



School of Environmental Studies

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To: AASHE STARS Committee

Dear STARS Committee Members,

This letter is being written in support of an Innovation Credit for the University of Victoria for the class Environmental Studies 200.

I have been teaching this class for 3 years. The course is a basic requirement for all students taking a major, minor or general program in the School of Environmental Studies. It is also taken by many students from other faculties as an elective. On average approximately 550 students take the course every year, making it the largest course in the Environmental Studies program.

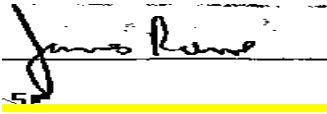
The course provides an introduction to the interdisciplinary subject of Environmental Studies at UVic that uses **food** as a specific thematic focus to develop an understanding of the sources and character of environmental problems and some of the analytical tools and contexts necessary to respond to them. Research we did last year suggests that ES 200 is the largest food-focused course offered at any university or college in Canada. Approximately 10% of UVic's undergraduate population has taken or is currently enrolled in the class.

ES 200 has been organized around food since 2005. We've found that this focus viscerally connects students to environmental problems more generally while intensifying their specific interest in food security. This interest radiates out beyond the class. ES 200 has played, and continues playing, an important role in shaping the food culture on campus and in Victoria.

The class has sparked a core group of campus leaders interested in food activism working with the Student Union, UVic Sustainability Project, the Campus Community Gardens, and other food-focused institutions on campus and in the community.

Many of our students have since been invited back into the class to give guest lectures sharing the initiatives they've undertaken, thus completing the educational circle.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James K. Rowe". The signature is written on a set of horizontal lines, with a thick yellow underline below the bottom line.

James K. Rowe
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