Table of Contents

1. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE 2

1.1 Climate Studies as a Unique Interdisciplinary Field 3

1.2 CSB/SJU Demand 3
   1.2.1 Faculty and Staff Support 3
   1.2.2 Campus Engagement 4
   1.2.3 Student Perspectives 5

1.3 Peer/Aspirant Institution Comparison 8

2. PROPOSED CSB/SJU CLIMATE STUDIES MINOR 10

2.1 Learning Outcomes 10

2.2 Curriculum Structure and Administration 10

2.3 Staffing and Enrollment Implications 13

2.4 Resource and Space Implications 13

2.5 Assessment Plan 13

3. REFERENCES 15

4. APPENDIX A: SELECTED FACULTY PUBLICATIONS RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE 17

5. APPENDIX B: LETTERS OF SUPPORT 19
1. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Climate Studies is an emergent, interdisciplinary field of inquiry that seeks to understand the multiple facets of climate change. Climate change, or the climate crisis as it is increasingly called, is the “super wicked problem” of our times (Levin, Cashore, Bernstein et al. 2012). Super wicked problems cannot be resolved with one solution or one way of thinking. They require solutions from many areas of society and from many different disciplines. Therefore, Climate Studies—scholarly inquiry that seeks to understand and craft solutions to the global climate crisis—is a quintessentially interdisciplinary field that complements the interdisciplinary Environmental Studies major and the interdisciplinary commitments of the liberal arts education offered by CSB/SJU.

Evidence for the urgent need to understand and respond to climate crisis, at all levels of society, is abundant. The year 2020 tied 2016 as the warmest year on record (NASA 2021), wildfires in the western United States have burned unprecedented quantities of land, and communities in the US and abroad continue to suffer from super storms and the “slow violence” (Nixon 2011) of sea level rise, unpredictable agricultural patterns, and new health challenges brought on by climate change.

Our students have lived their entire lives in this climate-changed world. Many of them learned about climate change in high school or even earlier and fear for how it will affect their futures. A 2018 Gallup poll found that 70% of Americans ages 18 to 34 worry “a great deal or a fair amount” about the climate and global warming (Reinhart 2018). Similarly, a 2018 Kaiser Family Foundation and Washington Post representative survey found that a quarter of US teens have engaged politically on the issue of climate change (e.g. by participating in a protest or school walk-out, or contacting an elected official) (Hamel, Lopes, Muñana et al. 2019). Climate grief and climate anxiety are increasingly common emotional responses to this existential crisis (Pihkala 2020), with concerning mental health impacts for young people (Taylor and Murray 2020). A Climate Studies minor will help students process their knowledge and emotions by equipping them for leadership on climate solutions. The minor would advance our institutional learning goals, particularly engage globally, serve graciously, and live courageously. CSB/SJU would be two of the few liberal arts colleges among only a handful of US higher education institutions of any kind to offer such a minor, offering students a rare opportunity while leveraging our existing faculty expertise in climate studies (see Appendix A) and our status as formal observers of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP) to attract new students.

Offering a Climate Studies minor, which will require no additional budgetary or personnel resources, will:

1. Meet demonstrated need for expanded, interdisciplinary exploration of climate change, evidenced by the narrative above, student perspectives, and by recent events and actions on campus (see below)
2. Aid in recruitment by attracting current and prospective students seeking fields of study and career paths that not only fulfill their interests and provide them skills to the workforce, but also help ensure a livable and equitable planet
3. Make students more attractive to employers in the rapidly growing sector of jobs related to climate change

4. Strengthen CSB/SJU’s reputation as a leader in environmental education and sustainability (e.g. CSB/SJU Sustainability, Outdoor University) and build on the institutions’ unprecedented access as formal observers to the United Nations climate change negotiations, where we bring 20 students each year. No other undergraduate institution in the country is able to take as many students and very few provide the kind of specialized course and research preparation that we offer our students as part of this experience.

5. Further CSB/SJU’s missions to foster leadership for change and to cultivate the habit of promoting the common good

6. Contribute to students’ capacity to practice the Benedictine Values of justice, moderation, stability, peace, and stewardship

In addition to these benefits, a Climate Studies minor also fits with Strategic Planning goals at CSB/SJU that include adding “transcriptable” programs and minors that require zero additional resources.

1.1 Climate Studies as a Unique Interdisciplinary Field

Climate Studies, like the crisis that it explores, is a relatively new field, but one that an increasing number of interdisciplinary scholars claim as their own. CSB/SJU has offered an Environmental Studies minor since 1994 and a major since 2004. Each of these programs require broad course work across multiple environmental topics and disciplines. The Environmental Studies major requires students take courses in humanities, social science, and natural science approaches to environmental studies; even an environmental art course is offered as an elective. But currently neither the Environmental Studies major or minor require that a student take any upper division courses focused on climate change.

A Climate Studies minor would be similarly interdisciplinary but would draw on the existing strengths of Environmental Studies faculty and faculty in other disciplines to offer a distinct program focused on the climate crisis in depth that could be suitably paired with almost any major. Completing the climate studies minor would signal expertise in climate change to potential employers, ensuring that students who are passionate about climate change have transcripts that clearly represent their interests, skills, and experience. We also anticipate the minor will continue to inspire faculty beyond the Environmental Studies Department to utilize their diverse expertise in offering future courses that examine climate change from many different disciplinary perspectives.

1.2 CSB/SJU Demand

1.2.1 Faculty and Staff Support
The six faculty of the Environmental Studies department are unanimous in their support for the proposed Climate Studies minor. As reflected in the department’s 2019-2020 mid-term program review, the department believes that it will be a good use of existing expertise, valuable for student learning and employment outcomes, an effective way to recruit prospective students, and an important contribution to enhancing our institutions’ renown for environmental and climate leadership (see Appendix A). Beyond Environmental Studies, faculty who would be teaching electives in the proposed minor are housed in ten different departments: Political Science, Peace Studies, Sociology, Nutrition, Communication, Art, Physics, Education, Economics, and Chemistry Departments. Environmental Studies invited faculty participation in the minor through the Faculty Discussion List and by emailing faculty and chairs in specific departments that we guessed may be interested in participating. In their letters of support and in review of this document, each of the participating faculty as well as some department chairs have voiced their support for the minor proposal. Faculty in Philosophy, Math, and Gender Studies have also voiced support for the minor and an interest in developing future courses following the Academic Prioritization Process.

Concerning recruitment, in review of this proposal both Nathan Dehne (see letter in appendix) and Tom Voller-Berdan in Admissions agreed that the proposed minor would enhance the attractiveness of our academic offerings for prospective students interested in the environmental fields. This proposal recognizes the wide understanding of the importance and relevance of climate studies. A survey of more than one million people conducted by the UN and University of Oxford (2021) found that 65% of adults in G20 countries believe we are in a climate emergency, and 72% of people under age 18 believe so. This shows the rising awareness of climate studies amongst all people, but especially in high school and college students.

