

# CONNECTING STUDENT ATTITUDES AND SUSTAINABILITY COMPETENCIES IN PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCE EDUCATION

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**SUBTHEME:** Other

## BACKGROUND

Environmental and social sustainability is an increasingly significant factor for the pharmaceutical industry. Higher education programs need to equip future pharmaceutical professionals with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to effectively address sustainability problems and seize emerging opportunities. Sustainability competency (SC) frameworks (Brundiens et al., 2021; Redman & Wiek, 2021) may offer guidance for the development of sustainability curricula, but there is little precedence for their integration into programs that do not specialise in sustainability or the environment.

## AIMS AND METHODS

This study focussed on a four-week sustainability module in a Master of Pharmaceutical Science degree to explore the applicability of SCs to the degree context and their utility for assessment design, and to gauge student views on the relevance of sustainability to their career aspirations.

In a mixed-methods approach, written assessment submissions and responses to an evaluation survey were analysed<sup>1</sup>. Thematic analysis of the qualitative data was performed and the resulting themes compared to the SC learning objectives defined by Wiek et al. (2016).

## RESULTS

Preliminary analysis of survey responses and reflections from a small number of students (n=13; total class size: 125) suggested that:

- Sustainability is seen as career-relevant (84 % agreed/strongly agreed with the statement: "Understanding sustainability will be useful in my career") and many students are motivated to contribute to sustainable practices, such as avoiding pharmaceutical waste.
- Procedural skills, such as stakeholder engagement and conflict resolution, are considered important not only in relation to sustainability, but for career purposes in general. These skills can be mapped against SCs (e.g., values thinking; cf Wiek et al., 2016).

## REFERENCES

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