

Fleming College

Advancing Sustainability Across the Curriculum

Proposal for Recognition of Sustainability Knowledge Upon Graduation

Background:

Fleming's current strategic plan embeds a commitment to sustainability – “for our college and our environment” in our corporate values. Our Academic Plan makes sustainability knowledge for all of our graduates a priority and the introduction of a college-wide learning outcome is a significant step in achieving this. Approximately 87% of Diploma Programs have included our Sustainability Learning Outcome in required courses with a goal of 100% by 2018. In addition, a new Indigenous Perspectives Designation (IPD) is available to students across the College. In alignment with a number of recent publications, such as “Greenprint, Jobs of the Future” (2016), Fleming is poised to enhance programs to prepare students “with 21st century skills and sustainability basics for new clean economy workforce”. New Fleming programs such as Sustainable Agriculture; Advanced Water Systems Operation and Management; Aquaculture; Waste Resource Management, and Applied Planning lead this trend. Our renowned reputation at SENRS and CAWT are further examples.

Community-based projects are also at the centre of student learning. The Sustainable Building and Design Program is focused on projects that are built for community use, constructed from natural and local materials and that utilize renewable energy sources. Projects have included an Environmental Education centre, a youth recreation facility, a library and a home for Habitat for Humanity. Our Early Childhood Education program gets students involved with local child care centres to design and create outdoor nature play areas for young children using all natural materials. Our School of Business features applied projects where students work with community organizations and Fleming's Office of Sustainability to deliver sustainability initiatives ranging from energy assessments to marketing campaigns. All of these experiences, and more, give students the opportunity to learn about sustainability in the classroom and then apply what they have learned in the community. The question remains, however, how do we formally recognize the sustainability knowledge and skills that students have gained during their time at the College. The College is now looking at options to recognize students upon graduation in a way that is meaningful to them and to their future employers.

Current Status

Based on discussions with Fleming College's Academic Task Force, Learning Design Team and the Registrar's Office, the following is an initial proposal to recognize students for sustainability knowledge that is acquired through academic and community based learning during their course of study.

Proposal:

Recognition would be introduced in a staged approach. For the graduating class of 2017, students would be able to attain formal Recognition for Sustainability Knowledge by applying on-line starting in January 2017.

The Application would require students to confirm that they have met both academic and community based learning criteria as below:

Completion of one required course containing Fleming College's Sustainability Learning Outcome *plus a combination of one or more of the following;*

- A minimum of *one* additional course that is designated as a "Sustainability Course" or *two* courses that are designated as a "Course Containing Sustainability". * *These designations are based on the International Sustainability Tracking and Rating System (STARS). A list of course offerings at Fleming College that fall into these categories is available on the Office of Sustainability website.*
- Participate in at least one Sustainability Co-Curricular Activity **Each year students have the opportunity to apply their extra-curricular activities to a co-curricular record provided that they meet specific Learning Outcomes. A Sustainability Learning Outcome is included in the Co-Curricular application.*
- Completion of the **"Green Citizen" Course**
<http://www.thegreencitizen.ca/introduction.html>: Developed by Seneca College (Green Citizen Modules take approximately 3 hours to complete and is open source).
- Additional activities: Conference attendance, volunteer work, completion of sustainability – related workshops and other activities as defined by the Academic Task Force and the Office of Sustainability.
- Alternatively, individual schools could develop school-specific or program specific criteria.

The Office of Sustainability would be responsible for confirming that the criteria has been met.

For June, 2017 it is proposed that a Letter of Recognition would be drafted and signed by the Office of Sustainability and the Dean of the student's school or by the VP Academic. (draft letter below) For future years, a form recognition that can be displayed directly on transcripts or on diplomas could be explored.

DRAFT

Letter of Recognition from Sir Sanford Fleming College

Sustainability Knowledge

Dear

This letter is to formally recognize your commitment to understanding and acting upon issues of sustainability. You have successfully completed course(s) containing Sir Sanford Fleming College's Sustainability Learning Outcome. This has given you the ability to make interconnections between the principles of sustainability which include human health and well-being, ecological health, social issues and secure livelihoods - in order to support a better world for all generations. Further, you have taken additional courses that are focused on sustainability allowing you to understand, not only broad principles of sustainability, but also how these may be applied to your field of study.

Most importantly, you have applied this knowledge to co-curricular and other activities. In addition to successfully completing your studies, you have worked on projects and initiatives that have had positive benefits socially, economically and environmentally both for the College community and the wider community that we serve. In understanding the interconnections between the principles of sustainability and applying them in practical and beneficial ways you have achieved the very heart of the sustainability knowledge we aspire to provide for our graduates.

We know that the skills you have applied during your program of study are greatly needed across all fields of study. It is therefore with great pleasure that Sir Sanford Fleming College formally recognizes and thanks you for your commitment to sustainability and the skills you will take with you to "support a better world for all generations".

Prepared by: Fleming College, Office of Sustainability