



OFFICE OF THE FACULTY COUNCIL

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

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February 16, 2016

Judith H. Langlois
Interim Executive Vice President and Provost
The University of Texas at Austin
MAI 201
Campus Mail Code: G1000

Dear Dr. Langlois:

Enclosed for your consideration and action is proposed addition of the Bachelor of Arts in Sustainability Studies degree program in the College of Liberal Arts chapter in the *Undergraduate Catalog, 2016-2018* (D 14058-14062). Yesterday, the Faculty Council unanimously approved the legislation. The proposal was classified as being of *general* application and of primary interest more than one college or school. The authority to grant final approval resides with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Please let me know if you have questions or if I can provide other information concerning these items of legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hillary Hart".

Hillary Hart, Secretary
General Faculty and Faculty Council

HH:dlr

Enclosure

- xc: Gregory L. Fenves, president
Janet Dukerich, senior vice provost for faculty affairs
- ec: Carol Longoria, deputy to the president
Richard Flores, associate dean for academic affairs, College of Liberal Arts
John St Lawrence, senior administrative associate, liberal arts
Allen Walser, manager of reporting and analysis, IRRIS
Brenda Schumann, associate registrar
Lydia Cornell, program coordinator, provost's office
Michelle George, administrative manager for faculty affairs, provost's office
Linda Dickens, senior director of institutional accreditation and effectiveness
Cindy Cruz, administrative manager, provost's office

DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

**PROPOSED ADDITION OF A BACHELOR OF ARTS IN SUSTAINABILITY STUDIES DEGREE
PROGRAM IN THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS CHAPTER IN THE *UNDERGRADUATE
CATALOG, 2016-2018***

Dean Randy L. Diehl, in the College of Liberal Arts has filed with the secretary of the Faculty Council the following addition to the *Undergraduate Catalog, 2016-2018*. The secretary has classified this proposal as legislation of *general* interest to more than one college or school.

The Committee on Undergraduate Degree Program Review recommended approval of the minor on January 21, 2016, and forwarded the proposal to the Office of the General Faculty. The Faculty Council has the authority to approve this legislation on behalf of the General Faculty. It will be considered by the Faculty Council at its meeting on February 15, 2016. The authority to grant final approval on this legislation resides with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.



Hillary Hart, Secretary
General Faculty and Faculty Council

**PROPOSED ADDITION OF A BACHELOR OF ARTS IN SUSTAINABILITY STUDIES DEGREE
PROGRAM IN THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS CHAPTER IN THE *UNDERGRADUATE*
CATALOG, 2016-2018**

Type of Change Academic Change
 Degree Program Change (THECB form required)

Proposed classification Exclusive General Major

1. IF THE ANSWER TO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IS YES, THE COLLEGE MUST CONSULT LINDA DICKENS, DIRECTOR OF ACCREDITATION AND ASSESSMENT, TO DETERMINE IF SACS-COC APPROVAL IS REQUIRED.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| • Is this a new degree program? | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Does the program offer courses that will be taught off campus? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| • Will courses in this program be delivered electronically? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

2. EXPLAIN CHANGE TO DEGREE PROGRAM AND GIVE A DETAILED RATIONALE FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL CHANGE:

The Sustainability Studies B.A. in Liberal Arts is designed to provide a rigorous and focused study of sustainability methods and content and simultaneously allow a student to complete all degree requirements within four years. While degrees will be granted by the College of Liberal Arts, it will be overseen by an interdisciplinary and cross-college committee to maximize its use of campus resources. Student advising will be provided by the College of Liberal Arts. The Program Director and Capstone Director (full time lecturer positions), supporting TA lines, and staff support will be located in the Department of Geography and the Environment. The program is designed so that future B.A. degrees in Sustainability Studies in other Colleges on campus, such as Architecture, will be possible based on a similar curriculum but with different tracks.