Chad Marolf and Troy Fritz of Institutional Advancement at both CSB and SJU, as well as Rachael Brodeur, the CSB/SJU Sustainability Coordinator, also strongly support the minor (see letters in appendix). They highlight its capacity to build on existing strengths to attract donor dollars to support students and initiatives like the Center for the Environment, and to provide important foundations for student engagement on campus.

1.2.2 Campus Engagement

Qualitatively, there has been increasing CSB/SJU student interest in climate crisis over the last three years. In 2016-2017, the student Climate Action Club, recently renamed the Climate Justice Club, was weak, with few members and high turnover. In the last two years, the club consistently has 10-15 meeting attendees, including summer Zoom meetings. The total student membership in this club is thirty-five students, and they are from a variety of different majors. It has gained visibility in the CSB/SJU community through organizing large protests supported by the administration, such as the 2019 Climate Strike at which President Hinton spoke. The Climate Justice Club has produced two fact books demonstrating substantial student initiative to educate fellow students about climate change and climate justice (see CSB/SJU Climate Justice Club 2020; CSB/SJU Climate Justice Club 2021). In 2021, the club was involved with Line 3 protests both on- and off-campus. This core group of students shows a clear demand for additional curricular offerings that a Climate Studies minor would provide.
Student engagement in the United Nations climate change negotiations (Conference of the Parties, or COP) demonstrates broad and growing interest and engagement with climate crisis. In 2009, a small group of students self-organized to work with donors and the institutions to attend the negotiations in Copenhagen. Then, in the lead up to the negotiations held in Paris in 2015, CSB/SJU gained formal observer status through a faculty initiative, allowing us to take about twenty students each year. We are now two of the four Minnesota colleges with this status (the others are Macalester and the University of Minnesota), and among a small percentage of American colleges and universities overall to be so recognized. Most colleges, including University of Minnesota, does not take undergraduates. Since 2015, we have had 20 to 30 applicants each year, more than half of whom are not Environmental Studies majors. For the last few years, donors have contributed scholarships for student travel to the negotiations totaling $7,500-$10,000 per year for CSB students and $7500 per year for SJU students. The St. Cloud Times has featured multiple articles highlighting how our students (see Hertel 2019 in Appendix B, Hertel 2021b) and faculty (Hertel 2021a) bring their experience from the conference to bear on their local climate change work. Clearly, there is great support among the CSB/SJU community for student learning related to climate change. A Climate Studies minor would be an accessible way for students of all majors to channel their interest in climate change into their academics and to build upon the success of our COP programming.

Recent events on campus also demonstrate a greater awareness that climate crisis is of interest to people in many disciplines. In 2019, 69 faculty and staff, from 32 departments, published a call for climate action in The Record and The St. Cloud Times (see Faculty and Staff at CSB/SJU 2019). The Climate Justice Club organized a petition, signed by over 1000 faculty, staff, and students, demanding the next SJU president lead on climate and sustainability. MLK week in 2019 and 2020 featured a presentation and student panel on the connections between Dr. King’s work and the climate crisis. In fall 2019, Amelia Cheever and Kyhl Lyndgaard entered CSB/SJU as a site for the international Climate Change Theatre Action, and hosted a public reading of selected plays written for the occasion. In fall 2020, Daniel DiLeo gave the talk “Climate Change as Religious, Ethical, and Political.” All these events were standing room only in some of our campuses’ largest rooms. In spring 2020, CSB/SJU hosted the Talk Climate Institute, drawing 35 community members and 30 students who learned how to craft and share their own personal stories about climate change. Soon after, CSB/SJU was the Minnesota host for the national Solve Climate by 2030 event. We facilitated presentations by three MN-based climate change and climate justice experts and a virtual discussion with over 70 attendees from around the state. In fall 2020, QPLUS hosted the event “The Climate Crisis is a Queer Issue,” attended by about 25 students from a diverse array of majors. A month later, Derek Larson gave the talk “Understanding of Creation and Our Care for Our Common Home” as part of the Sunday at the Abbey programming. Since 2019, the Climate Action Workshop class of less than 20 students has organized annual events related to climate justice that are regularly attended by 40 students from outside the course. These events evidence broad interest by the campus community in understanding and engaging with climate change from a diversity of perspectives.

1.2.3 Student Perspectives

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1 https://www.change.org/p/sju-president-select-committee-hire-a-sju-president-that-will-advocate-for-the-environment
In January 2022, a brief survey was sent by faculty and/or department chairs in 13 departments to CSB/SJU students. The survey explained the idea for the climate studies minor, potential course requirements, and asked students to rank and describe their interest in the minor. All questions asked for rating on a scale from 1, strongly disagree, to 5, strongly agree. The mean scores for the 247 respondents are presented below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Average Score (1 - 5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A climate studies minor would be a good addition to the CSB/SJU academic catalog.</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would be interested in a climate studies minor.</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think other students would be interested in a climate studies minor.</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents represent 29 distinct majors and 36 minors. Only 23 respondents are Environmental Studies majors or double majors, with six students minoring in Environmental Studies. Mean scores, coming from the majority of students who are not currently pursuing environmental fields, demonstrate student support for adding the minor and student perception that this is a field of interest to their peers. Fifty-one students agreed or strongly agreed that they would be interested in the minor.

When asked to explain their ratings, student responses highlight a number of common themes. They overwhelmingly thought climate change is a “hot topic” that will only become more important, with daily effects on their lives. Many also highlighted that “we live in a society that lacks knowledge about climate” and that it is important to equip students with tools to effect change.

Many students who would not personally pursue the minor perceive high interest and passion among their peers and feel that it is important to have choices available so all students can pursue their passions.

I think it’s a good minor to expand the academic curriculum at CSBSJU. The more minors available, the more people are able to study what they want.

I think a climate studies minor would be a good addition to the curriculum for a lot of people. I am not personally interested in it, but I do think it is an important field that is only going to become more prominent as time goes on.

Others pointed out that the minor would be an important way for students whose primary interest lies elsewhere, to still pursue learning to enable them to be part of climate solutions.

I support the idea of a climate studies minor because climate and climate change are becoming more and more important in our society and for the survival of the human race. Though it might not be everyone’s passion, I think many people realize the importance of the issue and would like to be a part of helping stop climate change. A minor would allow students to be involved in the issue while still majoring in their main passion or area of talent.
There was also widespread agreement that climate change is a critical liberal arts issue and that specialization in this field could support students to be leaders in their communities.

More and more students have become passionate about climate change and working to solve some of the social and scientific issues it is creating. This would be a liberal arts way of supporting students to be active and passionate in their communities and provide them with more specific knowledge to influence their career and life paths.

