

# EN 12: Continuing Education

5 points available

## A. Credit Rationale

This credit recognizes institutions that provide continuing education courses and programs in sustainability to the community. Such courses train community members in sustainability topics and help build knowledge about the subject. They can also provide the training people need to obtain and perform green jobs. Certificate programs offer professional recognition for sustainability training and are important tools in helping students obtain, perform, and advance their position in green jobs.

## B. Criteria

### Part 1

Institution has conducted an inventory during the previous three years to identify its [continuing education](#) courses that address sustainability. These course offerings may include:

- Continuing education courses that have been identified as [sustainability course offerings](#) using the definitions provided in G. Standards and Terms; and/or
- Continuing education courses that have been formally designated as sustainability course offerings in the institution's standard course listings or catalog.

For each course, the inventory provides:

- The title and department (or equivalent) of the course.
- A brief description of the course.

Courses for which partial or incomplete information is provided may not be counted toward earning points for Part 1 of this credit. Courses that are typically taken for academic credit are not included in this credit; they are covered in the Curriculum subcategory.

### Part 2

Institution has at least one sustainability-themed certificate program through its continuing education or extension department.

Degree-granting programs (e.g., programs that confer Baccalaureate, Masters, and Associates degrees) and certificates that are part of academic degree programs are not included in this credit; they are covered in the Curriculum subcategory.

## C. Applicability

This credit applies to institutions that offer continuing education or community education programs.

## D. Scoring

Each part of this credit is scored independently.

## Part 1

Institutions earn the maximum of 3 points for Part 1 of this credit when courses that address sustainability comprise 10 or more percent of all continuing education courses offered. Incremental points are awarded based on the percentage of continuing education course offerings that address sustainability. For example, an institution where 5 percent of all continuing education courses offered were sustainability courses would earn 1.5 points (half of the points available for Part 1).

*Points for Part 1 of this credit are calculated automatically in the STARS Reporting Tool as follows:*

Factor		Number of continuing education courses that address sustainability		Total number of continuing education courses offered		Points earned
30	×	_____	÷	_____	=	Up to 3

## Part 2

Institutions earn 2 points in Part 2 of this credit for having at least one certificate program that meets the criteria outlined above. Partial points are not available for Part 2 of this credit.

## E. Reporting Fields

### Required

- ☐ Does the institution offer continuing education courses that address sustainability?  
*If yes, provide:*
  - ☐ Total number of continuing education courses offered
  - ☐ Number of continuing education courses offered that address sustainability
  - ☐ A list and brief description of the continuing education courses offered that address sustainability (text or upload)
- ☐ Do the figures reported above cover one, two, or three academic years?
- ☐ Does the institution have at least one sustainability-themed certificate program through its continuing education or extension department?  
*If yes, provide:*
  - ☐ A brief description of the certificate program(s), including the year the program was created

### Optional

- ☐ The website URL where information about the programs or initiatives is available
- ☐ Additional documentation to support the submission (upload)
- ☐ Data source(s) and notes about the submission
- ☐ Contact information for a responsible party (a staff member, faculty member, or administrator who can respond to questions regarding the data once it is submitted and available to the public)

## F. Measurement

## Timeframe

### *Part 1*

Report on the most recent data available from within the three years prior to the anticipated date of submission. Institutions may count course offerings from one, two, or three academic years, as long as the counts of continuing education courses and sustainability continuing education courses are drawn from the same time period.

### *Part 2*

Report on current program status and offerings at the time of submission.

## Sampling and Data Standards

Not applicable

## G. Standards and Terms

### **Continuing education**

Continuing education (also known as further education) includes non-credit courses and programs that train community members and help build knowledge about particular subjects. Continuing education is inclusive of non-credit, community education and extension courses and programs. Examples include non-degree career training, workforce training, credential maintenance courses, formal personal enrichment courses, self-directed learning and experiential learning (on and off campus). In some cases, non-credit students may earn continuing education units, certification or other evidence of class completion to meet personal or professional requirements.

### **Sustainability challenges**

Consistent with [Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) (United Nations, 2015), major sustainability challenges include (but are not limited to) climate change, global poverty and inequality, natural resource depletion, and environmental degradation. To identify courses, research, programs and initiatives that contribute towards understanding or solving sustainability challenges, it is helpful to ask:

- Does it contribute towards realizing one or more of the principles outlined in the [Earth Charter](#)?  
And/or
- Does it contribute towards achieving one or more of the targets embedded in the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs)?

### **Sustainability course offerings**

Sustainability course offerings include "sustainability courses" and "courses that include sustainability":

#### *Sustainability Courses*

Sustainability courses are courses in which the *primary and explicit* focus is on sustainability and/or on understanding or solving one or more major sustainability challenge. This includes:

A. Foundational courses in which the primary and explicit focus is on sustainability as an integrated concept having social, economic, and environmental dimensions. Obvious examples include Introduction to

Sustainability, Sustainable Development, and Sustainability Science, however courses may also count if their course descriptions indicate a primary and explicit focus on sustainability.

B. Courses in which the primary and explicit focus is on the application of sustainability within a field. As sustainability is an interdisciplinary topic, such courses generally incorporate insights from multiple disciplines. Obvious examples include Sustainable Agriculture, Architecture for Sustainability, and Sustainable Business, however courses may also count if their course descriptions indicate a primary and explicit focus on sustainability within a field.

C. Courses in which the primary focus is on providing skills and/or knowledge *directly* connected to understanding or solving one or more major sustainability challenges. A course might provide knowledge and understanding of the problem or tools for solving it, for example Climate Change Science, Renewable Energy Policy, Environmental Justice, or Green Chemistry. Such courses do not necessarily cover “sustainability” as a concept, but should address more than one of the three dimensions of sustainability (i.e. social wellbeing, economic prosperity, and environmental health).

While a foundational course such as chemistry or sociology might provide knowledge that is useful to practitioners of sustainability, it would not be considered a sustainability course. Likewise, although specific tools or practices such as GIS (Geographical Information Systems) or engineering can be applied towards sustainability, such courses would not count as sustainability courses unless their primary and explicit focus is on sustainable applications. If there is a sustainability unit, module or activity within one of these courses, but it is not the main focus, the course may be counted as a “course that includes sustainability”:

#### *Courses That Include Sustainability*

A course that includes sustainability is primarily focused on a topic other than sustainability, but incorporates a unit or module on sustainability or a sustainability challenge, includes one or more sustainability-focused activities, or integrates sustainability issues throughout the course.

While a foundational course such as chemistry or sociology might provide knowledge that is useful to practitioners of sustainability, it would not be considered to be inclusive of sustainability unless the concept of sustainability or a sustainability challenge is specifically integrated into the course. Likewise, although specific tools or practices such as GIS (Geographical Information Systems) or engineering can be applied towards sustainability, such courses would not count unless they incorporated a unit on sustainability or a sustainability challenge, included a sustainability-focused activity, or incorporated sustainability issues throughout the course.

## Scoring Example: Continuing Education

### Part 1

Example Community College offered 600 continuing education courses during the past year. Of those courses, 25 address sustainability.

Factor		Number of continuing education courses that address sustainability		Total number of continuing education courses offered		Points earned
30	×	<u>25</u>	÷	<u>600</u>	=	1.25

### Part 2

Example Community College offers a green building certificate program through its department of continuing education. Example Community College earns 2 points for this part of the credit.

#### Total Credit Score:

Part 1 + Part 2 = 1.25 + 2

Total points earned = 3.25