

**Sustainability Education Gen-Ed Requirement**

**AUTHOR(S):** Senator Jessica Nicholson, Senator Dana Yun, Chair of the Committee on Environmental Sustainability Bugra Sahin

**SPONSOR(S):** Senator Eleena Ahmed, Senator James Kosmopoulos, Senator Deniz Namik, Senator Nathan Poulosky, Senator John Compton, Senator Arnoldo Ayala, Senator Alissa Xiao, Senator Sudarshana Rao, Senator Alec Navickis

**ENDORSEMENT(S):** Outreach Coordinator Tyeese Braslavsky, Chair Sihah Reza

**WHEREAS,** Rapid environmental changes due to climate change that cause detrimental effects to environmental and human well-being are becoming increasingly evident; and,

**WHEREAS,** ensuring the well-being of our present and future generations is a large, complex and interdependent challenge that requires sustainability-based technological, social, and economic changes; and,

**WHEREAS,** students in all fields of study at our university can benefit from sustainability education to contribute to the improvement of our environmental state; and,

**WHEREAS,** the Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and Environment (ISEE) lists over 500 courses across 50+ departments related to sustainability, energy conservation and environmentalism; and,

**WHEREAS,** several schools, including Dickinson College and the University of Vermont, a public land-grant research university similar to University of Illinois, have implemented a university-wide requirement of a course related to sustainability; and,

**WHEREAS,** the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign currently has no university-wide formal sustainability course requirement; and,

**WHEREAS,** General Education requirements change often to accommodate issues that arise in the changing social, economic and ecological environment; therefore,

**LET IT BE RESOLVED,** that the University require students in all degree programs to take a 3-credit-hour elective that explores questions and solutions to sustainability challenges and opportunities with relation to students' respective fields of study; and,

**LET IT BE RESOLVED,** Course Explorer will list recommended courses based on ISEE's designated courses that are deemed appropriate to fulfill the Sustainability general education requirement; and,

**LET IT BE RESOLVED,** that one other 6 credit hour Gen-Ed requirement or sub-requirement be reduced by 3 hours so that the addition of a Sustainability Gen-Ed will not increase the total number of required Gen-Ed hours for any program nor eliminate any requirement; and,

**LET IT BE RESOLVED,** each college will have discretion as to which part of another Gen-Ed requirement to replace in order to make room for the Sustainability Gen-Ed requirement; and,

**LET IT BE RESOLVED,** the Senate requests the President direct the Executive to take any action necessary and proper to carry out the provisions of this resolution.

## Appendix

### I. Resolution Passage through the Illinois Student Government (3rd Assembly)

- A. Passed through committee to Senate floor 17-0-0
- B. Recommendation to pass 17-0-0
- C. 12/4/2019: Passed on floor 26-1-1

### II. 4th Assembly Sponsors and Endorsements

This resolution was passed through ISG during the third assembly, so below are sponsors and endorsements from members of the current 4th assembly.

**SPONSOR(S):** Senator Creen Ahmad, Senator Tyler Swanson, Senator Suda Rao, Senator Enoma Egiebor, Senator Vada Gregory, Senator Nicole Arnold

**ENDORSEMENT(S):** Chair of Community and Governmental Affairs Bryce Tune,

### III. Endorsement Letter and Signatures

We, signed below, fully endorse this resolution to create a Sustainability General Education Requirement for all incoming students. Given the increasing importance of sustainability for the well-being of our society, it is critical that all students at the University become more educated on topics relating to sustainability. All of us signed faculty and registered student organizations recognize the immense value of sustainability education and the long-term benefit it enables students to create. This Sustainability General Education resolution will allow students to learn sustainable practices that they can apply to their careers, their personal lives, and their circles of influence. Based on this benefit, we strongly encourage the Academic Senate to pass this resolution so that the General Education Board may implement the requirement.

