

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA ASHEVILLE
FACULTY SENATE

Senate Document Number SD3523S
Date of Senate Approval 03/30/2023

Statement of Faculty Senate Action:

**APC Document 25 (IST): Delete IST 330, Sustainability Seminar, renumbering it as IST 230;
Revise the requirements for the Interdisciplinary Certificate in Sustainability**

Effective Date: Fall 2023

1. Delete: On page 190, the entry for **IST 330, Sustainability Seminar:**

330 Sustainability Seminar (1)

Drawing on the combined expertise of faculty, staff and students from across the university this course will explore sustainability issues and challenges in local to global contexts. The concept of sustainability lies at the nexus of socioeconomic, humanistic, and environmental systems. The diverse perspectives, theories, and terminology in the field of sustainability are explored. The course focuses on key knowledge areas of sustainability theory, policy, and practice, including population, ecosystems, climate change, energy, agriculture, water, the built environment, economics, policy, ethics, and cultural history. Readings and discussions will touch on topics such as natural resource use, local and global sustainability efforts, environmental justice, and current emerging topics in sustainability. We will apply different academic lenses and scales of analysis to reach a complex and multi-faceted understanding of our collective opportunities and impacts. Prerequisite: Junior standing or permission of instructor. Fall.

Add: On page 190, in place of the deleted entry:

230 Sustainability Seminar (1)

Drawing on the combined expertise of faculty, staff and students from across the university this course will explore sustainability issues and challenges in local to global contexts. The concept of sustainability lies at the nexus of socioeconomic, humanistic, and environmental systems. The diverse perspectives, theories, and terminology in the field of sustainability are explored. The course focuses on key knowledge areas of sustainability theory, policy, and practice, including population, ecosystems, climate change, energy, agriculture, water, the built environment, economics, policy, ethics, and cultural history. Readings and discussions will touch on topics such as natural resource use, local and global sustainability efforts, environmental justice, and current emerging topics in sustainability. We will apply different academic lenses and scales of analysis to reach a complex and multi-faceted understanding of our collective opportunities and impacts. Spring.

2. Delete: On page 187, the second paragraph under **Interdisciplinary Certificate in Sustainability:**

The certificate requires the completion of a minimum of 5 courses and 13 semester hours, to include IST ~~330~~, Sustainability Seminar, the required core course for the certificate. The remaining classes must be chosen from the courses listed below, with at least two courses at the 300-400 level. Requests for course substitutions must be approved by the certificate coordinator. The combination of courses must comply with the guidelines for all interdisciplinary certificates, listed above.

Add: On page 187, in place of the deleted entry:

The certificate requires the completion of a minimum of 5 courses and 13 semester hours, to include IST 230, Sustainability Seminar, the required core course for the certificate. The remaining classes must be chosen from the courses listed below, with at least two courses at the 300-400 level. Requests for course substitutions must be approved by the certificate coordinator. The combination of courses must comply with the guidelines for all interdisciplinary certificates, listed above.

Impact: This course is the core required course for the Sustainability Certificate. It is the shared experience for students getting the certificate. The class size is 15 and there are no specialized classroom needs. It is a one credit hour course and is in a seminar format, and is co-taught by the Director of Sustainability and a different faculty member from the certificate program working group each spring. The student learning outcomes are the following:

1. Students will understand diverse perspectives, theories, and terminology in the field of sustainability.
2. Students will learn to apply interdisciplinary approaches to sustainability challenges from local to global levels.

Changing the course number and removing the prerequisite for the Sustainability Seminar will have no impact on faculty resources. The Sustainability Certificate program is the result of cross-campus collaboration starting in Fall 2016. A working group of five faculty and the Director of Sustainability met from Spring 2017 to Spring 2019 to develop the certificate program proposal. Three of these members, Alison Ormsby, Carrie Tomberlin, and Jennifer Rhode-Ward, have all already co-taught the seminar course. The content of the seminar course was developed by a steering committee of eight faculty. These eight faculty members will rotate through co-teaching the seminar course, and are also guest speakers in the course. It may be an overload for some of these faculty, depending on their semester courseload. This is part of the reason the course is a one-credit course, to make it more manageable for faculty to teach as an overload, if needed.

There will also be no impact on students pursuing the Sustainability Certificate, as either iteration of the course number can be counted toward the Certificate and we have offered the course as a Special Topics course three times already. Removing the prerequisite of junior standing and changing the course number to the 200-level will positively impact students and allow them to take this “cornerstone course” earlier in their college careers and thus better guide their completion of the Certificate requirements. Changing the offering pattern offers greater flexibility to faculty that might teach the course.

Rationale: This course was originally designated as a 300-level course available only to those with junior or higher standing because it was envisioned as a “capstone course” for the Sustainability Certificate. However, since establishment of the Certificate and the Sustainability Seminar in 2019, we have found that the course better serves as a cornerstone course that allows students to engage in applied work addressing local sustainability challenges earlier in their college careers. Removing the prerequisite and changing the course number to the 200-level allows more students the opportunity to take the course and obtain the Certificate. Building more flexibility into the stated offering pattern of the course better reflects the reality of faculty resources available to deliver the course.