AC 5: Immersive Experience

2 points available

A. Credit Rationale
This credit recognizes institutions that offer sustainability-focused immersive experience programs. Sustained immersive experiences such as community-based internships and “study abroad” programs give students the opportunity to witness and learn in-depth about sustainability challenges and solutions. These programs provide a memorable way for students to deepen and expand their knowledge of sustainability.

B. Criteria
Institution offers at least one immersive, sustainability-focused educational study program. The program is one week or more in length and may take place off-campus, overseas, or on-campus.

For this credit, the program must meet one or both of the following criteria:

- It concentrates on sustainability, including its social, economic, and environmental dimensions
- And/or
- It examines an issue or topic using sustainability as a lens.

For-credit programs, non-credit programs and programs offered in partnership with outside entities may count for this credit. Programs offered exclusively by outside entities do not count for this credit. See Credit Example, below, for further guidance.

C. Applicability
This credit applies to all institutions that offer immersive educational programs.

D. Scoring
Institutions earn 2 points for meeting the criteria outlined above. Partial points are not available for this credit.

E. Reporting Fields

Required
- An indication of whether the institution offers at least one immersive, sustainability-focused educational study program that meets the criteria for this credit
- An affirmation that the submitted information is accurate to the best of a responsible party’s knowledge and contact information for the responsible party. The responsible party should be a staff member, faculty member, or administrator who can respond to questions regarding the data once submitted and available to the public.
Conditional
Required if the institution is reporting an immersive, sustainability-focused educational study program:
☐ A brief description of the sustainability-focused immersive program(s) offered by the institution (including how each program addresses the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainability)

Optional
☐ The website URL where information about the immersive program(s) is available
☐ Notes about the submission

F. Measurement

Timeframe
Programs offered during the three years prior to the anticipated date of submission are eligible for this credit.

Sampling and Data Standards
Not applicable

Credit Example: Immersive Experience

Example 1: Eco-village semester
Example Community College offers a semester abroad at one of eight affiliated overseas and domestic eco-villages. These eco-villages are sustainability-themed communities where students engage in sustainability skills and issues relevant to that culture and region. The semester experience includes academic content taught by resident faculty at each eco-village as well as practitioners of sustainable practices. In addition, the semester stresses immersion in the culture of sustainability by interacting and working with the people that live there as well as in surrounding areas to develop solutions to environmental, social and economic problems.

Example 2: Local service semester
Example University offers formal semester-long, full-time internships with three local non-profit organizations that serve to advance sustainability. Each organization has a designated faculty liaison that also serves as a mentor for students involved with a particular sustainability organization. As part of the internships, students must complete a substantial academic writing project. These reflections focus on sustainability learning and are presented to all students that completed academic internships that semester.