specific tools or practices such as GIS (Geographical Information Systems) or engineering can be applied towards sustainability, such courses would not count unless they incorporated a unit on sustainability or a sustainability challenge, included a sustainability-focused activity, or incorporated sustainability issues throughout the course.

WHAT WE WANT: to FLAG COURSES in the Course Schedule that either include sustainability or whose primary focus is sustainability, beginning with spring 2019 schedule.

In spring 2018, we sent out an email to all faculty asking whether they include sustainability in the course sections they teach. Compiling and verifying specific sections is a bigger process that will require the next several months to work out, but for now, the first step is to flag the courses which, by their nature, are sustainability courses, irrespective of whoever is teaching them, which won't require any verification by us. See additional file of the core sustainability courses offered at SRJC which will be flagged in this first semester.