



Post-secondary Students

This section is for organizations and individuals that support, provide, or deliver environmental and sustainability education to students currently enrolled in all forms of post-secondary education, both undergraduate and post-graduate certificate, diploma, or degree programs.

Outcomes

Post-secondary students will:

1. Acquire an understanding of environmental issues and ecological concepts, and their complex relationship to society, technology, and the economy

Sample Indicators:

- They are familiar with and can discuss local, regional, national, and global environmental issues.
 - They are able to connect the effects of policies, technologies, institutional practices, and behaviours to both short-term and long-term environmental impacts.
 - They recognize the connection between ecosystem health and the health of economies, societies, and individuals.
 - They can relate environmental and sustainability issues to their own areas of study and training.
2. Find information and practice skills relevant to integrating environmental issues into their areas of study and training

Sample Indicators:

- They develop skills of inquiry, information gathering, analysis, communication, critical thinking, problem solving, and decision-making.
- They seek current, significant, scientifically accurate, **bias-balanced** information to improve their **environmental literacy**, problem solving skills, and decision-making abilities for environmental issues.



- They use critical thinking to evaluate objectively the pros and cons of decisions that have environmental impacts.
 - They critically analyze media reports, their sources, biases, and effects on public opinion and environmental decision-making.
3. Understand and appreciate the social systems, values, and environmental thinking of their own culture and of other cultures

Sample Indicator:

- They are able to relate the diversity and difference of positions and attitudes in our society to our heritage, cultural diversity, and our historical relationship with the environment.
4. Apply their new understandings of nature, the natural environment, and the complex functions and needs of ecosystems to the development of ecologically sustainable lifestyles and decisions

Sample Indicators:

- They understand the importance of individual choice and action to their own future well-being, and practice ecologically sustainable behaviours both on and off campus.
 - They help to initiate or participate in projects that enhance campus and community **sustainability**, including the **sustainability** of natural areas.
5. Contribute to building an ecologically aware culture on campus, in the community, and beyond

Sample Indicators:

- They organize or attend presentations, workshops, and events and activities that raise awareness of and contribute to addressing environmental issues.
- They participate in campus greening initiatives.
- They communicate their views on environmental and **sustainability** issues to school administrators, government officials, and others.

Needs

Post-secondary students need:

- An understanding that healthy economies, societies, and individuals are dependent on the continuing integrity and health of the natural environment
- Environmental and sustainability education integrated into all fields of study, including both theory and practice



- Faculty members and instructors who are able to integrate environmental connections and ecological principles within their disciplines
- Curricula that have ecological principles and environmental **sustainability** as core elements
- Curricula that teach skills of inquiry, information gathering, analysis, communication, critical thinking, and environmental problem solving and decision-making that are relevant to their fields of study
- Time, opportunities, and support to pursue a broad educational experience that includes environmental learning and activities
- Access to comprehensive information about contemporary environmental issues and ecological concepts
- An approach to **ecological literacy** that is interdisciplinary, and uses methods such as **integrated learning communities** and self-directed learning
- Post-secondary education institutions that are models of sustainable programs and practices
- Information about environmentally relevant courses, resources, events, groups, and organizations
- An understanding of “**ecological footprint analysis**,” and information on environmentally friendly technologies, products, and practices
- A learning environment that includes exposure to local natural environments and ecosystems
- Awareness that environmental studies, environmental science, and ecology are increasingly important fields of study and research, offering many career opportunities
- Opportunities for real world experiences that allow them to apply their learning to solve to environmental problems
- A sense of ownership and community, with opportunities to participate in environmental decisions and projects on campus and beyond
- Recognition and support for involvement in activities that have a positive effect on the environment

Strategies

Programs, Projects, Policies

1. Make post-secondary education institutions and campuses models of environmental programs and sustainable practices; ensure stable funding for staffing and maintenance of teaching and “green campus” programs.
2. Introduce a compulsory **ecological literacy** course for all students.
3. Make E&SE a component within all fields of study.
4. Conduct research to identify the most effective ways to build **ecological literacy** and develop attitudes and skills that protect the integrity of the natural environment.
5. Create new environmental programs, and strengthen and expand existing programs in environmental studies, environmental science, ecological restoration, ecology, ecosystem health, and interdisciplinary programs that include environmental components.



6. Introduce teaching methods that include approaches such as experiential learning, leadership training, lifelong learning, **integrated learning communities**, self-directed learning, open-ended curriculum, and town hall role playing.
7. Provide programs, resources, and support to ensure that faculty, administration, and staff are prepared to provide **environmental education**, and to make the institutional changes needed to achieve the outcomes stated above.
8. Teach the skills of inquiry, information gathering, analysis, communication, critical thinking, problem solving, and decision-making needed to deal with environmental issues.
9. Include environmental and outdoor education experiences as a basic part of the development of **ecological literacy** (e.g., opportunities to see natural areas, experimental farms, biospheres, emerging technologies, and sustainable practices).
10. Create practical opportunities for students to apply acquired knowledge to environmental decision-making processes (e.g., environmental activities during frosh week; committees that include faculty, staff, and students; partnerships with industry and non-governmental organizations; links between students and **new Canadians**; and cooperative community projects).

Resources

1. Create a website database to keep students, faculty, and staff informed about current environmental projects, events, organizations, contacts, resources, model programs, jobs, and volunteer listings, and to disseminate knowledge of environmental issues on campus. This resource should make an effort to provide continuity from one student generation to the next.
2. Provide quality resources and textbooks to deliver the content of **environmental education** components.
3. Maintain natural areas on campus and outdoor education facilities that will enhance students' environmental awareness and learning.
4. Create and support staff and student council positions for environmental coordinators, who are responsible for facilitating environmental programs and projects.
5. Provide the resources—meeting rooms, staff assistance, and advertising budget—for environmental groups, initiatives, and activities that operate on campus.

Support

1. Offer scholarships in the area of environmental studies, and create local scholarships and awards for environmentally active students.
2. Foster networking opportunities among colleges and universities for exchanging environmental information, programs, and projects.
3. Improve financial aid programs to reduce the need to work, and give students time to be more involved in learning and in a campus life that includes environmental activities.



4. Offer recognition for student, faculty, and staff participation in environmental activities on campus (e.g., establish awards of excellence similar to the National Research Council Awards for environmental initiatives and achievements).
5. Encourage and recognize faculty, staff, and student participation in environmental organizations outside the institution (e.g., on boards of non-governmental organizations).

Please see Appendix 1 for a list of useful websites.

