

Enhancing the Undergraduate Student Experience Through Extra-Curricular Activities

Impact Statement

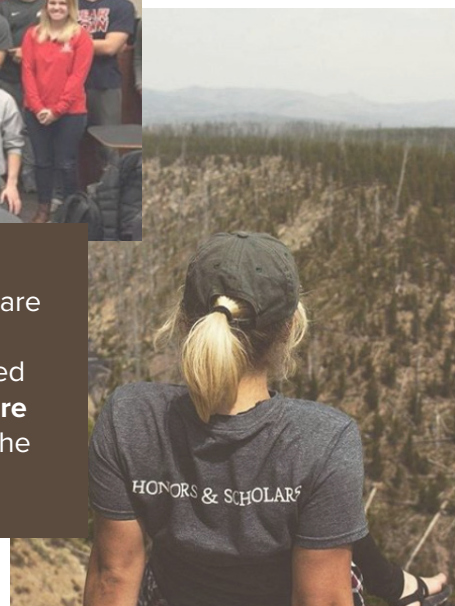
INVESTIGATORS

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SUMMARY

Extra curricular involvement opportunities and engagement are expanding in the School of Environment and Natural Resources. Engagement in these opportunities has increased the effectiveness of SENR in **recruiting and supporting future professionals**, while also directly connecting students with the land-grant mission of the The Ohio State University.



SITUATION

Involvement in extra-curricular activities has a direct correlation with **higher retention rates, better graduation rates, and ultimately better job outcomes for students involved**. These opportunities are particularly effective in recruiting and supporting underrepresented minorities and first generation students on the pathway into STEM careers. Through these experiences, students develop soft and hard skills, a professional network, and leadership experience. As post-graduate employment become more and more competitive, these outcomes are essential in helping students acquire positions within their field. Extra-curricular opportunities also connect students with means to participate in The Ohio State University's land-grant mission as undergraduates, **serving the state through the application and dissemination of knowledge**.

RESPONSE

The School of Environment and Natural Resources provides a variety of opportunities for students to engage in development and learning outside of the classroom. Student organizations have been part of the SENR community since its beginning and there are currently **13 active organizations based out of the School**. In their first and second year, students are also able to participate in one of two living-learning communities focused on environmental and natural resources themes, the SUSTAINS Learning Community and the Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) Scholars.

SEEDS
3,000 HOURS OF SERVICE
BUCKEYE FRIENDS
OF STONE LAB
STUDENTS FOR A SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS
ENR SCHOLARS
PEACE CORPS CLUB
SUSTAINS LEARNING COMMUNITY
THE SIERRA CLUB STUDENT COALITION
FORESTRY FORUM
FISH AND WILDLIFE SOCIETY
1,000 STUDENTS INVOLVED
TERRAQUA



IMPACT

In 2017, over 1,000 Ohio State students (ENR majors and beyond) participated in activities with extra-curricular opportunities through the School of Environment and Natural Resources. The Soil Judging Team, one of our oldest student organizations, provides students opportunities for hands-on, professional skill-building related to soil resources and ecosystem services, including regional and national competitions. The Fish and Wildlife Society, Forestry Forum, Peace Corps Club, and Net Impact connect students directly with professional networks and opportunities in their intended careers, while the Sierra Club Student Coalition and Students for Recycling seek to create change in the campus and Columbus communities. The SUSTAINS Learning Community and ENR Scholars are **highly effective in recruitment, retention, and community outreach**. While the overall university yield rate for Autumn 2017 was 31 percent, the ENR Scholars yield rate was 44 percent, including a 69 percent yield rate with first generation students. Additionally, the **ENR Scholars program boasts a 98 percent first year retention rate** (University: 94 percent) and an 82 percent four-year graduation rate (University: 62 percent). Through SUSTAINS and ENR Scholars, students participated in over 3,000 hours of service learning in 2017, primarily focusing on the Columbus community. Through these activities outside of the classroom, SENR is expanding Ohio State's land-grant mission and impacting both students and the state.

CONTACT

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