

Colleges of the Fenway Minor in Sustainability

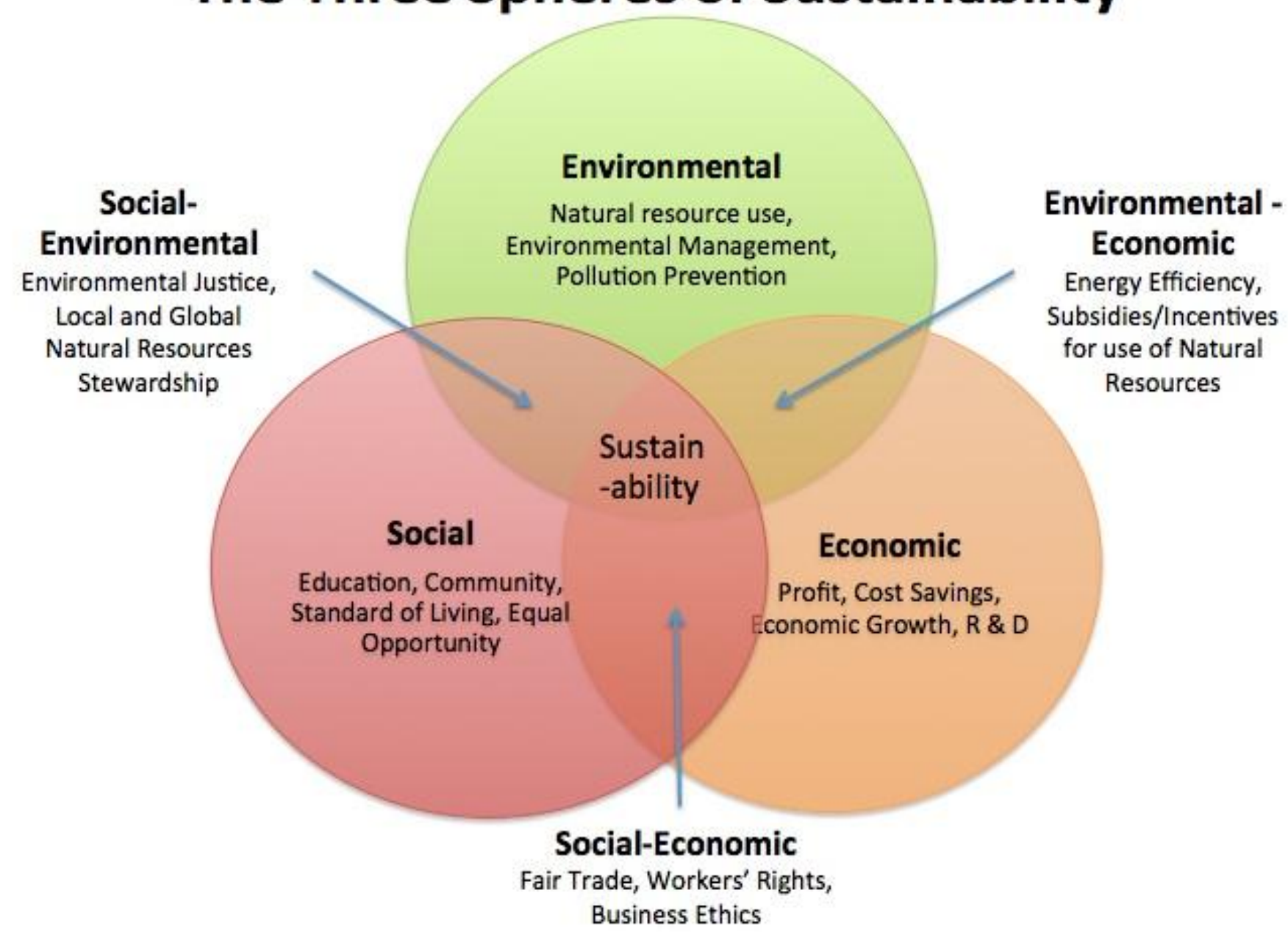
Center for Sustainability and the Environment

COF Minor in Sustainability



The COF Minor in Sustainability is embedded in the international recognition that unsustainable pressures resulting from human activity threaten the natural systems on which human existence depends. These pressures often impact the most vulnerable members of society. The minor encourages students to explore connections between their specific career-directed studies to issues of the natural world, finite resources and social justice.

