

**College of Design, Construction and Planning  
University of Florida**

**Program in Sustainability and the Built  
Environment**

# **Strategic Plan**

**2019-2024**

December 3, 2018

# College of Design, Construction and Planning | University of Florida Program in Sustainability and the Built Environment

## Strategic Plan 2019-2024

### BACKGROUND

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The College of Design, Construction and Planning (DCP) offers its newest undergraduate degree Program in Sustainability and the Built Environment (SBE). It was conceived of by former Dean, Dr. Christopher Silver, FAICP with courses first being offered in Fall 2008. Professor Margaret (Peggy) Carr served as its first director through spring 2018. Professor Bahar Armaghani was named the Program's second director beginning in May, 2018.

The SBE degree has been designed to provide majors with the opportunity to combine the degree with accelerated completion of a graduate degree from DCP, and minor in sustainability to other academic units across campus.

The SBE program is interdisciplinary, meaning it does not have its own dedicated faculty. All of those who support the program have an academic home in one of the four units of the College: Architecture, Construction Management, Interior Design, Landscape Architecture and Planning and their annual effort in the program is determined through negotiation between the program director and each academic unit's administrator. The breadth of background and expertise this brings to the program is considered a strength.

In spring 2018, the number of majors topped 122 students, the third largest undergraduate degree program in the College of Design, Construction and Planning. Approximately 25 students complete the program's minor every year.

### VALUES

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#### **Responsibility**

It is our duty to teach future generation the strategies, tools, and skills needed to save the planet.

#### **Integrity**

We emphasize on having strong moral principles to be an effective conserver and consumer.

#### **Innovation**

We encourage and celebrate innovation in our students' work and the application of better solutions to climate issues.

#### **Leadership**

We instill in our students to believe in themselves, strive for success, and embrace a global world-view to recognize the connection between the planet and humanity; thereby, through personal and organizational choices, effects positive environmental and social change.

## VISION

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Inspire, engage, educate, and graduate leaders to create vibrant, resilient, and regenerative communities while protecting natural and cultural resources.

## MISSION

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Arm graduates with the tools and skills needed to combat climate change to improve social, economic, and wellbeing of the planet and human being.

## STRATEGIC GOALS

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### STRATEGIC GOALS IN GOVERNANCE

The unique contribution from the Faculty Governance Board members is the key to the success and advancement of the program.

**Goal 1:** Ensure involvement and participation of the Faculty Governing Board in decisions have significant impacts on SBE program.

#### Objectives:

The Faculty Governing Board will review procedures for governance and program's annual report. The review should include:

- a) The procedures for approving changes in the SBE curriculum and admissions criteria.
- b) The qualifications, responsibilities, and membership term for Governing Board members.
- c) The size Governing Board and procedures for adding members.
- d) The procedures follow all applicable rules and procedures of the College of Design, Construction and Planning and the University of Florida's Review annually.
- e) The program's annual report in reference to the strategic plan goals and objectives.

### Strategic Goals in Education

Outstanding education opportunities are the foundation on which the SBE program has been built. It is essential that this student-focused approach continues through careful attention to individual course content, course sequencing and combined degree opportunities.

**Goal 1:** Ensure a Quality Degree Experience.

#### Objectives:

- a) Continue collaboration with the College advising team to ensure they are aware of curriculum, and course offerings.
- b) Develop a database that includes information on students' choices after graduation.
- c) Write a clear and brief description of career opportunities for SBE graduates to be included on the website and other promotional materials.
- d) Maintain the quality of the SBE curriculum for the major, its specializations/concentration and the minor by continuous evaluation of the SBE

curriculum to ensure it remains relevant and is providing students with optimum educational opportunities so they may further their academic and career goals, for example internships and employment.

**Goal 2:** Continue to expand known elective courses available to SBE students by working to identify relevant courses in other academic units in the College, and in other academic units across campus.

**Objectives:**

- a) Benefit students in pursuing a specific concentration and provide more flexibility in scheduling and developing a roadmap to graduation.
- b) Review Peer Institutions and organizations and explore if/how SBE can improve.
- c) Identify space needs to support good quality teaching experiences.
- d) Create/encourage student club(s)?

**Goal 3:** Manage recruiting and resources for program growth.

**Objectives:**

- a) Continue the growth in the number of students in the SBE program to 180 students.
- b) Establish target numbers for each specialization; interdisciplinary to 120 and Geo-design to 60.
- c) Establish maximum class sizes for all required courses per university's required guidelines.
- d) Secure the faculty and staff resources to ensure these targets are met by monitoring active students FTE. Currently 122 students and 2 full time faculty members with a ratio of 61:1.
- e) Recruit and Retain Affiliate Faculty Reinforce and support the diverse faculty team and the expertise it brings to the program.
- f) Recruit and Retain Staff;  
Support program staff who are essential to meet and exceed program expectations by providing a great working environment, opportunities to improve performance, and respectful demeanor between faculty and staff.
- g) Develop the necessary recruiting materials including the program's website.

**Goal 4:** Expand program offerings

Explore the potential for additional concentration including energy, water, and health and wellbeing.

**Objectives**

- a) To attract new students who are interested in a specific area.  
Learn skills in a specific area of interest and excel in potential better job opportunities.
- b) Enhance Internships and job placement

**Goal 5:** Graduate Degree and Certificate Options for SBE. A master's degree is being developed.

### **Objectives**

- a) Provide opportunity to students interested in further pursue their studies in sustainability.
- b) To develop a strong Master's and certification program under the guidance of the board who is familiar with the program and its needs.

