

SDCCD Leaf Program - Teaching Sustainability



Thank you for your interest and support!

This is a faculty-led effort to increase the teaching of sustainability topics, including climate change, environmental justice, environmental sustainability, and/or environmentally sustainable practices. The program was developed through the District Committee on Sustainability (DCS) and is currently managed by Mesa College's Environmental Sustainability Committee (ESC).

Beginning in Fall 2023, SDCCD began to include a LEAF icon in the online course registration system to identify courses with such content. You can see the [current list of courses and sections that have earned a LEAF at this link](#).

The purposes for this project include:

- Supporting students in their effort to find courses and faculty committed to these issues
- Signaling the importance of climate literacy and environmental justice at SDCCD
- Enabling faculty to approach teaching this content with more intentionality
- Ensuring that our students are prepared for the economic and societal changes that are to come



How to request a LEAF icon for your course:



There are 2 ways to earn a LEAF for your course:

1) Collaborate with contract faculty across the district to revise the content of the course COR to include one or more of these topics.

1. Choose a course to modify - one or more of these issues (climate change, environmental justice, environmental sustainability, and environmentally sustainable practices) should be relevant to the content of the course.
2. Requirements for a LEAF icon:
 - a. At least one student learning OBJECTIVE AND one topic in the CONTENT section should be added or revised in the COR, to include at least one of the following phrases: climate change, environmental justice, environmental sustainability, environmentally sustainable practices;
 - b. CONTRACT faculty members who teach the course - at Mesa, City, Miramar, and Continuing Education - should agree on the COR modification
 - c. The COR revision should then be entered into CurriQnet and sent through the course revision process. You should indicate in the "Reason for Proposed Action"

that the proposal includes a “revision to include environmental sustainability content for the LEAF program” and specify which revisions are related to this purpose.

3. How to receive a LEAF icon
 - a. After the proposal has been entered into curriQnet and approved by the curriculum review committee at one of the campuses, [notify the Mesa Environmental Sustainability Committee using this form](#) and we will request a LEAF icon if the course meets the criteria.
 - b. After the COR revision receives final approval, a LEAF icon will automatically be applied to all sections.



2) Design an individual section of an existing course to teach content via sustainability-themed materials (ie- language, math, art, critical thinking....)

1. Choose a course and a particular section that will be redesigned with a THEME of environmental sustainability, climate change, environmental justice, and/or environmentally sustainable practices - these issues would be the vehicle for teaching the course content.
2. Requirements for a LEAF icon:
 - a. Develop a syllabus for a “sustainability-themed section” in which ALL OR MOST of the teaching materials - readings, examples, problem sets, projects - through which the content is taught relate to the theme.
 - b. The section should continue to meet all of the criteria specified in the relevant COR.
3. How to receive a LEAF icon
 - a. When you have completed planning your section and have a draft syllabus, [submit it to Mesa’s Environmental Sustainability Committee for review using this form](#). Please use colored highlighting to indicate “sustainability-themed” content, activities, and assignments.
 - b. If all or most of the teaching materials relate to the theme, we will notify you and request a LEAF icon for the section. Using the following terms in the syllabus can demonstrate this relationship: environmental sustainability, climate change, environmental justice, and/or environmentally sustainable practices.
 - c. Each semester thereafter that you plan to teach the section, notify the ESC using the form and we will request a LEAF icon.
 - d. Each time you teach the section, take steps to describe the theme in the “class notes” section of the “class details” on the online course registration system.



Rev. 1/27/25

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- More information about this program and other sustainability efforts at Mesa can be found at [Ecomesa](#).
- [Here is a slideshow about this process, presented at the 1/27/25 Catalyst workshop at Mesa College.](#)