

**Faculty Senate, Environmental Issues Committee (EIC)  
Annual Report 2023-2024**

Submitted by  
*Alice Mulder* (SPARC Director and EIC Co-Chair) and *Robert Reynolds* (EIC Co-Chair)  
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**1) Accomplishments of the EIC:**

- Ongoing implementation of “SUS” designation course attribute.
  - Alice Mulder offered four Zoom drop-in help sessions to walk faculty through the application process.
  - Seven members of the EIC reviewed two SUS application cycles during Fall and Spring Semesters, resulting in the designation of **19 classes**, 7 of which were for all sections of the course regardless of instructor, from **five** colleges. These are the courses which were approved:

Course Prefix	Course #	Title	Gen Ed?	College	All Sections	Faculty Submitter Last Name
ART	2200	Intro to Printmaking	N	A&H	Y	Rice
ART	3200	Intermediate and Advanced Printmaking	N	A&H	Y	Rice
ART	4200	Intermediate and Advanced Printmaking	N	A&H	Y	Rice
MATH	2280	Ordinary Differential Equations	N	S	N	Cai
BTNY	2750	Topics in Science and Society: Symbiosis and Rewilding	N	S	N	Root
BTNY	1010	Plants: Apocalypse Prevention	LS	S	Y	Root
MATH	1040	Introduction to Statistics	QL	S	Y	Chan
SPAN	3320	Sustainability: un buen futuro	N	A&H	N	Trimble
THEA/ENGL	3505	Playwriting	N	A&H	N	Grunnah
POLS	1010	Power, Politics, and the State	SS	SBS	N	Stramer-Smith
POLS	3340	Environmental Political Theory	N	SBS	N	Kuehls
GEOG	4950	Capitol Reef Field Course: Sustainability and Public Lands	N	SBS	N	Mulder
OCRE	4020	Nature Interpretation	N	ED	Y	Morgan
ART	2810 (cross	Poetry and Printmaking*	N	A&H	N	Rice

	listed Eng 2750)					
ENGL	2750 (cross listed ART 2810)	Poetry and Printmaking*	HU	A&H	N	Stott
PSY	4200	Environmental Psychology	N	SBS	Y	O'Hare
ECON	1100	Environmental Issues and Economic Policy	SS	GSBE	N	Gnagey
ENGL	1010	Introductory College Writing	EN1	A&H	N	Wilkinson
ENGL	2010	Intermediate College Writing	EN2	A&H	N	Wilkinson

- The following events were successfully supported by EIC:
  - Members of the EIC helped in the planning and implementation of the [Intermountain Sustainability Summit](#), held March 21-22, 2024. EIC members served as session moderators and student poster judges. The 2024 event had over 500 participants, over 170 of whom were from the WSU community. Attendees came from 13 counties in Utah, as well as four additional western states (ID, CA, AZ, OR). The event featured 16 sessions, along with a morning keynote by Jeff Speck and afternoon plenary panel discussion. Two workshops on March 22 were each well attended (with 40+ participants): “Preparing Business and Communities for a Postgrowth World” and “Designing for Earth Care, and Fair Share: A Taste of Utah’s Inaugural Permaculture Design Certificate.”
  - EIC members, in collaboration with the SPARC contributed to the planning of and encouraged WSU participation in the [Worldwide Climate /Justice Education Week](#), an initiative organized by the Graduate Programs in Sustainability at Bard College in New York. A dozen faculty as well as eight students/staff presented during the week’s teach-in sessions on Monday and Tuesday April 1-2 and Eco-Poetry/Climate Theater Event on Wednesday April 3. In total the week’s events had 225 attendees.
  - EIC members contributed ideas for the monthly Sustainability Film Series planned and hosted by SPARC.
- The EIC administered the [Faculty and Student Sustainability Research Awards](#) (two to students and two to faculty) given by SPARC and the Alumni Association.
  - The following faculty were recognized with awards this year (\$1000 each):
    - Brandon Burnett (Chemistry and Biochemistry), “Heavy Metal Reclamation from Electronic Waste through Environmentally-Friendly Extraction Methods”

