

Sustainable Development Goals Course Inventory: A Preliminary Study at the Chinese University of Hong Kong

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Abstract

Higher education institutions (HEIs) have been powerful drivers for achieving the SDGs. Through education for sustainable development (ESD), HEIs provide broad knowledge, innovative technologies and creative solutions to the SDGs. Mapping what has been done to contribute to ESD is the first step to discovering further possibilities to contribute to sustainable development. Using the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as the framework, this study aimed to develop the SDG course inventory and understand the landscape of ESD across the university curriculum of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK). All active courses offered by the eight faculties, nine colleges, and five other course-offering units in 2021 were automatically shortlisted by 847 keywords. A total of 581 courses mapped into 17 SDGs were manually selected and analyzed. Our findings showed that all 17 SDGs were covered by the curriculums at CUHK. SDG10 (Reduced Inequalities) and SDG3 (Good Health and Well-being) were the two main components of ESD, while SDG6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), SDG14 (Life below Water), and SDG1 (No Poverty) were the least focused. Landscape analysis showed that the Faculty of Education and Faculty of Medicine had primary focuses on SDG3 (Quality Education) and SDG4 (Good Health and Well-being), respectively, while other faculties covered a wide variety of SDGs. This study revealed the strengths and gaps of ESD and provided essential information for the development of ESD at CUHK. It also served as a foundation for a more rigorous SDG course inventory study in the future.

Keywords: Education for Sustainable Development, Higher Education Institution, SDG Course Inventory, SDG Landscape, Sustainable Development Goals