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Sustainable Enterprise Partnership announces certificate of advanced study in sustainable enterprise

Graduate students at Syracuse University and the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF) can now earn an advanced credential in sustainability offered through the Sustainable Enterprise Partnership (SEP) that will provide them with the knowledge needed to address the economic, environmental, technical and social challenges facing enterprises seeking to achieve sustainable operations and practices.

The certificate of advanced study in sustainable enterprise (CASSE) was developed to engage graduate students from a wide range of academic backgrounds in a trans-disciplinary program focused on sustainable strategies for organizations. The CASSE curriculum uniquely integrates business, science, engineering and policy instruction with practical knowledge in sustainability. It is delivered by expert faculty and researchers from the Whitman School of Management, SUNY-ESF, the L.C. Smith College of Engineering and Computer Science (LCS) and the Syracuse Center of Excellence in Environmental and Energy Systems (SyracuseCoE)—the four curricular partners of the SEP. This collaboration is a key distinction of the CASSE in comparison to other graduate programs in business and sustainability.

“Cross-institutional collaborations such as the certificate of advanced study in sustainable enterprise strengthen the academic experience in all its dimensions, catalyzing transformative teaching and learning,” says SU Vice Chancellor and Provost Eric F. Spina.

The CASSE responds to the growing demand for professionals who are knowledgeable in sustainability issues and can contribute strategic solutions to the environmental, economic and social dilemmas facing enterprises, such as cost-effectively reducing atmospheric greenhouse gas output, efficiently managing energy use, incorporating clean technologies, and promoting sustainable decision making and principles. CASSE graduates will also be prepared to spark innovation in enterprises to develop greener operations, models and practices, and help recognize the opportunities that advance an organization’s sustainability.

“The global economy has taken notice that the inputs to production are not limitless and the wastes of production can accumulate to levels that are hazardous to human well-being,” says Bruce C. Bongarten, provost and vice president for academic affairs at SUNY-ESF. “CASSE graduates will be well-prepared to provide the insight necessary to navigate the myriad of available sustainable management practices for enterprises and engender the innovation needed to achieve sustainable operations.”

The SEP is a collaborative effort involving faculty and researchers from three partnering institutions—the Whitman School, SUNY-ESF and the SyracuseCoE—and provides world-class education and research on sustainable enterprise by leveraging the academic, public and private sector resources of Central New York and beyond to address this significant and growing area of concern for businesses and other organizations. A key component of the SEP is the development of trans-disciplinary curricula in

sustainability. In offering the CASSE, the SEP aims to qualify skilled professionals to effectively assess and manage organizational sustainability issues.

“A growing commitment to environmental and social stewardship in the global economy has yielded a wealth of innovative ideas and technologies that are making 21st-century business better,” says Melvin Stith, dean of the Whitman School. “The CASSE is the kind of trans-disciplinary approach to sustainability education that is relevant to this transition to a healthier society. All future generations of leaders need to have a solid understanding of the sustainability challenges we face; the Whitman School is excited about the establishment of this new certificate program.”

“Graduates with academic experience in the scientific aspects of sustainability will be able to contribute the insight and skilled knowledge needed to innovate technical solutions in a green economy—both regionally and globally,” says LCS Dean Laura Steinberg. “The CASSE’s collaborative approach to teaching and learning provides a focal point for our efforts to develop more multi-disciplinary experiences for students in sustainability-related studies.”

Admission to the certificate program is ongoing and available to all currently matriculated graduate students at SU and SUNY-ESF. CASSE candidates will be required to complete three core courses and two electives. The core courses—“Managing Sustainability: Purpose, Principles and Practice,” “Strategic Management and the Natural Environment” and “Sustainability-Driven Enterprise”—are designed to be relevant and accessible to a wide range of disciplines. Students are expected to articulate a rationale and focus to support the selection of electives, which will be approved on an individual basis by the CASSE faculty director, in consultation with the student’s department; these electives may also be counted toward a concentration or other program.

In addition to these course requirements, a student must attain at least a “B” in courses taken to fulfill the certificate requirements and a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 to earn the CASSE.

“As a collaborative instructional effort led by faculty and researchers from SyracuseCoE, SUNY-ESF, LCS and the Whitman School, the CASSE is truly a unique proposition for graduate students to complement most every professional path,” says Edward A. Bogucz, executive director of the Syracuse CoE. “The CASSE is another wonderful example of the strengthening of this region’s reputation as a leader in sustainable education and solutions to pressing global challenges in human and natural environments.”

For more information on the CASSE and other SEP programs and initiatives, visit the SEP website at: <http://partnersforsustainability.org>.