Signed,

University Faculty

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position and Department</b>
Gillen Wood	Professor, Environmental Humanities and English
Robert McKim	Professor Emeritus, Religion
Leon Liebenberg	Teaching Associate Professor, MechSE
Clara Bosak-Schroeder	Assistant Professor, History
Bullard, Clark W	Professor Emeritus, Engineering
Brian Deal	Professor, Architecture
Bill Stewart	Professor, Recreation, Sport and Tourism
Ann Witmer	Lecturer, Agricultural and Biological Engineering

Lisa Lucero	Professor, Anthropology
Zsuzsa Gille	Professor, Sociology
Mary-Pat McGuire	Associate Professor, Landscape Architecture
Don Wuebbles	Professor, Atmospheric Sciences
Steve Witt	Director, Global Studies
Ashlynn Stillwell	Associate Professor, CEE
Sean Kennedy	Assistant Professor, Urban Planning
Roderick Wilson	Assistant Professor, History
John Barnard	Assistant Professor, Comparative Literature
Richard Brazee	Associate Professor, NRES
Sotiria Koloutsou-Vakakis	Lecturer and Research Scientist, CEE
Murugesu Sivapalan	Professor, CEE
Jennifer Fraterrigo	Associate Professor, NRES
Jim Miller	Professor, NRES
Carena Van Riper	Assistant Professor, NRES
Elif Ertekin	Associate Professor, MechSE
Brian Dill	Associate Professor, Sociology
Scott Willenbrock	Professor, Physics

Environmental Organizations, Institutes, and Registered Student Organizations

<b>Organization Name</b>
Illinois Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and Environment (iSEE)
Students for Environmental Concerns UIUC (SECS)
ActGreen UIUC
Green Greeks
Illinois Enactus
Illini Rotaract

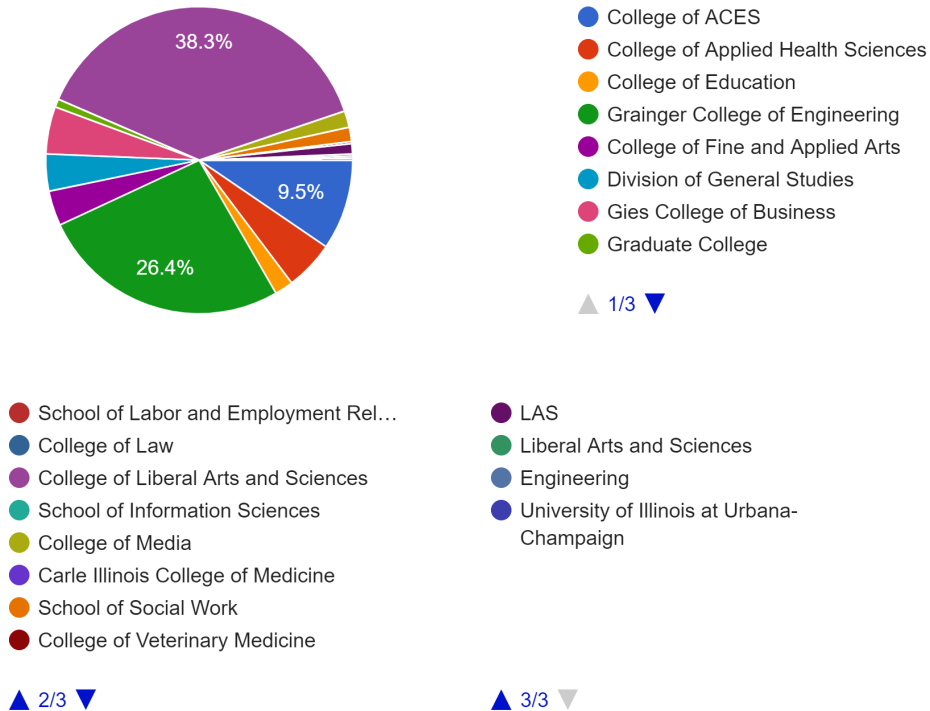
#### IV. Student Survey and Results

Before this resolution passed through the Illinois Student Government, we conducted a random-sample student survey to gauge student awareness of environmental issues, level of education on environmental topics, and opinions on whether or not a Sustainability Gen Ed Requirement would have a positive impact. 1 corresponds to “Strongly Disagree” while 4 corresponds to “Strongly Agree.”