- Caitlin Tems (Applied Climate Science, Earth and Environmental Sciences), “The Impact of Deicing Materials on Water Quality in Northern Utah”
- Student sustainability research awards (\$500 each), sponsored by SPARC and the Alumni Association, were given to:
  - Colle Christensen (History major, advisor Eric Swedin), “Municipal Solid Waste in Davis County: Short-Term Financial Incentives Delay Implementation of Sustainable Solutions”
  - Ian Nuttall (Geography, Environment & Sustainability major, advisor Alice Mulder), “Measuring the Urban Park Cooling Island Effect in Ogden, Utah”
- With respect to Weber Dining and sustainability initiatives and food options:
  - The committee met with Jessica Oyler in the fall prior to a food service provider RFP being put out, to request that sustainability initiatives and responsiveness be included in that process. (The RFP process, apparently, has been delayed and the current food provider Sodexo is continuing for one more year.)
  - The group also met with Jessica Alford in April to learn more about what sustainability initiatives Sodexo has been doing for Weber Dining.
  - A “Green Event Guidelines” document shared by the Energy and Sustainability Office for campus indicates that vegan/vegetarian options be included with food choices.
- The EIC heard updates from Jacob Cain and Jenn Bodine on the planned construction of a solar-panel W on the hill behind campus, and ultimately voted to endorse it. It also offered suggestions for the role out of campus communications regarding the W. Co-Chair Rob Reynolds attended the Faculty Executive and Faculty Senate Meetings when the W was brought to those groups.
- The EIC was charged to “consider the need to propose updates to the campus Transportation Policy, with an eye to fostering more active/alternative transportation to and on campus.” Work and proposed changes by the WSU Transportation Committee in this realm was shared with EIC by Jenn Bodine. There was no need for further EIC involvement beyond providing some input/feedback regarding the proposed policy which was being shepherded through the approval process by the chair of that committee (Seth Cawley, Chief of Police).
- Another charge to “Explore support for a mandatory carbon fee/offset related to campus parking, following trial of voluntary option in place for 2022 - 23” was rendered unnecessary following a decision by the Parking Committee, working with Jenn Bodine, to phase in a parking pass fee, increasing incrementally over 10+ years, specifically for carbon offsets related to commuting emissions. The voluntary option to provide more offset payments is likely to remain in place as well.

- Progress was made on increasing the number of SUS designated Gen Ed courses. Seven of the approved courses this year are within the Gen Ed areas, as indicated in the table above. This is a necessary component for a proposal for a sustainability-themed “track” in General Education which could facilitate a future Sustainability Associates Degree. This formal proposal still needs to be fleshed out.
- The committee heard from the ESO about work on Green Purchasing Guidelines and discussed the potential for and challenges to policy revisions that would be more supportive of sustainability ([Meeting Minutes from Oct. 10](#) cover this). Policy recommendations might be an option in the future, following a piloting of green purchasing by some departments.
- EIC members reviewed and offered input on the criteria and application process for the new annual Sustainability, Teaching, Application and Research (STAR) Grants offered to faculty by SPARC, with the first round of applications and awards, totalling \$20,000, made in Spring 2024.
- EIC Co-Chairs, Alice Mulder and Rob Reynolds were part of the subcommittee along with Jenn Bodine of ESO to review the Jeanne Evenden Sustainability Leadership Scholarship applications for 2024-25 and award the available funds. Three students were nominated to receive funds, totalling \$5000.

**2) Number of committee meetings held since August 2023:**

Full committee meetings were held 7 times in 2023-24, with smaller subcommittees meeting at other times or coordinating via email as needed. All meetings were held in person.

**3) Attendance of committee members:**

Attendance at full committee meetings was monitored throughout the year. Not all members were able to attend all meetings, as it proved impossible to find a time that worked with everyone’s teaching schedules on the committee during both semesters. Student participation from WSUSA assigned members was also essentially absent.

