**SWATeam Recommendation**

Name of SWATeam: Education

SWATeam Chair: Gillen D'Arcy Wood

Date Submitted to iWG: 4/2/2020

Specific Actions/Policy Recommended (a few sentences):

The Sustainability Career Fair working group has the following tiered recommendations, which would grow the general program over three years, with event implementation beginning in the Spring of FY21:

* **Year 1:** The Career Center would coordinate with various University colleges’ career fairs in Spring of FY21 to create an integrated Sustainability identity within existing career fairs. Initially, this would primarily target Environmental Sciences and Sustainability majors and minors, but eventually would include a broader base of colleges as we build awareness. In order to quantify the need for developing a Sustainability career fair, we recommend creating assessments in the Fall of FY21. These would determine the job market demand for Sustainability professionals along with establishing desired credentials for job applicants. A second assessment would target students with a Sustainability career focus to better understand their career goals and desired career path (government policy work at the local and State, and Federal level, applied science and coordination work within government, Not-For-Profits, corporations, start-ups, or higher education).
* **Year 2:** The Career Center would continue promoting and coordinating a consistent Sustainability identity within individual colleges’ career fairs while adding a modest career fair of interested companies and partners in conjunction with the Fall 2021 ISEE Congress. We recommend starting one paid internship through the Career Center, partnering with ISEE, the LAS Life + Career Design Lab and ACES Career Services to help organize and promote the event. Other student volunteers would assist with planning and day-of event management.
* **Year 3:** Grow the Sustainability Career Fair program to include the Year 1 and Year 2 events, and adding a larger stand-alone, comprehensive Campus-wide Sustainability Career Fair in February 2023, involving multiple University colleges (ACES, LAS, Grainger, Gies, FAA, etc.).

Rationale for Recommendation (a few sentences):

Students from the Student Sustainability Committee involved with drafting this proposal feel that current career fairs do not create opportunities for students with a Sustainability career focus to market and differentiate themselves, nor are the recruiters marketing their organizations’ Sustainability programs and needs. There is not a coordinated Campus-wide effort fostering Sustainability related career recruiting partnerships between the colleges and departments with corporate, NFP, and government recruiters coming to Campus. Furthermore, the students also felt that even within their own programs, Sustainability majors and minors often operate in small silos, which is detrimental to networking and collaboration.

Connection to iCAP Goals (a few sentences):

The 2015 iCAP Education Goals seek to develop and educate future leaders in Sustainability. This initiative is primarily focused on implementing curriculum and co-curricular experiences within the University that further student interest and knowledge of Sustainability in various disciplines. As important as this is, we must also help our student leaders find meaningful employment in their desired disciplines and apply their respective areas of study. Without bridging this gap, our students entering the workforce will not be able to implement a sustainable future for mankind and our world that the University of Illinois is facilitating through the iCAP Goals.

Perceived Challenges (a few sentences):

We believe there are some logistical hurdles, such as getting commitment and buy-in from key stakeholders, such as the Career Center and college career offices. Colleges such as LAS and ACES already have considerable experience supporting Sustainability related scholarship, and so helping their students with Sustainability related students’ careers is in alignment with their goals. In other colleges, however, the connection to Sustainability is less clear. There will likely be less impetus and some push-back to participate without the strong support of senior administration.

Suggested unit/department to address implementation:

The Career Center would be the lead facilitator within the University to achieve the FY21-FY23 goals. Moderate involvement from iSEE (Sustainability Intern), the LAS Life + Career Design Lab and ACES Career Services would be necessary to help coordinate efforts for FY21 & FY22. Considerable effort and outreach to not only Campus departments and entities but also the Illinois Research Park and the Champaign County Convention and Visitor’s Bureau. Campus Conferences & Events Services would be ideally positioned to organize a larger Campus-wide Sustainability career fair.

Anticipated level of budget and/or policy impact (low, medium, high):

The budget impact for the Year 1 and 2 recommendations would be low (cost of a grad hourly working under the Career Center to organize and coordinate implementing goals in colleges’ career fairs and Fall 2021 career fair. Policy-wise, the proposed goals and coordination align well with the iCAP goals. The Year 3 goals likewise do not present a policy risk but would entail a medium level of budgetary commitment from both colleges and private and public recruiters seeking to participate.

Individual comments are required from each SWATeam member (can be brief, if member fully agrees):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Team Member Name | Team Member’s Comments |
| Gillen Wood (Chair) | I support this recommendation. |
| Ann-Perry Witmer (Faculty) | I support this recommendation. |
| Stacy Gloss (Staff) | I fully support this recommendation. I wish I had a tailored career fair like this available to me over 10 years ago. Great idea! |
| Julie Cidell (Faculty) | (Unavailable for comment) |
| Sharlene Denos (Staff) | (Unavailable for comment) |
| Dave Guth (Staff) | (Unavailable for comment) |
| Anna Riedl (Student) | Networking is the primary platform to kickstart a career in any industry. With the Sustainability Career Fair, recruiters have easier access to students just as students have easier access to the recruiters. |
| Carolyn Cai (Student) | (Unavailable for comment) |

Comments from Consultation Group (if any; these can be anonymous):

Explanation and Background (can be supplied in an attachment):

Please see attached meeting notes from 3/4/20.