

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Fall 2020

The UBC Sustainability Initiative (USI) is pleased to offer current UBC graduate students the opportunity to work on funded sustainability internship projects. Successful candidates work under the mentorship of a partner organization, and are immersed in real world learning where they can apply their research skills and contribute to advancing sustainability across the region.

Note: Projects must be completed remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Visit the [Sustainability Scholars Program website](#) to learn [how the program works](#) and to [apply](#).
- Be sure to review the [application guide](#) to confirm your eligibility before applying.

Applications close at midnight on Sunday September 20, 2020.

Research project title: Embedding decolonial and Indigenous approaches in mental health promotion, education and mental health literacy efforts in a university setting

Project description

In this project, the goal is to work towards greater inclusion and consideration of Indigenous perspectives and communities with respect to health promotion efforts at UBC for students, staff and faculty. The Sustainability Scholar will support the work of two departments, serving the whole UBC community (HR Health, Wellbeing & Benefits and Health Promotion & Education) by providing an Indigenous perspective and decolonization lens and supporting research. This project asks the scholar to compile research and best practices while also reviewing existing content and material and making recommendations to adapt and inform changes and improvements to health literacy focused material and programs.

Key Questions:

- What gaps related to Indigenous teachings/knowledge/practices exist in current mental health literacy and mental health promotion educational tools within both UBC HR and UBC Student Health Promotion and Education?
- What does the literature say about best practices for decolonizing practices in mental health literacy education and mental health promotion (within post secondary settings if possible)?
- How could the HR and Student Health Promotion and Education units improve their existing programs/resources with respect to health equity, cultural inclusivity, respect and safety in mind?

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Overview:

Indigenous ways of knowing emphasize the interconnectedness of all things on our planet, including humans, other four-legged creatures, creatures that swim and fly, plants, and the rocks. The Wellbeing Strategic Framework incorporates these elements especially through the built and natural environment. In terms of other Wellbeing priorities, our units' health promotion and education efforts focus largely on mental health and physical activity, often from a more singular and non-Indigenous perspective. Our hope is that this project can help identify gaps, or highlight opportunities where an Indigenous lens to wellbeing can be included and/or amplified in existing educational materials for UBC community members.

Purpose of the Project:

Through incorporating Indigenous perspectives in everyday educational activities that support the wellbeing of tens of thousands of students, faculty, and staff at UBC, our units are hoping to more intentionally embed social sustainability (considering equity, promoting cultural inquiry into Indigenous concepts of wellbeing, and developing cultural competence within the UBC community), as well as built and natural environments into our current work.

Scope of Work:

The Sustainability Scholar will engage with professional staff, other student staff, faculty members and student leaders who are focused on health promotion initiatives across the University. The scholar will have the opportunity to gain practical experience working and communicating with multiple stakeholders on interdisciplinary and collaborative projects and initiatives in a large university setting.

There will be 4 parts to this project overall, and these will be outlined in more detail below.

1. A research component (1 month)
2. A review component (2-3 months)
3. A recommendation component (2-3 months)
4. A final report component (2-4 weeks)

1. Research

- Engage Indigenous community (students, staff, and faculty) at UBC on their perspectives on mental health, health promotion, and wellbeing. This will involve a goal of connecting with 2 students or student leaders, 2 staff members, and 2 faculty members and performing one-on-one interviews.
- Review existing literature and best practices for mental health promotion, mental health literacy and the approaches and perspectives to both among Indigenous communities and/or within other universities.

2. Review – what is listed below are some of the existing resources that the Scholar can review and make recommendations and edits which may include the creation of new content.

