

The theme of my program, Environment, Technology & Economy (ETE), is already Sustainable Development, so I came into the Chesapeake Project looking for something a bit different – not just how to incorporate sustainability into the program, *but how to make it more cohesive for students from all majors & how to find connections to folks on campus...* in other words, how to make sustainability more meaningful. College Park Scholars is an enhancement program aimed at getting top quality students to look beyond just their major course of study. In ETE we do that by challenging students to explore the relationships among natural & built environments; looking advances in technology and efficiency; and the impact of economic sectors, such as energy, transportation, and manufacturing. We try to show them the value (to all career paths) of studying how to develop in a more sustainable fashion; and we try to make it real for them.

But one thing that has been missing is a cohesive story line. Giving 18 & 19 year olds a glimpse into the entire world of sustainability studies via 4 credits spread over 4 semesters is impossible, so we expose them to key ecological building blocks, basic important government policies & how those apply to business, to broader economic sectors, to emerging technologies, to human health & justice, etc. We touch on ecology, policy, corporate social responsibility (including supply chain), cradle to cradle & life-cycle assessments among other topics. We focus on the misplaced emphasis of the end-of-life of the product – the waste & re-focus them on the impact of thinking sustainably from the design stage to truly reduce waste. But while all students find a topic or two to relate to, they see the program as good, but disjointed. Participating in the Chesapeake Project this year, I found the link I needed. Community.

Scholars is also about community. We have approached that part of the mission by embracing ETE as a living-learning community, a community of folks to study with. We have tried to help them connect to professors, staff & projects around UMD to help them feel a part of their community. **We have never had them *envision their perfect community*; never helped them feel *empowered to shape the future they want to see*. The adjustments I have made to the first 3 semesters of their 4 semester curriculum are designed to do just that. Keeping much of the key elements we have been using, but putting that in the framework of building their ideal world...however big or small they want to go...giving them the tools to be changemakers... hopefully changemakers who embrace sustainability.**

Here are the redesign details...first the stated course goals as they appear on the syllabi:

For the 1st semester - #s 1& 4 are most relevant:

- Become well-versed in basic scientific principles necessary to understand **sustainable development (SD)**;
- Participate in **professional development** and career building exercises to help improve resume writing and job searching skills so that you will be able to find a valuable practicum experience;
- Identify strategies to ensure **academic success** and thoughtfully reflect on experiences as students, professionals, and citizens; and
- Develop a **sense of place** within College Park Scholars community, the University of Maryland and the surrounding metropolitan area.

The 2nd semester is set up a bit differently – here's the description:

In this course you will further your exploration into sustainability by participating in a long-term group project & continuing to develop your professional skills via career-building forums & assignments. The first few weeks of the semester will be focused on building your team, then we

will shift to career building for a bit to help you find your practicum experience. The remainder of the time, we will guide you through the steps necessary to successfully complete a group project. The Connections Project will allow you to delve more deeply into a specific topic *that fits your interests*, teach you how to function effectively in a group setting, improve your problem-solving skills, & further hone your proficiency in research & presentation.

For the 3rd semester:

- Become familiar with several key governmental policies that guide (hinder?) SD
- Incorporate your knowledge from last year with the business-side of SD via case studies & application to the energy & transportation sectors
- Have a good understanding of a very complicated & very important part of SD – Renewable Energy
- Continue to identify and implement strategies to improve academic & professional success (particular emphasis on evaluating the accuracy & reliability of sources & professional networking)
- Critically reflect on your experiences as students & citizens & articulate meaning for your future

Here’s the chart of key targets that I am using for the overall program design:

Freshmen - Fall	Freshmen - Spring	Sophomores - Fall
<p>Community 1 (Cmty)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify elements of Cmty important to themselves - Create sense of place <p>Build Environmental Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ecosystems services - Various footprint exercises - Focus on Waste & Food - Circular economy & CSR - Life Cycle Assessment →Product Footprint - Environmental Justice - Climate Science 	<p>Community 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify part of Cmty they can & want to effect <p>Build skills to make a difference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design Thinking - Empathy - Visioning - Planning for needs - Prototyping <p>Improve chosen area of SD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deep research into specific topic 	<p>Community 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bring elements together to create their vision of the ideal Cmty <p>Build Environmental Relevance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key enviro policies - Rethinking Economy - Sector studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Energy (e.g. Cove Point) ○ Transportation ○ Business/Manufacturing <p>Identify Necessary Competencies to make the changes they want to see – primarily through success stories they find</p>

Because my students already know they are going to be studying sustainability, I did not include a statement on the syllabus about this. Rather, on the first day’s lesson plan of each semester, I have incorporated the idea of community in a slightly different way each semester – all aimed at improving the sustainable elements in each individual’s vision of community. Assessment of student learning will be done throughout the program in a variety of ways, including but not limited to, questions in class discussions (oral & posts), incorporated into larger project goals, making written connections of speakers, reading & events to specific areas of SD. At the end of each semester the students write a reflection paper with varying themes each semester. These themes have been updated to progressively walk student from their current community to their “ideal sustainable community.”