Respondents also demonstrated an awareness of the interdisciplinary nature of their future careers and how a climate studies minor could support their success on the job market.

There are many different fields later on in people's career paths that would benefit from being able to study climate and all that relates to it. One example would be any prospective lawyer wanting to go into that field of law.

Having professional experience working in the public policy arena, I've seen the importance of STEM majors that work in the public sector; they utilize their scientific education to deeply understand proposed policy. I believe that Climate Studies would provide CSB SJU students the same critical perspective while also uniquely preparing them for thinking beyond science-based education, and into an interdisciplinary education.

Aligning with institutional learning goal of leading courageously, respondents connected the minor to strengthening CSB/SJU students’ existing capacity for making a difference in the world.

Climate change has had a major impact on this generation and our approaches to this problem look different all over the world. CSBSJU students are known to do great things for the greater community and that mainly stems from what we learn in the classroom. Having this minor would do just that!

Others highlighted how this minor would provide a needed specialization to reflect work that some students are already doing on their own, demonstrating the existing expertise of our faculty.

Students are already taking climate studies classes out of sheer interest, allowing for a more focused path to climate studies would be beneficial for allowing students future growth in the field and opportunities to investigate possible future interests in careers related to climate studies. [this was written in all capitalized letters]

I think it would allow people who are interested in the climate in particular to have a degree that reflected that. Environmental studies is so broad that it can be hard to make yourself unique and specialized.
Finally, some students were simply unsure of whether they would be interested in such a minor, likely because of low exposure to the topic. Having a minor would heighten awareness of climate studies as an option and, combined with what students hear about climate change from the media and peers, likely encourage more students to pursue the minor. It would also support students who have an interest, but may not make the space to take classes that they perceive as “not counting toward anything.”

In one student’s words, this minor would help students know where to start to engage their passions:

I think a climate studies minor would be a phenomenal opportunity for students to learn about an issue that so many of us are passionate about, but aren't sure where to start with. I'm interested in the intersection of science and sociology/politics, and would definitely consider a climate studies minor.

Student responses present arguments in support of this minor that highlight its value for institutional learning goals, the liberal arts, passions and interests of rising generations, and expanding career opportunities. These sentiments are generally supported throughout the responses and align with the perceptions of environmental studies faculty and faculty and staff who have provided letters of support for this minor.

1.3 Peer/Aspirant Institution Comparison

Few schools in the country have a Climate Studies program of any kind and even fewer of those are liberal arts colleges. A review of 31 peer institutions (identified by CSB/SJU Institutional Research and Assessment) found no similar programs. While some schools have courses related to climate change and potentially related minors (Atmospheric Science, Environmental Sustainability, Environmental Justice, etc.), none of the peer institutions had a specific climate change or climate studies major or minor. Despite CSB/SJU no longer recognizing formal aspirant institutions, a further review of the 15 institutions previously-recognized as aspirant institutions yielded no climate studies or climate change majors or minor programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peer Institutions</th>
<th>*Aspirant Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allegheny College</td>
<td>Barnard College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustana College</td>
<td>Bucknell University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin College</td>
<td>Centre College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beloit College</td>
<td>Connecticut College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coe College</td>
<td>Dickinson College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gustavus Adolphus College</td>
<td>Franklin and Marshall College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hendrix College</td>
<td>Furman University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hobart &amp; William Smith Colleges</td>
<td>Gettysburg College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Wesleyan University</td>
<td>Kenyon College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juniata College</td>
<td>Occidental College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalamazoo College</td>
<td>Sewanee – The University of the South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knox College</td>
<td>Skidmore College</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The only liberal arts college we found that may have a similar program is Macalester College. Housed within the Environmental Studies department, majors at Macalester can add a “Preapproved Interdisciplinary Emphasis” (similar to a minor) in Climate Science and Policy. Students can gain emphasis in either a science or policy approach based on the approved courses they select to fulfill the program requirements. Their program requires three foundational courses that include an introductory, a methods, and a research course. Students may select from a list of electives to fulfill the final four courses.

Additional research including a google search of Climate Studies minors yields the following results for institutions that offer a climate studies program. Unlike climate science, climate studies denotes interdisciplinary across ways of thinking. In other words, it incorporates social science and humanities perspectives rather than relying solely on natural science disciplines. Even the fine arts may be involved—and will be at CSB/SJU.
As can be seen in the table, most of the schools with climate studies programs are large public institutions. Thus, CSB/SJU would be somewhat unique in offering such a program in a smaller, private, liberal arts setting. Credits required for a minor at these institutions range from 18 to 24, with most in the 18-19 range. They require a range of one to four natural science courses, with most requiring two.

Offering a climate studies minor would distinguish us from liberal arts colleges, that rarely have such a program. By providing a program typically only found in larger public institutions, this minor would enable students determined to pursue a climate specialization to be able to do so in the rich learning environmental of a liberal arts institution. While our relatively recent neuroscience minor is offered at a wide variety of peer institutions, a climate studies minor provides us with the opportunity to be a point of distinction and be a leader in this area rather than follow our peers. In both ways, this minor has potential for increasing enrollment. It would be an important marketing and recruitment tool.

2. PROPOSED CSB/SJU CLIMATE STUDIES MINOR

2.1 Learning Outcomes

1) Students explain causes, consequences, and responses to climate change.
2) Students analyze and evaluate climate change processes, effects, and solutions, drawing on different fields.
3) Students synthesize information to recommend, in accessible terms and drawing on evidence appropriate to an advanced level, paths to ensure a stable and just climate.

2.2 Curriculum Structure and Administration

The proposed Climate Studies minor at CSB/SJU is as follows:

Required core courses (14 credits) – Foundations

1. Introduction to Environmental Studies: ENVR 150
2. Natural Sciences
   - Science of Global Climate Change: ENVR 331
   - OR Energy and the Environment: INTG 278A
   - OR 4 credits of Climate and Habitat Change: CHEM 343, Atmosphere: CHEM 344A, or Hydrosphere and Lithosphere: CHEM 344B
3. Social Sciences
   - Energy and Society: ENVR 377A
   - OR Climate Action Workshop: ENVR 303 (Corrie Grosse will propose this as a 4-credit rather than its existing format as a 2-credit course)
4. Global Climate Policy Role Play: ENVR 3xx (2 credits, Corrie Grosse will propose this new course, building on a successful pedagogical style she developed to adapt ENVR 305 (which travels to the UN negotiations) to pandemic travel restrictions)
Upper-division electives

- **Part 1: Applications in diverse fields** (4 credits, 300- or 200-level)

