

FOCUS AWARD INFORMATION – FOR CATALOG DESCRIPTION

What are focus awards?

Focus awards recognize students who complete a minimum number of credits within a defined area of study. The awards encourage students to expand their knowledge, experience, and/or skillset related to a particular academic area. Focus awards are not formal degrees or certificates, nor are they noted on academic transcripts.

How are focus awards managed?

Focus awards require a minimum of five courses or 18-20 credits from a variety of disciplines. Students will track their own progress, then notify the designated faculty member once complete. The faculty member will confirm completion of a focus award via a transcript review, then award the student with a paper form of recognition and special cord to be worn at commencement.

What focus awards are offered at COCC?

There are currently two focus awards offered at COCC. Descriptions and requirements for each award are listed below.

Social Justice Focus Award: The COCC Social Justice Focus Award takes an interdisciplinary approach to understanding power, privilege, and domination and their operation at the individual, group, community, and national levels. The Social Justice Focus award requires a minimum of five courses (20 credits), and courses from at least two different disciplines.

ANTH 103: Cultural Anthropology, 4 credits

ANTH 295: Gender/Sexuality in Anthropology, 4 credits

ED 219: Multicultural Issues in Education, 4 credits

ED 224: Anti-Bias Curriculum Education, 4 credits

ES 211-214: Ethnic Studies, 4 credits

PHE 228: Health and Social Justice, 4 credits

HS 208: Multicultural Issues in Counseling, 4 credits

HUM 240: Native American Literature and Culture, 4 credits

PSY 202: Mind and Society, 4 credits

PSY 216: Social Psychology, 4 credits

SOC 212: Sociology of Race, Class, and Gender, 4 credits

SOC 228: Sociology of the Environment, 4 credits

SUS 101: Introduction to Sustainability, 4 credits

WS 101: Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies, 4 credits

Sustainability Focus Award: The COCC Sustainability Focus Award is designed for students interested in exploring the science, ideologies, and/or applications of sustainability in our modern world. Courses highlight the interconnected nature of environmental, social, and economic dimensions of sustainability. The Sustainability Focus award requires a minimum of five courses (18-20 credits), two SUS-prefix courses, and courses from at least three disciplines.

SUS 101, Introduction to Sustainability, 4 credits

SUS 102, Introduction to Environmental Science and Sustainability, 4 credits

SUS 103, Physical Science of Climate Change, 4 credits

SUS 210, Creating a More Sustainable Society, 4 credits

SUS 220, Sustainable Food and Agriculture, 4 credits (or PHE 268, Sustainable Food and Nutrition)

SUS 298, Independent Study: Sustainability, 1-4 credits

BI 142, Introduction to Marine Biology, 4 credits

CUL 235S, Farm-To-Table and Sustainable Cuisine Practices, 4 credits

FOR 208, Soils: Sustainable Ecosystems, 4 credits

FOR 260, Conservation of Natural Resources, 3 credits

G 163, Field Geology, 4 credits

G 201, Geology I, The Dynamic Earth, 4 credits

G 202, Geology II, Earth's Surface, 4 credits

G 203, Geology III, Earth History, 4 credits

OL 111, Introduction to Outdoor Leadership, 4 credits

PHE 228, Health and Social Justice, 4 credits

PHE 268, Sustainable Food and Nutrition, 4 credits (or SUS 220, Sustainable Food and Agriculture)

SOC 228, Sociology of the Environment, 4 credits

FOCUS AWARD INFORMATION – FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY

What are focus awards?

Focus awards recognize students who complete a minimum number of credits within a defined area of study. The awards are designed to encourage students to expand their knowledge, experience, and/or skillset related to a particular academic topic or theme. Focus awards are not formal degrees or certificates, nor are they noted on academic transcripts. That said, focus award course credits may transfer to a variety of programs at four-year colleges or universities.

Why are focus awards?

Students of the 21st century are impacted by various and significant environmental and social problems. Climate change, class segregation, resource depletion, cultural discrimination – these problems are complex, multifaceted, and interdependent. As a result, today's students may desire or require a deeper understanding of the underlying causes and potential solutions. Focus awards provide students with a broader foundation, deeper experience, and a more holistic understanding of complex and interdisciplinary issues.

The establishment of focus awards at COCC fulfills a variety of purposes. First, focus awards provide a list of courses across disciplines that address content linked to a particular topic or theme; by providing such a list, the college facilitates connecting students to courses that address their specific area(s) of interest. Second, focus awards communicate important college values to students and the surrounding community. Third, students who complete the focus award requirements will receive recognition in the form of a paper certificate and colored commencement cord. Lastly, focus awards may be highlighted on student resumes for potential employers.

How are focus awards managed?

Focus awards will be designed by faculty within a particular field of study and vetted by the appropriate committee(s). The awards will require a minimum number of courses (5) or credits (18-20) from a minimum number of disciplines (2-3). Focus award requirements will be posted to the COCC website and students will track their own progress. When complete, they will notify the appropriate faculty member (e.g., Tom Barry for the Social Justice Focus Award or Owen Murphy for the Sustainability Focus Award). Once completion is confirmed via transcript review, the faculty member will award the student with a paper form of recognition and a green cord to be worn at commencement.

See focus award descriptions and course lists under the "Catalog Description" (above).