



SUSTAINABILITY INSTITUTE

COURSE SUMMARY

SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING is increasingly essential to achieve operational excellence across industries. While most organizations recognize this to be a growing necessity, finding the time and expertise to draft a strategic sustainability plan can often be challenging. A time commitment is required to spell out the specific goals, actions, and outcomes needed to measure sustainability progress at one's organization.

Members of the AZA Green Scientific Advisory Group and park and recreation professionals have partnered with Oglebay and North Carolina State University to create a sustainability planning course that will simplify the process. The course is organized to highlight the big themes within a sustainability plan (reducing environmental impacts of utilities including, water, energy, waste) while also focusing on the softer skills needed to implement a successful plan including employee and stakeholder engagement.

This course is designed to introduce the typical contents and concepts in a sustainability plan while providing time for course participants to organize data and draft outlines for their own organizations. Even organizations with advanced sustainability practices may lack the clarity and consistent metrics from not having adopted an institution-wide plan. Engaging exercises throughout the course will help participants gain confidence in the principles of sustainability planning while providing them focused time to draft a plan outline appropriate for their organization along with strategies for gaining stakeholder input for effective adoption.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Introduce terminology and concepts essential to organizational sustainability plans.
- Define metrics for tracking progress across categories such as energy, water, waste, etc.
- Organize utility data for a minimum of 12 months of bills to establish a baseline for each respective participating organization.
- Formulate a mission, vision, and goals within the categories explored.
- Draft a sustainability plan outline for organization.
- Establish a plan for gaining stakeholder feedback on draft of the plan.

COURSE SCHEDULE

MONDAY

- Explore why sustainability matters within the global context and why sustainability planning at the organizational level is an effective strategy to progress.
- Define the sustainability planning process.
- Establish metrics and baselines for consistent tracking of data.
- Introduction to energy systems.

TUESDAY

- Energy systems continued with guidance on interpreting utility bills, identifying the greatest consumers on campus, and establishing goals for reduction.
- Water management overview with focus on potable water systems and methods for consumption reduction through proven strategies.

WEDNESDAY

- Sustainable design & construction terminology and concepts will be explored and advice provided on creating guidelines for new projects and renovations.
- Building & site management dives into the ongoing facilities maintenance and business operations highlighting opportunities for enhancing green practices through routine activities.
- Establishing a vision & mission for institutional sustainability plans after utilities have been organized and baseline metrics defined.
- Purchasing strategies and policies introduced to streamline sustainability goals across categories in the plan.

THURSDAY

- Managing waste streams (recycling, composting, landfill, etc.) and establishing consistent metrics to track waste reduction goals over time.
- Chemical management will delve into the storage, use, and disposal of chemicals ranging from cleaning compounds to hazardous products used in operations with focusing on methods for reducing the use of harmful chemicals with green alternatives.
- Employee engagement methods will advise participants how they can build consensus and support for adoption of the sustainability plan at their respective institutions.