

4-1-2011

Faculty approves new major in sustainability science

Furman University

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Recommended Citation

University, Furman (2011) "Faculty approves new major in sustainability science," *Furman Magazine*: Vol. 54 : Iss. 1 , Article 22.
Available at: <https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/furman-magazine/vol54/iss1/22>

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Faculty approves new major in sustainability science

IN KEEPING WITH the university's emphasis on sustainability, the Furman faculty has approved the establishment of a major in the emerging field of sustainability science, making Furman one of the first institutions to offer such a multidisciplinary program.

Administered by the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, the new major focuses on the complex relationships among human, social and environmental systems, and how changes in one system directly or indirectly affect the others. Brannon Andersen, chair of the department, says many of Furman's EES majors have expressed an interest in earning degrees in sustainability science.

The new major features a core group of five courses: Principles of Sustainability Science, Environmental Science, Human Systems, Social Systems, and Dynamic Systems Modeling. They are designed to enable

students to understand the interaction of varying systems and how they affect environmental, human and social quality.

Majors will also complete five sustainability-related elective courses chosen from 13 departments, and will complete a senior thesis.

Based on current listings with the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education, Kean University in New Jersey is the only other institution in the United States that offers a Bachelor of Science degree in sustainability science.

The addition of the major gives Furman an even broader array of curricular options in the field of sustainability. Since the implementation of the university's new curriculum in 2008, students have been required to complete at least one course that focuses on the relationship between humans and the natural environment.

Furman, Bank of America join forces for sustainability boot camp

THE CENTER for Corporate and Professional Development at Furman has received a \$50,000 grant from the Bank of America Charitable Foundation to support a program that will educate and transform small businesses in the area of sustainability practices.

The program, among the first of its kind nationally, is expected to positively impact the financial bottom line of small businesses and their communities, and to help promote a "green" economy in South Carolina.

The CCPD will develop and implement the "Small Business Boot Camp," a hands-on program that will detail sustainable business

practices which can reduce operating costs, increase revenues and build social responsibility. The first boot camp, based upon the "Furman Sustainability Framework for Small Business," will be held this fall.

Topics will include how to develop and maintain green facilities, operating processes, and products or services. The program will also provide educational tools for analyzing and reducing energy usage, water consumption and waste creation.

Furman faculty will help lead the program and provide ongoing support for projects implemented by participating businesses.

The participants will be supported by a dedicated Web portal providing access to additional content, tools and techniques.

Stacy Brandon, Greenville president of Bank of America, said, "As a global company committed to addressing climate change, the bank is pleased to continue our support of Furman's sustainability efforts by helping educate local businesses on how to create sustainable business models that are essential to prosper in the 21st century."

Visit the website at www.fusbp.com.