1. Climate Action Workshop: ENVR 303 (new, 4 credit version)
2. Energy and Society: ENVR 377A
3. Science of Global Climate Change: ENVR 331
4. Sustainable Agricultural Science: ENVR 300T
5. American Environmental Literature: ENVR 315
6. Environmental Health: ENVR 300Q
7. Global Environmental Politics: PCST 354
8. Sustainable Urban Planning: POLS 350
10. Environmental Anthropology: SOCI 349
11. Global Malnutrition and Disease: NUTR 326 (Prerequisites: NUTR 125 and NUTR 323)
12. Food Systems: Policies and Controversies: NUTR 240 (2 credits, Prerequisites: NUTR 125)
13. Environmental Rhetoric: COMM 309 (Check anticipates changing the title to Climate Communication)
14. Intro to Computer Art: ART 218
15. Elementary Science Content: EDUC 323
17. Environmental and Natural Resource Economics: ECON 318 (Prerequisite: ECON 111, or instructor permission)
18. Climate and Habitat Change: CHEM 343 (2 credits, Prerequisites: CHEM 250 and 255 or departmental permission)
19. Environmental Chemistry, Atmosphere: CHEM 344A (2 credits, Prerequisite: CHEM 250 and 255 or departmental permission)
20. Environmental Chemistry: Lithosphere and Hydrosphere: CHEM 344B (2 credits, Prerequisite: CHEM 250 and 255 or departmental permission)
21. Nanomaterials: CHEM 346 (2 credits, Prerequisites: CHEM 315 or 318 or departmental permission)
22. Sustainable Energy: CHEM 354 (2 credits, Prerequisites: CHEM 250 and 255 or departmental permission)

Potential Future Courses (depending on APP process):
1. Ethics of Climate Change (Wright, PHIL)
2. Climate Modeling/Data course (Hesse)

- **Part 2: Integrating and Deepening Knowledge** (2 credits)

1. Climate Studies Capstone (2 credit ILP) OR
2. Global Climate Policy: ENVR 305 (2 credit, attends UN climate negotiations, admission by competitive application process)
No more than four credits may count for another major or minor.

The minor is 20 credits in total, which is comparable in size to other CSB/SJU minors and Climate Studies minors at other institutions. To be included as an elective, a course must have 25% of its content focused on climate change. This is comparable to Cornell’s Climate Change minor, which requires a minimum of 20% of content related to climate change to count toward the minor. The Climate Studies minor would be delivered by the Environmental Studies Department while including course offering in other departments or in some cases cross-listed with environmental studies.

This minor structure was chosen because the core courses provide foundational knowledge on the causes, consequences, and responses to climate change from both the natural world and social world ways of thinking, providing students with options in diverse disciplines. Natural Science and Social Science Foundations courses will reinforce learning goals introduced in Introduction to Environmental Studies. For example, a course in chemistry would deepen students’ capacity to explain, analyze, and evaluate how greenhouse gases cause climate change, what the consequences are for the atmosphere, and what kinds of responses are needed to produce sustainable atmospheric compositions. A course on energy from a social science perspective would deepen students’ capacity to explain, analyze, and evaluate how fossil fuel combustion in our transportation systems produces climate change, what the social consequences of this are, and how renewable energy can provide a solution.

The Global Climate Policy Role Play\(^2\) course will provide all students with a grounding in how countries of the world are working to address climate policy through the United Nations. Student will each role play a nation at the negotiations, becoming an expert on that nation’s climate circumstances and policies. The upper-division electives will give students a range of classes to choose from in different disciplines. The Integrations Capstone, which would be taught as an ILP until or if there is high demand, would serve as a kind of Climate Studies thesis, where students would integrate their knowledge in an independent research project. For students who attend the United Nations climate negotiations, the final required course for the minor could be Global Climate Policy: ENVR 305. This course provides an immersive experience of a global climate meeting and supports students to conduct in-depth original research and presentations on a topic of their choosing related to climate change. This course, however, is not accessible to all students because admission is a competitive application process and the course fee is high.

The Climate Studies minor is distinct from the Environmental Studies minor. The latter requires two courses that take a much broader approach to environmental issues than the Climate Studies

\(^2\) As a two-credit course, ENVR 305 prepares students to travel to and conduct their own research at the United Nations climate change negotiations. Corrie Grosse taught ENVR 305 as an in-depth role play in 2020 and 2021 due to pandemic travel restrictions. Students who took this version of the course, and the pre-2019 version that traveled to the United Nations negotiations, said they were able to learn more about climate policy in the role play version (there simply is not enough time for in-depth policy learning in the travel version of the course). These students recommended that future students who travel to the UN negotiations take the role play version as preparation. Therefore, Grosse intends to propose a new role play version of the course, to complement the existing travel version. Without travel, this course will be accessible to all students and an excellent core course for the climate studies minor.
The electives for the Environmental Studies minor include courses on a broader array of environmental issues and do not include 12 courses focused on climate that would comprise electives in the Climate Studies minor. Students, therefore, would have to go above and beyond the requirements of the Environmental Studies minor to specialize in climate and would not be rewarded in the same way by employers as if they have a Climate Studies minor on their transcript. We also think there are students who are more passionate about climate than environment in general, who would pursue a Climate Studies minor, but not an Environmental Studies minor. The Climate Studies minor is also an exciting opportunity for faculty in diverse disciplines to contribute courses on climate; this minor requires just 25% of course content be devoted to climate change, whereas the Environmental Studies minor requires 100% of course content be devoted to environment and that the course be formally listed or cross-listed as ENVR. This makes the Climate Studies minor more accessible to all faculty wishing to develop or change courses.

2.3 Staffing and Enrollment Implications

The minor does not require any additional courses to be offered. The minor may require that Energy and Society (taught annually by Corrie Grosse) and Science of Global Climate Change (taught annually by Troy Knight) be offered more frequently, depending on student demand for the minor. This should not affect staffing in the Environmental Studies Department, which current serves around 85 majors. It is difficult to predict exactly how many students will pursue the Climate Studies minor and how this will affect enrollment in the Environmental Studies minor, which 37 students have currently formally declared in Degree Works and typically yields ten minors per graduating cohort. Environmental Studies expects the minor could be positive for enrollments in the major by providing an accessible way for students to explore a specific issue they care about and, in the process, begin to understand environmental studies as a broad interdisciplinary major that encompasses their interests.

2.4 Resource and Space Implications

There are no resource and space implications for the minor because it draws on existing courses. In the event that additional sections of required courses for the minor need to be offered (see above), the primary resource implication is classroom space. Due to the recent renovation of Peter Engel Science Center and the relocation of Environmental Studies to expanded teaching space on the second floor there is ample room to absorb significant increases in enrollment within the existing facilities footprint.