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

- Review, edit, and support changes to existing mental health promotion and mental health literacy resources - including existing workshops and Canvas content that are for both student and employee audiences. The goal will be to increase the relevance of content for Indigenous community members, while sharing Indigenous knowledge on wellbeing with the broader UBC community.
- HR (Staff & Faculty) Specific Resources:
 - Review online Self-directed canvas course content (Self-care 101, Wellbeing in the Workplace)
 - Review facilitated webinars (Self-care 101, Positive Coping Strategies)
 - Review Facilitator's Guide (Intersectionality and MH)
 - Potential: Review and contribute to the development of microaggressions and allyship educational content for faculty and staff (a partnership between Human Resources, Equity & Inclusion at UBC-Vancouver and UBC-Okanagan), contributing an Indigenous lens
- Health Promotion and Education (students) Specific Resources:
 - Review online self-directed canvas course content related to self-care, stress management, and other wellbeing topics for students

3. Recommend

- Based on the findings in the research stage, the scholar will develop a set of recommendations and best practices as a resource that either unit can use in the future for the development of new educational materials.
- (Time permitting) The scholar can create a document with culturally relevant resources for Indigenous students/employees that could be shared directly with employees and students.

Every month, the Scholar will meet with representatives from HR (Health, Wellbeing and Benefits team), Health Promotion & Education and potentially with another graduate student who is conducting some related work in other Wellbeing affiliated units.

Deliverables

Note that a final deliverable (either a full report or, if the report contains confidential information, an executive summary) is required by the end of the program (March 12, 2021). The deliverable will be archived in the online [public-facing Scholars Project Library](#).

The Scholar will deliver a final report containing a summary of their completed work complemented by a final presentation to key stakeholders. The final report should include:

- Summary report of consultation with UBC Indigenous community on Indigenous perspectives on mental health, health promotion, and wellbeing, and on any literature collected and synthesized.
- A brief summary of content reviewed, edited, and created for the student-facing Health Promotion and Education unit and Human Resources Health, Wellbeing and Benefits

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

- Include the best practices/recommendations developed
- Database of individuals consulted that are interested in continued engagement.
- A final report in the form of an “executive summary” for the UBC Sustainability Scholars online project library.
- The Scholar will also deliver a final presentation to key stakeholders in Human Resources, Health Promotion and Education, and UBC Wellbeing.

Time Commitment

The program runs for 22 weeks from October 19, 2020 to March 12, 2021, during which students work an average of 12 hours per week for a total of 250 hours.

- This project will take **250** hours to complete.
- This project must be completed between October 19, 2020 and March 12, 2021
- The Scholar must be available to participate in meetings during standard work hours (e.g., between 9 am and 5 pm Monday to Friday), approximately 12 hours per week.

Required/preferred Skills and Background

- Familiarity with Indigenous ways of knowing
- Excellent research and writing skills
- Knowledge of health, health promotion, or education, with some previous related academic, volunteer, or professional experience.
- An understanding of some wellbeing services and supports available on campus
- Understanding and/or experience with program development which may include program planning and evaluation an asset.
- Strong interpersonal skills and ability to liaise with multiple stakeholders and project partners.
- Ability to take initiative and engage in creative problem solving
- Ability and willingness to work both independently and as part of a collaborative team
- Strong computer skills (word processing, e-mail, spreadsheet).
- Excellent organizational and time management skills.
- Creativity, curiosity, enthusiasm and commitment.
- Ability to balance and manage multiple priorities throughout the school year, while maintaining good academic standing
- Experience conducting Indigenous community engagement, including facilitation skills, is an asset
- Familiarity with Indigenous research methodologies

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Applications close **midnight Sunday September 20, 2020.**

Apply here: <http://sustain.ubc.ca/scholarsapply>

Contact Karen Taylor at sustainability.scholars@ubc.ca if you have questions

Useful Resources

Below are some links to useful resources to help you with your resume and cover letter (there are many more online). Some of these resources also provide information on preparing for your interview.

Resume workshop for prospective Sustainability Scholars: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/resume-workshop-for-prospective-sustainability-scholars-tickets-117422877989>

<https://students.ubc.ca/career/career-resources/resumes-cover-letters-curricula-vitae>

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/current-students/graduate-pathways-success>

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/cover-letter-cv-resume-templates-ubc-career-services>