SUSTAINABILITY APPROACHES IN HIGHER-LEVEL EDUCATION: SUSTAINABILITY CURRICULUM IN THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Session: B, Breakout Room #20
Ruisi Xu*, @RuisiXu0321, Program on the Environment, University of Washington
Site Supervisor: Daimon Eklund, UW Sustainability, University of Washington
Faculty Advisor: Marilyn Ostergren, UW Sustainability, University of Washington

The Sustainability Declaration has had an impact on several higher education institutions. Sustainable practices and programs have been developed within the University of Washington but rarely achieve their goals whereas sustainable curricula have not been developed. This study aimed to emphasize the importance of sustainability promotion in the higher-level education environment and the best way to deliver a platform to help people to find resources easily and gain knowledge of how their study field can relate to the sustainability concept as well. The major methods I used to find the result were going through course inventory, browsing universities' websites, developing data visualization, conducting a survey, and reading article resources. Findings show that data visualization of organized course inventory can help students find sustainability courses easier; Sustainability courses are under-represented and unevenly distributed across majors at the University of Washington; The university should take sustainability courses as required or highly recommended curriculum. The university should put sustainability education programs into action as a place to lead future talents and leaders in society. The three scaffolds of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental can cover all aspects of education within the university where is the engine of social transformation, and making students aware of the importance of environmentally sustainable choices at this stage can guide them toward sustainability. The data visualization I created can also be used as a reference for other universities to help them build their course platform.