2.5 Assessment Plan

Learning outcomes define the mission of the Climate Studies curriculum and will be intentionally introduced, reinforced, designated proficient, and assessed as students move through the minor. Rubrics will be developed for all three learning outcomes and will be utilized in the grading of relevant artifacts. Instructors will submit the graded artifact with the rubric to a
central storehouse for assessment of the minor. Students will upload these artifacts to the Folio feature of Canvas to help the students process their curricular accomplishments.

We will also assess learning outcomes through surveys with graduating seniors. We will work with OAEE to design the exiting senior survey. Each April 15th, OAEE will administer the survey to graduating seniors within the minor and then share the results (with any identifying information stripped) with Environmental Studies. The surveys will ask students to reflect on each learning outcome, using quantitative and qualitative responses, and include specific questions about how learning outcomes were reinforced in the elective courses for the minor. Students will also be asked to demonstrate their level of achievement of the learning goals. The Environmental Studies department will use a rubric to assess these responses, and will assess one learning goal per year. These surveys will provide a valuable second data point for assessment of the minor. See curricular assessment map and schedule below.

Curricular assessment map and schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Plan</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Courses where outcomes will be assessed</strong></td>
<td><strong>Students explain causes, consequences, and responses to climate change.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction to Environmental Studies (ENVR 150)</strong></td>
<td>Introduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Natural Science Courses (ENVR 331, INTG 278A, CHEM 343, CHEM 344A, CHEM 344B)</strong></td>
<td>Reinforced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Science Courses (ENVR 377A, ENVR 303)</strong></td>
<td>Reinforced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Global Climate Policy Role Play (new course)</strong></td>
<td>Designated proficient and assessed in fourth year of minor (D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exiting Senior Survey</strong></td>
<td>Assessed in fourth year of minor (I)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D=direct assessment I=indirect assessment

We will work with professors teaching courses in the minor to ensure appropriate learning outcome introduction, reinforcement, proficiency, and assessment.
3. REFERENCES


4. APPENDIX A: SELECTED FACULTY PUBLICATIONS RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Corrie Grosse


https://doi.org/10.4337/jhre.2020.03.07

https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci8030079

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Troy Knight


Kyhl Lyngaard


Joe Storlien


5. APPENDIX B: LETTERS OF SUPPORT

1) Nate Dehne, Admissions
2) Chad Marolf, CSB Institutional Advancement
3) Troy Fritz, SJU Institutional Advancement
4) Rachel Brodeur, CSB/SJU Sustainability

5) Megan Sheehan, Anthropology/Sociology
6) Andrea Shaker, Art
7) Alicia A. Peterson, Chair, Chemistry
8) Terence Check, Communication
9) Samrat B. Kunwar and Shilpi S. Kumar, Economics
10) Diana Fenton, Education
11) Emily Heying, Nutrition
12) Jeffrey Anderson, Chair, Peace Studies
13) Erica Stonestreet, Chair, Philosophy
14) Jim Crumley, Chair, and Greg Taft, Physics
15) Matt Lindstrom, Political Science
December 14, 2021

Members of the Faculty Governance Committees,

It is with great enthusiasm that I write a letter of support of the proposed climate studies minor being proposed here at CSB/SJU. A minor such as this provides the ability for our admissions and marketing team to showcase coursework in an area that can be added to numerous related major programs here at The College of St. Benedict and St. John’s University (CSB/SJU).

The topic of climate change has been in the forefront of the conversations for the nation during the past handful of years, and a topic that we have seen the youth of the nation be particularly passionate about. It only takes a moment to conduct a Google search and see dozens of articles every day about the focus of climate change across multiple professions and industry. This minor can offer the ability for us to market to a student population interested in science and environmental studies, but also across all our program areas.

When you look at the “winners” in today’s higher education landscape, specifically in enrollment, you will find institutions that are adding these kinds of programs that augment current programming and do it utilizing many of the resources already on campus. That augmentation of programing allows us to become more distinctive and strengthen our value proposition. I urge you to give this minor serious consideration.

Please feel free to let me know if I can be of any additional help in your deliberations.

Take care,

Nathan Dehne
Vice President for Enrollment Management
January 13, 2022

I am writing in support of the Climate Studies minor being proposed by the Environmental Studies department.

I have been associated with the department and with aligned offices, such as the Office of Sustainability, since my arrival to campus in June of 2012. Having served and still serving on the Sustainability Council, I have had the privilege to meet and know many of the students who have been involved in the Office’s programs and who have attended the UN Climate Conference (COP). I have also gotten to know other staff and faculty involved in the Office as well as faculty in the Environment Studies department.

These relationships have led to some great donor engagement experiences, including a large group tour of Blattner Energy (in the fall of 2019) and the creation of a travel scholarship fund for COP that has provided support to a number of students who otherwise would not have been able to attend.

In my mind, these opportunities are the “tip of the iceberg” in terms of what CSB/SJU could achieve with a proclaimed focus on the pursuit of climate and sustainability issues and programming. Given our geographic location, the natural beauty of both campuses, our records of stewardship of our resources (including some of the lowest uses of energy among MN private colleges), the strength of the Office of Sustainability and, as pointed out in the proposal, the strength of our reputation as a leader in environmental education, it would be well worth pursuing a Climate Studies minor.

In fact, this could be just one of a number of additional steps that might lead to the establishment of a Center for the Environment & Sustainability, which I believe would position us well to continue to engage the youth of today who, in great numbers, seem to be concerned about the state of the planet they will be living in in the future.

Please approve this new minor.

Sincerely,

Chad Marolf
Senior Principal Gifts Officer, Institutional Advancement
College of Saint Benedict
January 17, 2022

I am writing in support of the Climate Studies minor being proposed by the Environmental Studies department.

I have been associated with the department for several years through my work in Institutional Advancement at Saint John’s. Most recently in raising support to travel scholarships for students interested in attending the UN Climate Change Conferences (COP). I have also gotten to know other staff and faculty involved in the Office as well as faculty in the Environment Studies department.

These relationships and ongoing conversations have led to some opportunities to engage donors in conversations and experiences which will enhance and expand opportunities for our students, faculty, and staff.

Our campuses are uniquely located and have a footprint, character, and qualities that lends itself to an intense conversation and exploration of climate change and how we become leading institutions in this conversation.

Adding a minor in Climate Studies could position us well as we begin to further explore steps in the creation of a Center for the Environment, which I believe would position us well to continue to engage the youth of today who, in great numbers, seem to be concerned about the state of the planet they will be living in in the future.

I encourage you to consider approving this new minor.

Sincerely,

Troy Fritz
Executive Director for Major Gifts
Institutional Advancement
Saint John’s University
05 January 2022

Dear Members of the Faculty Governance Committees,

I am writing to support the Climate Studies Minor be introduced at the College of St. Benedict and St. John’s University.

