



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

CURRICULUM IN ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

3301 VENABLE HALL T. 919-962-1270
CAMPUS BOX 3275 F. 919-962-1254
CHAPEL HILL, NC 27599-3275 <http://cee.unc.edu>

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AASHE STARS Innovation Credit 1- Sustainable Triangle Field Site

To advance our missions in undergraduate education, co-curricular experience, environmental research, and community engagement, the UNC Institute for the Environment and the Curriculum for Environment and Ecology have established a network of field sites in North Carolina and abroad. Each site focuses on themes specific to that community or region and provides a semester-long opportunity for students to explore real-world issues through a combination of course work, field trips, group research projects, and internships with local organizations.

Launched in spring 2011, the Sustainable Triangle Field Site (STFS) offers a unique and flexible program that serves students in residence at UNC. Rather than spending a semester at another location with a small cohort, students participating in the STFS retain their established Chapel Hill residences, relationships, and school base and dine together weekly. With its proximity to strong academic and administrative departments and pioneering private and nonprofit enterprises, the STFS offers students the opportunity to pair academic studies in the environment, urban planning, geography, health and related fields with practical experience in an innovative, urban environment without leaving home.

In keeping with the applied and integrative approach of field site courses, students undertake independent research both in individual internships and through a group Capstone project. Sustainability internships pair students with mentors from local businesses, nonprofit organizations, and government entities. Capstone projects provide a team of students the opportunity to apply their skills and interests to research a topic or challenge of relevance to the Research Triangle area of North Carolina. Capstone projects consider the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of an ongoing challenge.

Field trips to relevant locations in the Research Triangle region let STFS students observe sustainable practices in action. Destinations include green buildings and business practices such as Greenbridge Condominiums, the North Carolina Botanical Garden, the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce, farmers markets, and waste management and energy production facilities.

By exploring how sustainability is practiced on and near their own campus, STFS students gain an understanding of how communities, industries, government, and nonprofit organizations can work together toward a sustainable future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jaye E. Cable".

Jaye E. Cable, Ph.D.
Chair, Curriculum for the Environment and Ecology
Professor, Department of Marine Sciences