

SDM Reflection

The two core courses of the sustainability dual major both began and solidified my understanding of the subject. When I started this dual major, I had very limited knowledge as to what sustainability is and how many disciplines it encompasses. Having just switched out of COLSA and into the business school, I was eager to find a place where I could apply the scientific side of my academic career.

Sustainability 401 was precisely that. In this introductory course, we explored how sustainability came to be what it is today and learned that the field is constantly changing and adapting to new branches of ideas. I learned that I could use both my interests in business and science because sustainability focuses on people, planet, and profits. In the 401 course, we learned through experience to complete individual research projects as well as working with a team.

Sustainability 501: Perspectives and Methods required us to delve into more challenging concepts such as transdisciplinary work and thinking in systems. Through transdisciplinary study we forgo the boundaries of disciplines and work to find multi-faced solutions to real-world problems. Thinking in systems requires us to look at the bigger picture when analyzing problems that we face and makes us consider how different parts of a system interrelate.

Together, these classes form a framework for our total SDM experience by building the foundation for our sustainability knowledge. The knowledge and attitudes gained from these courses will be applied in our capstone projects. Without this knowledge we would be less effective in understanding the problems at hand and less efficient in working as part of a team of interdisciplinary students.