As the CSB/SJU Joint Sustainability Coordinator, I have the pleasure of working with the Environmental Studies Department and their students on a daily basis. Many of my student employees are participants in the Environmental Studies major as well. There are, however, a number of students whom I work with that are majoring in other departments, yet, they have a special interest in climate and studies. Adding a Climate Studies minor would allow these students to embed themselves in the Liberal Arts Education platform and bring a climate focused lens to perhaps their business or economics degrees. I also believe this minor would grow the strength of work that can come out of the Sustainability Office. With students having the opportunity to expand their knowledge in climate studies, they will be more equipped to tackle issues like energy and water use on campus. They will also have the tools to see the impact our campus can have when we work towards being more sustainable and the affect that would have off campus as well.

By adding a Climate Studies minor to the already thriving Environmental Studies department, there would be a huge advantage in recruitment strategies. Young adults today have an invested interest in mitigating climate change, and when prospective students see that CSB/SJU is providing students with the means to learn more and gain skills in this area, it can be a driving factor in their college decision.

Finally, I support the Climate Studies minor as it aligns with the Benedictine values of justice, moderation, stability, peace, and stewardship. These are values that can help cultivate the leaders and thinkers that CSB/SJU prides themselves on. You can feel free to contact me with any further questions you may have regarding my recommendation or support. I am easily reached through email or phone: (763) 381-2075, rbrodeur001@csbsju.edu.

Sincerely,

Rachel Brodeur
Sustainability Coordinator, College of St. Benedict & St. John’s University
Dear colleagues,

I write to offer my support for the proposal of the creation of a Climate Studies Minor. The minor responds to student interests, addresses the most pressing challenge of our time, furthers student grounding in the liberal arts, and brings together already-developed strengths from multiple departments.

Student interest and engagement with the theme of climate change is evident. In class conversations, students often drive discussions towards the topic of climate change even in classes that do not explicitly address climate concerns. For example, when teaching on human evolutionary adaptations in Intro to Anthropology, students always inquire about the implications of rapid climate change. In my course on food and culture, students want to know how climate change will impact food availability. For students, climate change and the way it shapes the world is a primary concern—one they know will continue to take on increasing importance over the course of their lifetimes.

Many Sociology majors and Anthropology minors are deeply involved in climate initiatives on campus—from COP participation to Climate Justice Club, and many plan careers around these engagements. Having a Climate Studies Minor would offer students a way to further engage in scholarly consideration of climate change and would prepare them to integrate these interests in their professional development.

I look forward to having SOCI 349/ENVR 300I Environmental Anthropology included as an elective in the minor. In previous iterations of the class, students have voiced strong interest climate-related course content, have developed semester long projects on climate issues, and have benefited from the type of cross-cultural perspectives on climate that anthropologists emphasize. I have spoken with the Sociology Department’s incoming chair, Dr. Ellen Block, about this minor. We anticipate offering SOCI 349 every other year, and there is departmental support for the Climate Studies minor and for having SOCI 349 as part of the minor’s course offerings.

I fully support the creation of a Climate Studies Minor as it will afford students a way to further integrate scholarly inquiry into their engagements with this pressing concern.

Sincerely,

Megan Sheehan
Assistant Professor of Anthropology
Members of the Faculty Governance Committees
College of St. Benedict/St. John’s University

Dear Members of the Faculty Governance Committees,

I am writing with enthusiastic support of the proposed Climate Studies minor. This minor will fill a clear academic need and embraces the interdisciplinary nature our liberal arts institutions.

Over the past several years I have given my Intro to Computer Art (Art 218) students three broad topics that they may explore for their final project. With this final project, students are to build upon and synthesize the visual, technical and creative problem-solving skills that they’ve developed over the first two thirds of the course. The objective of this project is to create a series of images that explores a topic with a visual acuity and with conceptual and thematic depth. This is not an easy task; it asks students to draw on not only what they’ve learned thus far in the course, but to also build upon their wider liberal arts education.

One of the three topics within which students choose from is “environment”. When I first started assigning this project, students who chose to work within the broad topic of environment would develop artwork that addressed topics such as the importance of recycling. Over the past few years, however, an increased number of students have addressed climate change specifically. In many ways, this is no surprise; this mirrors what this generation of students (and generations to come) is facing: exponential climate change, one that will certainly affect their lives and the lives of their communities for decades to come.

Artwork, generally speaking, reflects and responds to the times within which we live; it’s made within social, political, and historical frameworks. The images created by students around the topic of climate change has significance; they express an urgency of addressing climate change. These works serve as not only a means to communicate, but as a way to build communities through visual expression. This type of community building, I would argue, can be a powerful form of activism in and of itself and has the potential to create change.
In conclusion, the proposed Climate Studies minor would be highly relevant to current and future students -- it would fill a clear need. Among the many benefits to CSB/SJU, this minor will allow for students to further contextualize their visual work and the role of creative practice in addressing one the major challenges of their lifetimes: climate change.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions.

Respectfully,

Andrea Shaker
Professor of Art
To: Academic Planning and Budget Committee  
Re: Climate Studies Minor

As Department Chair of Chemistry, I am writing a letter regarding the proposal for a Climate Studies Minor. I support the addition of this minor to meet student demand in a growing interdisciplinary field and will assess the impacts on Chemistry department resources and student numbers below.

The impact on the Chemistry Department is not clear, but it is possible that a Climate Studies minor could attract students to CSBSJU and those students could potentially want to major in chemistry. The addition of this concentration will most likely not impact our staffing. A few Chemistry and Biochemistry Majors each year are interested in climate studies, and may choose this as a minor.

The proposal lists several potential classes in chemistry that could contribute to the minor, these include several two-credit upper-division chemistry courses (Climate and Habitat Change, Sustainable Energy, Nanomaterials, as well as our course in Air and Water Chemistry). These classes would serve as electives and do have prerequisites. I suspect only a few students will choose to fulfill their electives with these courses, so it is unlikely that the implementation of this concentration would increase the enrollment to a level requiring the department to provide additional sections.

In summary, the Chemistry Department supports this proposal. It does not appear that it will have an impact on our staffing or necessarily any significant impact on our enrollment numbers. Climate Studies is an increasingly popular interdisciplinary research area. Addition of this concentration will provide an opportunity for students to explore this area and could be attractive to potential students.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact me.

Best regards,

Alicia A. Peterson  
Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Chemistry  
apeterson@csbsju.edu
January 24, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

I write to enthusiastically support the proposed Climate Studies Minor at CSB/SJU.