Our survey gained 464 Responses and below are figures of the results. We found that many students feel they are aware of the critical state of climate change, yet a good portion feel uneducated on how they can make an environmentally sustainable impact within their field of study. 43.1% of students are unaware of the 500+ courses relating to sustainability at our university. Most importantly, however, 91.2% of students who responded either agree or strongly agree that a Sustainability Gen Ed Requirement would have a positive impact.

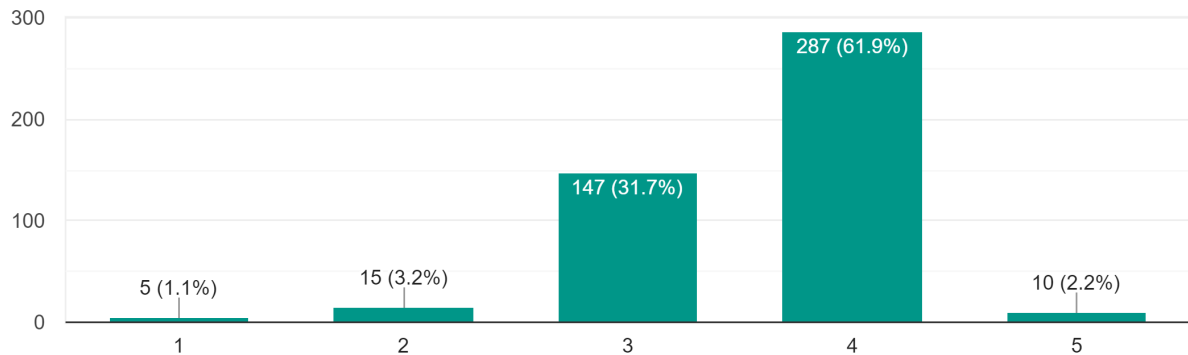
#### Survey Results:

College of Residence  
462 responses



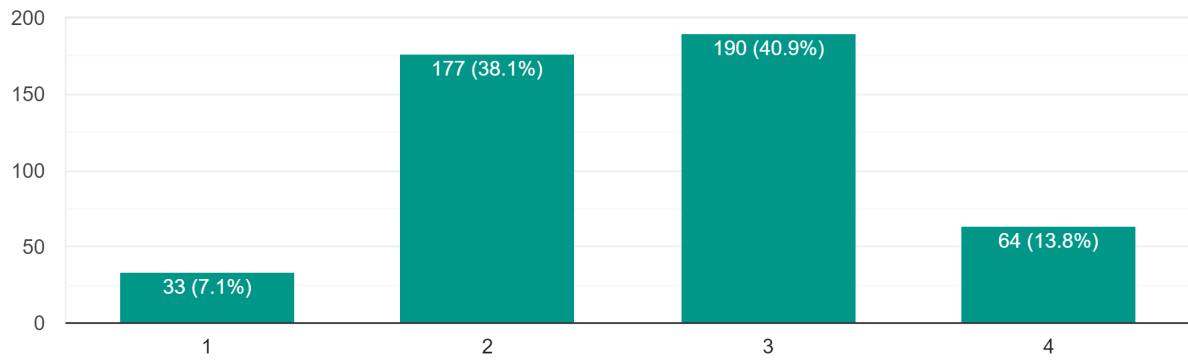
You believe that you are aware of the critical environmental state caused by climate change.

464 responses



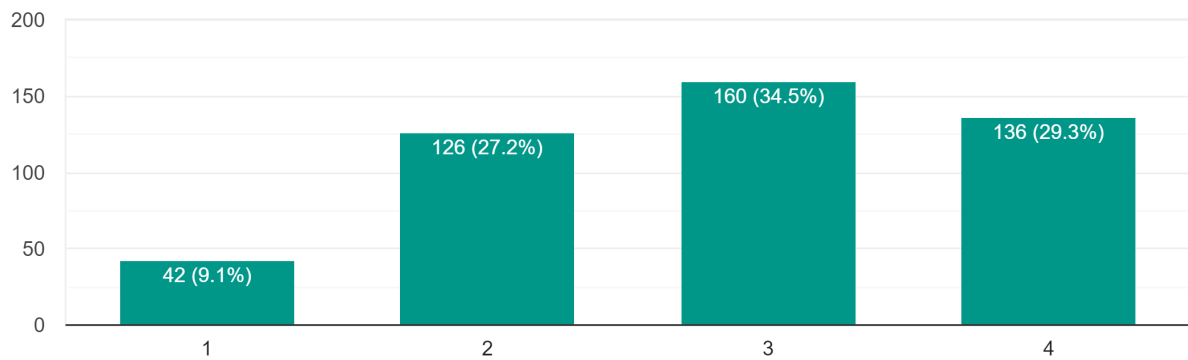
You believe that other students are aware of the critical environmental state caused by climate change.

