Sustainability Scholar Project Guidelines

Problem Statement:

South Florida is ground zero for addressing impacts related to climate change. The University of Miami has made climate-related resilience the core of its mission. This climate crisis, along with other concurrent environmental and social crises, requires that we adapt to and mitigate the consequences of climate disruption and build toward sustainability and resilience. One way the University is leading the way on this effort is by pledging to become carbon neutral. The Sustainability Scholar project should be an integral part of this strategy to make the U more sustainable.

General Project Requirements:

- Your project should focus on an on-campus sustainability initiative addressing one of the following [STARS](#) categories (Sustainability Tracking Assessment Rating System is the platform that most Higher Education institutions use to benchmark their sustainability performance): Campus Engagement, Air & Climate, Buildings, Energy, Food & Dining, Grounds, Purchasing, Transportation, Waste, Water, Diversity and Affordability, Investment and Finance, Wellbeing and Work.

- Your project should also align with at least one of the [17 UN Sustainable Development Goals](#)

- You must submit a project proposal, with the approval of one faculty mentor and one campus stakeholder (e.g., department, office, student group) by the deadline set each year near the beginning of the Fall semester.

- If selected as a Sustainability Scholar, you will refine your proposal through stakeholder consultation and other planning processes (e.g., budget and risk management requirements), and execute a pilot version of your project as "proof of concept".

- Finally, you will submit a project report (up to 5 pages) and present a summary of your initiative and pilot project experience to a panel of student and faculty judges at a symposium at the end of the Spring semester.

- Each year, at least one project will be selected by SG ECO Agency to be fully implemented the following year.

Project Mentorship Guidelines

Recruit a mentor from university faculty to serve as an advisor.
The mentorship/mentee relationship should:

- Develop a deeper understanding of your field of interest; Provide professional guidance.
- Cultivate leadership skills.

Recruit at least one on-campus stakeholder to collaborate with on the project design and implementation. This stakeholder/project leader relationship should:

- Help you develop skills necessary for collaborating with members of your community including listening, compromise, and working as part of a team.
- Make sure that you are incorporating the assets, capacities, needs and challenges within your campus community.

Report Recommendations:

The recommended sections to include in your project report are listed below:

- A "Challenge Question" is required. Feel free to be creative in your report and add your own flavor, so long as it addresses the general project requirements.

- Introduction: purpose and description of the initiative, sustainable development goal(s) it aims to address.

- Project Rationale: purpose of the project; reasoning and benefits of the project for the community and the University.

- Scope: who is the project targeting? Who are the stakeholders? Where on campus will it be executed? What is the timeline? What Key Performance Indicators will assess the success of this project?

- Research: description of the industry sector, sustainable development goal challenges that the industry sector faces; bibliography and case studies in other Higher Education institutions on the topic.

- Implementation Roadmap: outline of the operation, budget allocation, activity timeline, communication strategy for marketing, risk management plan (anticipated potential roadblocks/dependencies), maintenance plan if necessary.

- Pilot project description: outline the final deliverables and achievements, place this project in the context of potential future scale, include any initial data and observations, discuss how the pilot experience has informed your plans for future iterations and the possibility of scaling up the project while creating more benefits to the environment.

- Reflection: What were the main challenges you encountered during the project, and how did you overcome them? How did the project impact you personally, academically, and socially? What insights have you gained about the challenges and opportunities of sustainability initiatives?

Example: [2020](#)

Project Presentation and Judging Panel

- All final reports and pilot project findings will be presented for 10 minutes, followed by a five-minute Q&A, to a judging panel at a symposium at the

end of Spring semester.

- The judging panel will review all proposals to determine if they meet the general project requirements and follow the proposal recommendations.

- The panel will be comprised of Faculty, Advisers, Staff, Alumni, Student Leaders, and Researchers from the University of Miami.