The Three Spheres of Sustainability



Description

The COF Minor in Sustainability seeks to educate students about the interdisciplinary aspects of science/technology, economics/public policy and social justice which affect the ability of society to manage natural resources (such as clean air, water, energy), such that those resources meet society's present and future needs. Students who declare a minor in Sustainability are encouraged to explore the connections of their career-directed studies to issues of the natural world, finite resources and social justice. In addition to two semesters of the 2-credit Environmental Forum, the other four courses in this major have a main focus of sustainability.

Sustainability

Sustainability

The core definition of sustainability relates current human actions to the environment and to future generations; meeting the natural, social and economic resources needs for today ensuring also that the needs of the future will be met.

Rationale for the Minor in Sustainability

A Minor in Sustainability can function as one mechanism for a colleges and universities to introduce sustainability into the curriculum.

Why a COF Sustainability Minor?

Student Interest in Sustainability

- There is significant student interest across the 6 COF schools in learning about sustainability and how this can inform personal actions and future professional lives.
- A college's environmental commitment can play a significant role in the decision-making process when potential students choose an institution of higher ed.

Partial fulfillment of the Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC)

The COF Sustainability Minor helps to fulfill the President's Commitment of the Association of College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC).

Currently, five of the six COF colleges are signatories of the Presidents' Climate Commitment. The integration of sustainability onto the campus and into the curriculum is one element of the Commitment.

Interdisciplinary minor builds on existing resources

The creation of this interdisciplinary minor builds on existing resources and strengths throughout the COF to bring value to students without incurring additional expenses. It builds upon the strong level of collaboration among faculty associated with the Center for Sustainability and the Environment and the ten-year history of the Environmental Forum course developed by these faculty. It also utilizes the existing courses currently residing in the six COF schools.

Requirements for the Minor in Sustainability

Selection of elective courses within the minor is made in consultation with the student's major advisor or another faculty member with an interest in sustainability.

Courses approved for the minor can be taken at any campus through Cross Registration. <http://www.colleges-fenway.org/cross-registration/>

Environmental Forum 2 credits (Taken two times)

The minor is anchored in the COF Environmental Forum. This course provides a common experience for all students electing this minor.

The forum course is designed to expose students to contemporary sustainability issues through a series of discussions with local, regional and national experts in the field. Students will participate in projects related to the topic of the forum and will present their findings during the Muddy River Symposium or other regional sustainability conferences. A service-learning component is incorporated to further facilitate student learning.

4 Elective Courses – Students must take 4 courses* that form a cohesive and thematic thread, selecting from at least two of the following categories: *The following courses under each theme are representative examples of existing courses found at COF institutions

Policy/Economics

- Politics of Newly Industrialized States
- Environmental Economics
- Emerging Economies

Social Equity

- Environmental Ethics
- The Urban World
- Working for Social Issues

Environmental

- Investigating Green Energy
- Environmental Chemistry
- Sustainable Architecture



The Massachusetts School of Art and Design Dormitory earned the Silver LEED certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.

Center for Sustainability and the Environment

The Colleges of the Fenway Center for Sustainability and the Environment is a collaboration of faculty, staff and students from the six member colleges working together to enhance understanding of the complex issues of sustainability as they relate to natural resources and the environment. The mission of the Center is to engage and support faculty and students in all aspects of sustainability and environmental issues by providing resources and activities focused on education, scholarship, and service to the community. The directorship of the center is drawn from the Colleges of the Fenway (COF) faculty for two year appointments. Ongoing annual Center activities include:

- the Environmental Forum, a course open to all COF students that provides both academic and service-learning opportunities focused on issues related to sustainability (offered in the Spring);
- the annual Muddy River Symposium showcasing student research on the Muddy River, typically held in April;
- a community service project to clean up the Emerald Necklace;
- Teach-Ins focusing on climate change;
- participation with the Council of Environmental Deans and Directors (CEDD). An international organization focused on sustainability and environmental education and advocacy;
- and development of the COF Minor in Sustainability, already approved by two of the six COF schools.

Contact Information

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