464 responses



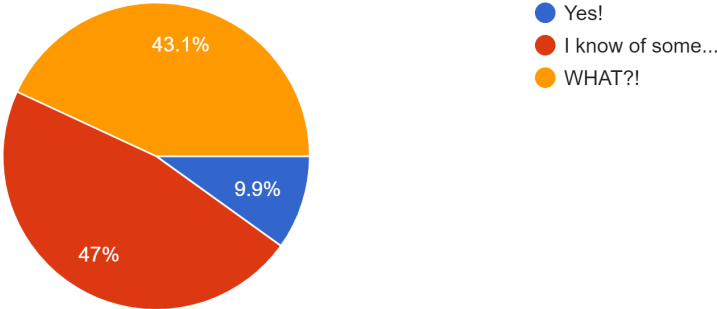
You feel educated on how you can make an environmentally sustainable impact within your field of study.

464 responses



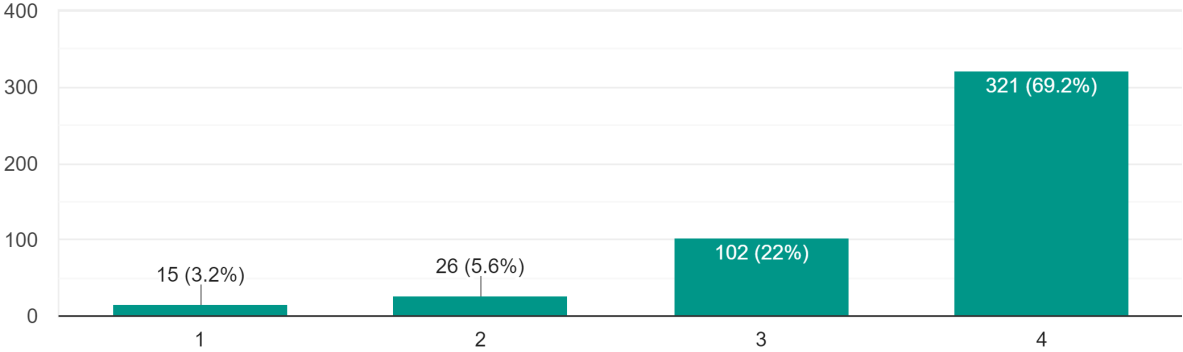
Are you aware of the 500+ courses related to sustainability on our campus?

464 responses



You feel that a Gen-Ed requirement for a Sustainability Course (without increasing the number of Gen Ed credit hours) would have a positive impact.

464 responses



**V. Suggested List of Existing Courses to Fulfill the Requirement (Curated Lists Created by iSEE):**

iSEE has created two lists of courses offered by UIUC that focus on sustainability, energy and environment. Both course lists can be found on iSEE's page below. iSEE's first list shows the 177 of these courses that were offered in Spring 2021, and their second is a comprehensive list of all 548 courses offered by the university that focus on sustainability, energy, and environment. These courses are referenced in the resolution as courses that would fulfill this proposed requirement.

iSEE's Page:

<https://sustainability.illinois.edu/education/student-resources-courses/>

Courses offered Spring 2021: 177

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wWC-Fay3ssTTQZEPTBfc6Vjs2CfU7Dq\\_/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wWC-Fay3ssTTQZEPTBfc6Vjs2CfU7Dq_/view?usp=sharing)

Total Courses offered since 2017: 548

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SB0qPkwWRDHDzY1rmJc0xgzTE6LuYhPk/view?usp=sharing>