**Goal 6:** Facilitate Job Placement. Develop a system for supporting students with job placement including:

- Recruit additional firms, NGOs and public entities for participation on the College's spring job fair.
- Support students' participation in conferences.
- Involve GBLC board members for assisting with job replacement.
- Maintain an accessible list of relevant job announcements on the program's website.

## **STRATEGIC GOALS IN PEOPLE**

Our people including faculty, staff, alumni, program affiliates and friends, and students are the very best and the reason the SBE program exists and thrives. Our future success will be dependent on the college's/university's ability to continue to attract, develop and retain teams of talented people. If we are true to our aspirations to provide current and future generations with education and research equal to the best in the world, we have an obligation to value excellence in those who work with us today, and those we seek to attract tomorrow. In addition, our friends in industry, public and private sector are another pillar that support SBE program and to keep it rising.

### **Objectives**

- a) Facilitate shared student experiences and collaborative relationships;  
Promote the building of relationships and shared experiences among students within the SBE program and other units within DCP to:
  - Foster a sense of mutual respect for other majors and develop an understanding that collaboration is a key to success.
  - Encourage the participation of SBE students in student organization within DCP and around campus, or consider the establishment of a new organization.
  - Develop opportunities for student participation in projects and experiences beyond the classroom to develop an appreciation of the value of team work and individual contributions.
  - Host every semester team building and information session for SBE students.

b) Value and acknowledge faculty and staff contributions to the program;

- Schedule at least one individual meeting each semester between the director and participating faculty members to maintain lines of communication and to discuss program issues including student needs, special activities, etc.
- Foster team building and collaboration among the program faculty by holding a meeting every semester.
- Provide support for faculty by securing funding for travel to conferences.
- Encourage participation by faculty in international programs to enhance the teaching, research, and students experiences.
- Promote professional development, training, and team work for program staff.
- Develop clear expectations for performance appraisal.
- Advocate for adequate staff as the program grows to be fair to the existing staff and avoid burnout.
- Recognize outstanding staff performance by nominating them for awards within the college and university.

c) Alumni engagement:

- Work to create a strong identity and network for SBE alumni.
- Maintain connections with students and alumni through the SBE dedicated LinkedIn group.
- Regularly administer a survey of alumni to gather information about their careers.

## **STRATEGIC GOALS IN COMMUNICATIONS**

One of our program challenges is the internal and external communication about who we are and what we do. We should not lose sight of the importance of building relationships within and beyond our college and University community. It is important that we are proactive in engaging the various disciplines, organizations and communities that both support and benefit from our efforts.

### **Objectives:**

- a) Reinforce the interactions between SBE students, its alumni, and the friends of the program.
- b) Establish and enhance connections to the alumni base of the program.
- c) Expand opportunities for collaborative experiences between students and professionals on GBLC board.

- d) Showcase student's work profiles and special stories on SBE website.

## **STRATEGIC GOALS IN FUNDRAISING**

As the SBE program has grown it is evident that a robust fundraising campaign is needed to support program activities and academic advancement. We realize an innovative approach is needed to generate support and funding for the program to sustain preeminent quality.

### **Objectives**

- a) Seek and secure a passionate Endowment Donor who believes in the tenets of sustainability and who is willing to endow the program in return for the naming opportunity.
- b) Leverage GBLC by maintaining and enhancing the role of the Green Building Learning Collaborative in fundraising efforts.
- c) Procure Funding for Non-Appropriated SBE Activities  
Increase the funding for SBE program activities not covered by state appropriations including:
  - Student travel to the annual Greenbuild, ASHEE, and Geodesign Conferences
  - Student competitions, credentialing, and field trips
  - Annual Leadership Speaker Series
  - Orientation/information session and team building
- d) Seek and Secure SBE Scholarship Endowment Donors  
Secure endowed or annual scholarship support to attract and retain exceptional students.
- e) Foster Public-Private Partnerships and Professional Development  
Continue to develop partnerships with the private sector to offer training and continued education courses related to sustainability, online and in person, with the goal of generating revenue for program operations.

## **STRATEGIC GOALS IN OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Building relationships internally and externally is the pathway to success. An important part of learning involves making connections, collaborate with college and university, and giving back to the community.

### **Objectives**

- a) Extend Industry Collaboration;  
Reinforce and expand the interactions between SBE and the GBLC board members for opportunities to get involved with the industry and community.
- b) Establish a Community Open House;  
Establish a once a semester open house for the community under the title: "You have a sustainability question, we have an answer!" to enhance connections with the campus and Gainesville community.

- c) Empower Community Action;  
Encourage student involvement in one community activity a semester in collaboration with student organizations such as the USGBC student chapter or the Students for New Urbanism to help a community NGO such as Habitat for Humanity, the Community Weatherization Coalition, etc.

## **STRATEGIC GOALS IN RESEARCH**

Add a focus on the capstone experience. Mention University Scholars Program. Applied research and publication. Pedagogical research goals. Faculty research?

### **Objectives**

- a) Participate in college Research Symposium to show undergrad research capability and performance.
- b) Encourage students to participate in the university undergraduate scholar program
- c) Showcase posters of capstone projects on SBE website.
- d) Encourage students and possibly make requirement for juniors to attend capstone presentation.
- e) Collaborate with other program within college and around university in research opportunities.