As the proposal for the minor points out, climate change has become the existential crisis of our generation and students are increasingly demanding that universities and colleges prepare them to address it. In an article, “The Unexpected Ways Climate Change Is Reshaping College Education,” published in Time on April 16, 2021, Ciara Nugent explains that a wave of youth activism have made students “increasingly insistent that their curriculums confront a fast-changing world.” CSB/SJU has the good fortune of having a dynamic Environmental Studies department to serve as the base for the major. In addition, the proposed minor is distinctive because it would include a diverse group of courses from the natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and fine arts. (Typically, the curriculum of such programs is almost exclusively science-based, even though climate solutions require broad, interdisciplinary perspectives.)

For the past 25 years, I have taught COMM 309: Environmental Rhetoric in the Communication Department at CSB/SJU. The course examines how people use messages to articulate viewpoints about the natural environment in the public sphere. I am thrilled to include the course as an elective in the Climate Studies Minor. Over half of the content of the course is already devoted to climate communication, as students examine numerous climate-related texts, including prominent policy speeches and testimonials, advertising, news stories, advocacy campaign literature and websites, films, and television programs on climate change and climate justice.

In addition, I have recently received approval for Thematic Encounter: Movement and Benedictine Raven designations for the Environmental Rhetoric course through the Integrations Curriculum. Students will examine Catholic social justice perspectives on climate change as articulated by texts such as Pope Francis’s 120-page Encyclical letter, “On Care for Our Common Home” and his recent plea in which he joined with scientists and other world faith leaders at the Vatican to call on the international community to intensify efforts to address climate change ahead of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow. As the proposal notes, the Climate Studies Minor not only meets expected student demand and bolsters the
sustainability credentials of the institutions, but it also contributes to student understanding of Benedictine values.

A Climate Studies Minor at CSB/SJU would be a distinctive program in our region with the ability to train students to confront an urgent global need. This proposal deserves your support.

Respectfully,

Dr. Terence Check
Professor of Communication
College of St. Benedict and St. John’s University
Collegeville, Minnesota 56321
tcheck@csbsju.edu
Dear Colleagues,

This is a support letter for the creation of the Climate Studies minor program, which is being proposed by the Environmental Studies Department. We believe a climate studies minor could prove to be substantially popular to the students that are taking economics classes as well, and as such, this is a priority for CSB/SJU. The detailed report submitted by our colleagues at the Environmental Studies department further establishes a strong case for the establishment of the climate studies minor program.

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges public policy makers are facing in our times. The negative impacts arising from climate change will undoubtedly become a transgenerational and transboundary issue, which will require interdisciplinary perspectives and cannot be addressed adequately by any single discipline. While climate change has historically been considered a natural science problem, it is becoming increasingly clear that incorporating perspectives from social science and humanities could provide a more comprehensive picture on understanding, adapting to, and finding mitigation strategies on this pressing issue. In fact, institutions such as the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco have already been actively stirring conversations, promoting research, and generating knowledge on climate change issues to complement natural sciences with the social sciences and humanities perspectives.

Economics is one discipline that could complement towards aiding in understanding the climate change crisis as it provides an avenue to look for market-based solutions for an issue where global coordination and cooperation has so far failed miserably. In fact, the economics department already offers few classes where the issue of climate change is taught from an economics perspective. By establishing a standalone climate studies minor, this would allow economics majors who are interested in environmental issues to get a more holistic understanding of this pressing issue. The economics majors that combine their skillsets with courses from the climate change minor program would be able to acquire unique perspectives and expertise in promoting a sustainable and healthy economy, that they could signal to potential employers as well. Furthermore, the economics department has recently moved towards allowing economics majors to graduate with policy concentration. We believe that if climate studies minor were to be established, it could also be perfectly suited for economics major that are interested in graduating with the policy track option.

The benefits of establishing a climate studies minor could be substantial to the college as well, as it could potentially make CSB/SJU stand out among other peer institutions. There are few institutions that offer climate studies minor program at the undergraduate level, and only a handful of these are liberal arts colleges. A climate studies minor would clearly be an appealing factor for aspiring students that are interested in climate change issues to attend CSB/SJU.
Lastly, since the nature of the proposed minor is interdisciplinary, we also believe that having faculties from different departments coordinating could lead to other successful collaborations between different departments in the future too.

Thank You,

Samrat B. Kunwar
Shilpi S. Kumar
Department of Economics
To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great enthusiasm I write this letter as support for the Climate Studies Minor to be offered CSB/SJU. Over the past seven years I have had many students interested in education but there is not a current license in the state of Minnesota to “teach” environmental studies. The Climate Studies minor may fill a niche for those who would major in Elementary Education or major in Biology with a minor in Secondary Education and minor in Climate Studies. In the state of Minnesota, many of the new science standards involve a deeper understanding of the environment and climate and are “embedded” in the standards. As early as first grade students are to be able ask questions about use of natural resources that increases complexity to sixth grade where they must clarify evidence of global temperature rise. This continues to increase in even more specifics on climate change in high school standards. To introduce climate studies to elementary educators, EDUC 323 Elementary Science Content devotes a significant part of the course (25%) to address climate studies and the signature assessment for the Truth Encounter involved writing and essay and micro-teaching on a state standard that relates back to climate change. A minor in Climate Studies can be used to supplement many other majors as well. Please consider this minor for CSB/SJU.

Best regards,

Diana Fenton

Dr. Diana Fenton
Associate Professor, Education Department
College of St. Benedict/St. John’s University
January 19, 2022

To Whom it May Concern,

I write in support of the endeavors to offer a Climate Studies minor here at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s University (CSB/SJU). The proposed curriculum is particularly strong because it not only highlights both the consequences of climate change from multiple perspectives, but also challenges students to think about solutions going forward. I currently teach NUTR 326: Global Malnutrition and Disease and NUTR 240: Food Systems, Policies and Controversies, both which incorporate ideas regarding the relationship between climate, food systems, and nutrition. I have collaborated with environmental studies department faculty previously and believe I can speak well in support of the proposal.

From my perspective as a nutrition professor, understanding the impact of climate change on food systems across the globe is pertinent. I often find that our students have limited exposure to understanding where food comes from prior to the grocery store and limited understanding of all the factors that can impact a food system. Not only is the quantity of food production impacted by climate, but also the quality of food. For example, ongoing research indicates that rising atmospheric CO2 is associated with decreased protein and micronutrient concentrations in some staple-food crops, such as maize or wheat (Smith & Myers, 2018). Students interested in nutrition and food would benefit from Climate Studies minor because the concentrated curriculum would provide more insight on how climate and environmental changes can impact early stages of the food system before it even makes it to the grocery store. Encouraging students to think about where food originates and how different factors can cause down-stream obstacles is crucial because these could eventually limit a community’s ability to achieve nutrient adequacy. Furthermore, not enough people in the nutrition field are discussing these issues – we need future nutrition scientists to take charge on this topic!