A number of Signature Courses currently exist related to this major. Although valuable, and contributing to core and flag requirements, they may not be used towards major requirements. Especially relevant recent signature courses include, for example, Latin America: Environmental History and Sustainability, Skyscrapers and Polar Bears: Perspectives on Sustainable Design, Global Inequalities and Health, Sustaining a Planet, and Our Global Backyard.

Geography currently has a Sustainability Track; it differs from the proposed Sustainability Studies major in being 30 rather than 39 hours, requiring a minor, and in requiring all course work be completed with GRG credit or cross lists. The track requires two courses each in techniques, environment, and human geography, as well as four courses in the track. Unlike the proposed Sustainability Studies major, there are no experiential or capstone requirements, no gateway course, and no requirements in communication, economics, or politics.

In their first year in the program, all students will be required to enroll in a broad introduction to Sustainability Studies, the Gateway Experience. The Gateway Experience will serve as students' entrée into interdisciplinary learning with hands-on research, teamwork, and practical application. Gateway Experience courses will be designed to carry both the Writing Flag and the Ethics and Leadership Flag.

Each student is required to take three Sustainability Foundation courses, which are intended to be lower-division courses that introduce students to the key concepts, frameworks, and issues related to sustainability and prepare them for further coursework in the major. Students' Sustainability Foundations courses will consist of one Humanities and Social Sciences course, one Environment and Earth Sciences course, and one Economics course. Along with the Gateway Experience, Sustainability Foundation courses will begin developing students' understanding of social, economic, and environmental factors and issues related to sustainability.

Each student is required to take three Theory and Context courses, which are courses specifically tailored to the Sustainability Studies degree. Theory and Context courses will teach students to recognize competing

theoretical frameworks applicable to sustainability studies and actively develop students' ethical and critical thinking skills.

Each student in the program is required to select four courses that constitute a 'theme' or concentration within Sustainability Studies, from the following three thematic areas.

Courses in Trajectories to Sustainability engage in the study of the changing relationships of human societies and cultures with their environments over the broad expanse of human time. They address social, cultural, demographic, economic, and environmental challenges from historical and cultural perspectives, at local and international scales. These courses will also frame and address content in real-world terms by giving students the opportunity to apply content to questions or problems that are relevant to their personal and professional lives. Courses within this track will speak to the history, culture and philosophy of sustainability, in the context of economic development, social justice, food production, rural society, and urbanism, among other topics.

Courses in the Sustainable Choices in a Diverse World engage in the study of what is involved in addressing social, economic, and environmental challenges with equity and respect for diversity, including awareness of issues of class, gender and power. The study of leadership and policy making is informed by ideas from environmental philosophy and ethics. These courses will also frame and address content in real-world terms by giving students the opportunity to apply content to questions or problems that are relevant to their personal and professional lives. As such, courses within this track will speak to the nature of environmental ethics and leadership, in the context of sustainable economic development, social justice, rural society, and urbanism, among other topics.

The Natural Resource Management theme is appropriate for students interested in studying issues of sustainable management and use of natural resources such as water, air, plants, and animals and associated industries such as agriculture, energy, mining, fisheries, and forestry. Courses will focus on the human side of resource management and will prepare students for work or further study in policy, land management, and resource conservation.

Students will finish their course of study with two courses designed to help them bridge theory and application, relating concepts they learned earlier in the program to real-world sustainability problems. Students will be required to take six hours of application coursework, which will include at least three hours of Capstone Experience and an additional three hours of either Capstone Experience or Experiential Learning.

The Experiential Learning course will place students in field-based courses or internships within organizations working on sustainability issues, to give them a significant 'hands-on' element outside of the classroom where they can learn practical skills. The Experiential Learning course will focus on students' individual development and will provide opportunities for reflection. Experiential Learning courses will prepare students for their Capstone Experience, provide networking opportunities through organizational contacts, and familiarize them with "real-world" work. Existing classes with heavy experiential learning components that focus on sustainability concepts may be approved by the Program Director to fulfill the Experiential Learning course requirement.

