



Elementary-aged Sustainability Education

Course Syllabus

Course Description

This 8-module course immerses educators in a comprehensive journey through sustainability education tailored for elementary-aged students. Aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), participants will delve into strategies, resources, and innovative teaching methods to instill environmental stewardship and global citizenship in their classrooms. From addressing poverty and hunger to empowering students to take climate action, this course equips teachers with the tools to inspire the next generation of change makers.

Participants will engage with the core pillars of sustainability—societal, economic, and environmental—and learn effective strategies for implementing SE through interdisciplinary, project-based, cooperative, and whole-school approaches. The course also covers the impact of young leaders on the sustainability movement, the concept of sustainable and green schools, and addresses the challenge of eco-anxiety. Throughout the course, Sustainability Education (SE) may be referred to as Education for Sustainability (EfS), Sustainable Development Education (SDE), or Education for Sustainable Development (EfSD). These terms are synonymous within the context of this course. By the end, educators will be equipped with the knowledge and tools to shape a brighter, more sustainable future for all through impactful education.

This course enhances classroom teaching effectiveness and supports improved student outcomes by introducing new knowledge in contemporary teaching frameworks and the integration of sustainability concepts into elementary school curricula.

Course Objectives

At the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Understand the fundamental concepts of Sustainability Education and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and recognize their importance for students and the global community.
2. Understand the significance of the Societal pillar of Sustainability Education, become familiar with the Societal Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and develop strategies for teaching these goals to elementary students.
3. Develop a comprehensive understanding of the Economic pillar of Sustainability Education, identify the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that support this pillar, and learn effective strategies for teaching these concepts in the classroom.
4. Develop a comprehensive understanding of the Environmental pillar of Sustainability Education, identify the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that support this pillar, and learn effective strategies for teaching these concepts in the classroom.



5. Understand the defining characteristics, impacts, and benefits of Green Schools and will be able to identify and recommend initial steps for their own educational environments to become sustainable Green Schools.
6. Acquire strategies to implement Sustainability Education through interdisciplinary, project-based, cooperative, and whole-school approaches, and will develop skills to effectively discuss climate change with children while addressing their eco-anxiety.
7. Understand the roles of Global Citizenship and Global Learning in Sustainability Education and learn strategies to effectively integrate these concepts into their teaching practices.
8. Learn about the leadership roles of young people in global climate and sustainability issues, identify notable young leaders to highlight in elementary education, and develop strategies to inspire and motivate students through their stories and achievements.

Modules

- Module 1: Introduction to Sustainability Education (SE) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Quiz 1
- Module 2: The Societal Pillar of Sustainability Education, Quiz 2
- Module 3: The Economic Pillar of Sustainability Education, Quiz 3
- Module 4: The Environmental Pillar of Sustainability Education, Quiz 4
- Module 5: Sustainable and Green Schools, Quiz 5
- Module 6: Implementing Sustainability Education: Interdisciplinary, Project-Based, Cooperative, and Whole-School Approaches and Addressing Eco-Anxiety, Quiz 6
- Module 7: Global Citizenship, Global Learning, and Their Role in Sustainability Education, Quiz 7
- Module 8: The Impact of Young Leaders on the Sustainability Movement: Learning and Inspiration for Elementary Students, Quiz 8

Grading:

Each quiz must be passed at an 80% or higher (three attempts allowed).

Format

This is a self-paced, asynchronous (no required live meetings) course. Throughout the PD course, you will find it helpful to take notes along the way to assist with the quizzes. Within each module, you will find reflection assessments that are not graded but will help in your journey through the course. There is an interactive forum in the course to help you connect with peers and instructors, share ideas, and collaborate on best practices throughout your learning journey.