Another strength of the Climate Studies minor is that the curriculum is interdisciplinary among several departments and divisions. Students will have many opportunities to make connections between different topic areas, which embodies the goal of a liberal-arts education. I am particularly excited about the policy-related courses in the minor because many students in the natural sciences have limited exposure to truly understand how policy has downstream effects on the health of populations.

Ultimately, the Climate Studies minor is well-developed and has a strong rationale. It provides a wide range of courses, yet students can still tailor the minor to specific interests, regardless of their major. I am happy to support this proposal and look forward to offering my course as an option for students in the minor. If you have any questions for me, I can be reached at eheying@csbsju.edu or by phone at 320-363-5614.

Sincerely,

Emily Heying, PhD, RD, LD
Associate Professor of Nutrition
College of Saint Benedict/Saint John’s University
DATE: January 19, 2022

TO: Academic Planning and Budget Committee (APBC)

FROM: Jeffrey Anderson, Chair, Peace Studies

RE: Proposal for Climate Studies Minor

I write to you in my capacity as chair of peace studies to offer my support for the proposed minor in climate studies. The minor in climate studies will meet the needs of students who wish to deepen their understanding of the threat climate change presents and strengthen their ability to address the problem.

At the core of climate studies is a strong position in favor of social equity as regards the need to protect the most vulnerable and assign responsibility to those who have created the threat. This orientation is consistent with that of our department and resonates with students eager to create a path forward that addresses the needs of marginalized groups. Few students come out of high school with an awareness of peace studies. Climate studies, as a minor, might help draw students towards our major, as the flexibility of both the peace studies major and the proposed climate studies minor should work well together. This is very important to us, as many believe the Integrations Curriculum’s perceived size has reduced student interest in double majoring. In recent years many of our peace studies majors have elected to construct a concentration in environmental justice. Having the minor in climate studies will allow them to do this more formally and with a greater cohort of students and faculty sharing similar interests. The ongoing weirding of the weather will likely continue to attract interest to climate studies among students and the public more generally. I believe peace studies will benefit from having a minor in climate studies that draws prospective and current students toward careers that strive for environmental equity.

Feel free to call me at 320-363-3047 if you have any questions. Thank you for allowing me to share my department chair’s view of the proposal.

Warm regards,

Jeffrey Anderson
Chair, Peace Studies
January 11, 2022

Dear Committees:

I’m writing to support the addition of a Climate Studies minor to our program offerings at CSBSJU. I believe that the minor is highly relevant to our times and our mission, and it will fit well with student interests. It will add to our repertoire of interesting, interdisciplinary minors such as Data Science and Global Health. It’s possible that the Philosophy Department could further expand the interdisciplinarity of the minor with a course in Ethics and Climate Change taught by Chuck Wright, though the course does not exist at this time. If the program is approved, however, I believe that the department will have the capacity to offer such a course, and would be glad to contribute to such a valuable program.

Sincerely,

Erica Stonestreet
Philosophy Department Chair
January 17, 2022

Corrie Grosse, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor – CSB/SJU Environmental Studies Department

Dear Dr. Grosse,

We are writing in support of the Climate Studies Minor that you have helped propose. This proposed minor is a logical addition to the academic programs offered by the Environmental Studies Department. The issue of climate change has been growing in importance during the past few decades and no longer can be ignored. As there are no quick fixes, it will continue to be an issue for which our students are needed to help study and solve for many decades. Since this issue affects so many aspects of our lives, we are happy to see that your proposal includes multi-disciplinary electives. This also fits nicely with the liberal arts mission of our institutions.

Many of our physics majors have been motivated to pursue careers in which they work to solve aspects of the climate change crisis. For example, Devin Batkiewicz started a job with Xcel Energy to help customers reduce their energy use, and Dane Kuhr recently started a job with Helios, a company planning new solar thermal power generation. Other of our graduates started the Engineering Group, a company that plans photovoltaic and wind generation projects across the country. Therefore, we know our students are concerned about this issue. Although our physics major has a relatively large number of required courses, some of our majors could pursue the proposed minor with careful planning and an ability to fulfill Integrations Curriculum requirements with courses in the minor.

Recently our department has worked to resurrect the PHYS-103 Energy and the Environment course which had not been taught since the retirement of Dan Steck more than a decade ago. Although we were able to teach the course in Fall 2020, it did not fill sufficiently in Fall 2021. This likely was due to students unfamiliar with the course and the recent drops in enrollment. We are hopeful that more students will enroll in the reincarnated version INTG-278A next fall, especially since that course will help students fulfill the Movement-Focus and Quantitative Reasoning Integrations Curriculum requirements. Although that course currently is not associated with any major or minor, it could serve as a feeder to your program, especially since it also covers the topic of climate change. In fact, one student who took PHYS-103 became interested enough to pursue additional classes in Environmental Studies.

We support your proposed program and feel it would serve a need for our students. Hopefully it could help to recruit additional students who are passionate about climate change. Since the program fits well with the expertise and mission of our institutions, we see this as an ideal way to
augment the options available to our students. We hope that you will be allowed to move forward with this new minor.

Sincerely,

Jim Crumley

Greg Taft
January 12, 2022

I am pleased to write a letter in support of a climate studies minor at the College of St. Benedict and Saint John’s University. This proposed interdisciplinary minor builds on the core strengths of the CSB/SJU Environmental Studies Department and will no doubt attract more students to CSB/SJU. This trendsetting and news-worthy minor will increase applicants and students to CSB/SJU, while also empowering existing CSB/SJU faculty and staff who address climate issues throughout our curriculum, student affairs, campus ministry, and other CSB/SJU entities.

There are several places where my work will directly support this proposed minor. First, I teach Environmental Politics and Policy, a cross-listed political science and environmental studies course. This class is taught every other year and usually rotates with another cross-listed class, Sustainable Urban Planning. Both courses incorporate materials involving climate studies. The policy class uses a broader, macro approach involving the global climate conferences and related climate policies at the national and state levels. The urban planning class incorporates climate studies by focusing on the roles cities and local regions play in mitigating and responding to climate realities, particularly in a dearth of federal policy actions.

Second, this proposed minor perfectly supports the CSB and SJU unique and prestigious positions as officially recognized United Nations NGO observers to the UN’s Conference of Parties for the Framework Convention on Climate Change. With a dedicated minor in climate studies, our students will be even more prepared to participate in this annual event.

Finally, as director of the Eugene McCarthy Center for Public Policy and Civic Engagement, I know the McCarthy Center’s resources and programs will continue to directly support the interdisciplinary research and civic engagement associated with climate studies.

This is not just a budget-neutral proposal. This is budget-positive proposal as it uses existing resources and will strengthen CSB/SJU’s attractiveness among potential applicants and current students. I fully support this proposed minor and commend the faculty members leading this important and timely initiative.

Sincerely,

Matt Lindstrom
Edward Henry Professor of Political Science