The degree will culminate in a Capstone Experience taken in the final year of the program. The Capstone Experience may involve partners such as community organizations, governments, industry, and UT Austin Operations to offer students practical experience working cooperatively in groups of students, faculty, and clients on a real-world sustainability issue. It may also involve faculty-led study abroad experiences involving environmental sustainability issues. The Capstone Experience will be flagged for independent inquiry and writing when appropriate.

3. THIS PROPOSAL INVOLVES (Please check all that apply)

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Courses in other colleges | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Courses in proposer's college that are frequently taken by students in other colleges | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Flags |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Course in the core | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in course sequencing for | <input type="checkbox"/> Courses that have to be |

- curriculum
 Change in admission requirements (external or internal)
- an existing program
 Requirements not explicit in the catalog language (e.g., lists of acceptable courses maintained by department office)
- added to the inventory

4. SCOPE OF PROPOSED CHANGE

- a. Does this proposal impact other colleges/schools? Yes No
- If yes, then how?
- b. Do you anticipate a net change in the number of students in your college? Yes No
- If yes, how many more (or fewer) students do you expect? Two hundred more
- c. Do you anticipate a net increase (or decrease) in the number of students from outside of your college taking classes in your college? Yes No
- If yes, please indicate the number of students and/or class seats involved.
- d. Do you anticipate a net increase (or decrease) in the number of students from your college taking courses in other colleges? Yes No
- If yes, please indicate the number of students and/or class seats involved.

If 4 a, b, c, or d was answered with yes, please answer the following questions. If the proposal has potential budgetary impacts for another college/school, such as requiring new sections or a non-negligible increase in the number of seats offered, at least one contact must be at the college-level.

How many students do you expect to be impacted?

Impacted schools must be contacted and their response(s) included:

Person communicated with:

Date of communication:

Response:

- e. Does this proposal involve changes to the core curriculum or other basic education requirements (42-hour core, signature courses, flags)? If yes, explain: No

If yes, undergraduate studies must be informed of the proposed changes and their response included:

Person communicated with:

Date of communication:

Response:

- f. Will this proposal change the number of hours required for degree completion? If yes, explain: No

5. COLLEGE/SCHOOL APPROVAL PROCESS

Department approval date: March 25, 2015 College of Liberal Arts Sustainability Studies Committee

College approval date: May 26, 2015 College of Liberal Arts Policy and Curriculum Committee

Dean approval date: September 21, 2015 College of Liberal Arts Faculty

PROPOSED NEW CATALOG TEXT:

SUSTAINABILITY STUDIES

Major

Thirty-nine semester credit hours, including eighteen upper division, consisting of the following:

- GRG 304E
- Nine hours of Sustainability Foundations, consisting of:
 - Three hours in Humanities & Social Science, chosen from GRG 305, GRG 319, URB 301, SOC 302, and ANT 302
 - Three hours in Environment & Earth Sciences, chosen from GRG 301C, GRG 301K, and GEO 302C
 - Three hours in Economics & Development, chosen from ECO 301, ECO 304K, and ECO 304L
- Nine hours of Sustainability Theories & Context, consisting of:
 - Three hours in Research Design & Methods, chosen from GRG 310C, URB 315, GRG 460C, GRG 373F, and GRG 373K
 - Three hours Communication, chosen from RTF 312C, ANT 307, CMS 306M, CMS 310K, GRG 356, *Reporting on the Environment*, and GRG 356T, *Geography of the Media*
 - Three hours in Politics and Policy, chosen from GRG 306C, GRG 340D, CMS 322E, and CMS 332
- Twelve hours in a Thematic Concentration, chosen from an approved list:
 - Trajectories to Sustainability
 - Sustainable Choices in a Diverse World
 - Natural Resources Management
- One course in Experiential Learning, chosen from BDP 320, GRG 379L, and URB 360
- At least one Capstone Experience course chosen from BDP 320, GRG 323K, GRG 356T, *Environmental and Cultural Dynamics in Botswana*, GRG 356T, *Climate Change and Vegetation Response in the Kalahari*, GRG 374, GRG 379L, J 346F, URB 360, and URB 370