

# **SWATeam Recommendation**

Name of SWATeam: Education

SWATeam Chair: Gillen Wood

Date Submitted to iWG:

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Specific Actions/Policy Recommended (a few sentences): The Education SWATeam recommends that the Career Center establish a Big Ten Green Career Fair. This will be modeled after the All-Ivy Environmental and Sustainable Development Career Fair.

Public and private entities that are invited to this career fair must have sustainability as core component of their mission. We have defined sustainability as efforts that directly improve existing environmental conditions (i.e., habitat remediation) or reduce the environmental impacts of existing processes (i.e., energy efficiency, waste reduction). Specific areas of focus include habitat conservation and restoration, energy efficiency and renewable energy, green building design and construction, sustainable food production, and waste and resource-use reduction. An exception may be made for an attendee that can justify the position they intend to hire has sustainability (as defined above) as its core function.

The Resiliency iCAP Chapter objective 8.5 states “By FY23, collaborate with colleges and community groups to inventory existing certification opportunities for green jobs and identify gaps.” If a certification is identified, the invited entities can broaden to include those that have obtained that certification.

Rationale for Recommendation (a few sentences): No such career fair exists at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (nor at most colleges across the nation). This provides an opportunity for students to connect with employment that utilizes their skills and passion while also highlighting our institutions’ dedication to making society more sustainable.

It is of utmost importance that the entities that are invited to participate have sustainability at the core of their missions lest students, and outside observers, lose confidence in our valuing environmental protection and improvement. It would be damaging to the reputation of the event if companies that attended were using it to “green wash”, providing students with a false sense that their future jobs would align with their values.

While it may seem ambitious to expand beyond our campus for this type of event, there are several efficiency gains that scaling collaboratively may incur. It is notable that the All Ivy Environmental and Sustainable Development Career Fair was relatively small, only recruiting 67 organizations across their eight esteemed institutions. It may be essential to seek Big10 collaboration for a successful event. The Career Center has expressed interest in this type of event because of the shared resources that they have developed with other institutions. Further, identifying public/private entities to attend can be rather cumbersome, and an event of this magnitude ensures broad marketing and a good pool of candidates to draw upon, thereby improving the attractiveness of attending.

Connection to iCAP Goals (a few sentences): 6.5 [Career Center w/iSEE] Partner with The Career Center and potentially other career offices in FY22 to help students explore and discover career opportunities that are connected to professional interests and goals related to sustainability. Incorporate a sustainability component into a minimum of two events beginning in FY22.

This recommendation intends to address objective 6.5 of the iCAP directly. Instead of being a component, this will be its own event.

Perceived Challenges (a few sentences): Coordination with other campuses may be difficult, and nearly impossible without the Career Center. Timing of the career fair such that it does not overlap with other significant campus events. Proper identification of companies and jobs.

Suggested unit/department to address implementation: iSEE and Career Center

Anticipated level of budget and/or policy impact (low, medium, high): This will require .5-.75 FTE appointment, which would be shared between iSEE and the Career Center (with workload varying in proximity to the event). Once the career fair is established, registration fees should be utilized to cover the costs of this employee.

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

Team Member Name	Team Member's Comments
Luis Rodriguez 	Approved. No further comments.
Eric Green 	Approved. No further comment.
Anna-Maria Marshall	Approved. The proposal summarizes the possible challenges, including who will vet the prospective employers to ensure that they are not “greenwashers.”
Gretchen Forman 	Looks good. Challenges to the event, specifically related to timing and coordination are very important to consider as mentioned above. Connection with Career Center will be vital.
Anna Mehl	I support the recommendations set forth. Thanks! 
Jessica Nicholson	I approve, it's good to see a proposed event that will connect students to sustainability-focused career opportunities and give these companies/organizations exposure.

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

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