See attached [record of attendance](#).

**4) Particular people: —**

- **Abe Smith** - served on the ISS planning committee and judged student posters for the ISS. He also co-hosted (with Sarah Grunnah from Theater) an eco poetry jam and climate theater session as part of the Worldwide Climate/Justice Education Week. He also reviewed SUS attribute applications in the fall semester.
- **Shellee Dyer**, chaired the Student & Faculty Research Awards review process

**5) Subcommittees or special assignments:**

- Subcommittee for the Student & Faculty Sustainability Research Awards - Shellee Dyer (Chair), Andrea Easter-Pilcher, Linnette Wong, Joanna Gautney, Abe Smith

- Planning and implementation of the Intermountain Sustainability Summit - Alice Mulder, Abe Smith, Rob Reynolds (Student Poster submission review)
- ISS Poster Judging - Abe Smith, Rob Reynolds, Julian Chan, David Aguilar-Alvarez, Joanna Gautney,
- ISS Session Moderator - Michelle Culumber, Francois Firaud-Carrier, Linnette Wong
- SUS Course Attribute Review Committee - Alice Mulder (chair), Holli Sowerby (fall), Justin Rhees (spring), Abe Smith (fall), Chris Scheidler (spring), David Aguilar-Alvarez, Andrea Easter-Pilcher, Francois Giraud-Carrier,
- Worldwide Climate/Justice Education Week lead- Alice Mulder, Abe Smith (co-organizer for Climate-Poetry event)

**6) Charges from this year that should carry forward:**

There are many ongoing or standing charges for EIC that should carry forward. These include:

- 1) Organize the EIC subcommittee for the Student & Faculty Sustainability Research Awards, which is responsible for the advertisement/promotion on campus, judging of submissions, and making awards (sponsored by the SPARC) during Spring semester each year. (**Ongoing**)
- 2) Contribute to the planning, management, promotion and hosting of events in campus sustainability speaker/film, and/or discussion series (working with SPARC as the central coordinator), 2-3 events per semester. (**Ongoing**)
- 3) Support the SPARC in the planning and implementation of the Intermountain Sustainability Summit. Two to four EIC members will serve on the planning committee for the annual Intermountain Sustainability Summit in March. EIC members also serve as moderators/judges/volunteers on the day of the Summit. (**Ongoing**)
- 4) Maintain the SUS Attribute Review subcommittee (made up of the faculty director of SPARC/EIC co-chair and one faculty experienced with sustainability teaching from each college, ideally EIC members) for the review of courses (and co-curricular activities) submitted for possible SUS designation. (**Ongoing**)
- 5) Support efforts to advance the inclusion of sustainability in general education at WSU. (**Ongoing**)

Unfulfilled charges:

- The task to explore options to support biodiversity on campus (another STARS credit area), possibly through creation of an interdisciplinary Living Lab project, also still needs attention.
- The charge regarding ensuring the language of new or updated documents is inclusive from the 2023-24 list has not yet been fulfilled (though what this should look like currently isn't clear) and could carry forward to AY25, if this is a priority for the Executive Committee.

**7) Recommendations for new charges/possible topics for EIC in 2024-25:**

- Explore fostering engagement with Green Department/Green Badge programs and Green Purchasing/Events initiatives on campus, perhaps through visits to College Council meetings.

**8) Suggestions for new directions to pursue and ways to increase effectiveness**

As with prior years, a challenge of the past year has been to find a time that works for the full committee to meet. **Has there been success with other committees in having a standing time for meetings from year to year – or at least known in advance of the coming year?**

If so, that may be something to consider for the future for EIC. But such set scheduling is likely also a challenge, with limitations for accessibility.

**APPENDICES**

- [2023-24 EIC Agendas and Meeting Minutes](#)
- [2023-24 EIC Attendance Record](#)