

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is being submitted in support of the University of South Carolina's STARS documentation for an innovation credit. I serve as Faculty Principal for Sustainable Carolina, and one of my primary functions is to support and develop our very innovative and successful green leadership program which trains 70 students a year in leadership and communication principles. Green leadership training is a semester-long program, beginning with an extensive orientation workshop and continuing with leadership development workshops throughout the semester.

The key innovation of our leadership program is that all students are part of the operations and governance structure for Sustainable Carolina. All students participate in the 17 project teams, sharing leadership responsibilities on the teams. Students also participate in weekly Coordinating Council meetings and the monthly Green Council meetings--the highest level of governance for Sustainable Carolina. The underlying philosophy of our green leadership program is that green organizations must model the decentralized, egalitarian, and activist structures that are necessary for sustainable organizations.

In their participation on our project teams, students are responsible for defining the goals of the team (within the STARS structure), mobilizing allies on campus and in the community, planning programs and events, and then assessing the success of their activities. Project teams develop program and budget proposals and then submit them for approval by the Coordinating Council, which is made up of the graduate students and full-time staff.

Our green leadership program has been very successful in training leaders for our own organization. Once students have been on our staff for a semester, they are likely to become project coordinators for one of the project teams. Eventually undergraduate and graduate students become some of the key staff within Sustainable Carolina.

Our student leaders have successfully gone on to take leadership positions in the community. One graduate of our program is the Executive Director of the local watershed association, and others have become interns and paid staff on local and regional sustainability-related organizations. Our students have also gone on to take on leadership positions on campus and have enrolled in graduate programs related to sustainability and environmental policy and advocacy.

My role in the green leadership program is to work with our Green Leadership Project Team in recruiting, training, and evaluating our student leaders. I am a faculty member in the Political Science Department, with research specialties in green politics and political/environmental communication. In that capacity, I am the person who officially sponsors the independent study course that all of our undergraduate interns are required to take. I am also very involved in the on-going series of workshops developed and organized on green leadership topics. Our new innovative this semester is to offer a section of my course on "Green Politics" as a service learning course, so that all of my 32 students will be participating in our project teams.

Sincerely,

David Whiteman