**Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks**

**Sustainable Energy Engineering**

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**Simon Fraser University**

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Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks

**Table of Contents**

Introduction……………………………………………………………………………………… 2 Schedules………………………………………………………………………………………….2 Alternative Courses………………………………………………………………………………12 Which Courses You Can Drop…………………………………………………………………...13 Certificates……………………………………………………………………………………….15 Extras…………………………………………………………………………………………….16 Conclusion……………………………………………………………………………………….16 Appendix………………………………………………………………………………………...17 References……………………………………………………………………………………….18

1

Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks

**Introduction**

Face it, we’ve all been there (or at least you will soon); an in depth look at the base SEE schedule and the realization that the next few years of your life are going to be crazy. I guess that’s one of the things about being in a newer engineering program, the courses are cool but the schedule can get messy, especially when there isn’t much space to move things around. Having been the guinea pigs of the program, my peers and I experienced first-hand what a not-so-nice schedule can look like. So, that’s why I decided to create this document. It is meant to help anyone who has no idea what they’re doing or what steps to take towards graduating without following the exact SEE curriculum. It is NOT a replacement for our amazing advisors (seriously, they’re lifesavers); however, they do get busy. Here, I hope to alleviate some probable stress concerning courses and curriculum so that you will have a (slightly) more pleasant university experience. Enjoy!

**Schedules**

Here I will outline the base schedule as well as some alternatives that I’ve come up with so far. Please do not follow my alternate schedules extensively, these are only suggestions that I’ve thought of and are not definitely plausible. Make sure to talk to an advisor to discuss how you would like your degree to look like.

**Base Schedule**

This is the schedule that we’re all given at the beginning of our degrees in Sustainable Energy Engineering. The first-year courses are extremely important because they provide the baseline to the vast majority of the SEE courses. Yes, I know, summer classes. Ew. But not really. I’ll be honest, they definitely aren’t easy, but they are manageable, especially if you’ve already gotten through both the fall and spring semesters.

Some things to keep in mind:

- This is the condensed schedule of the program. Because our program is so new, it is also the only existing schedule so far

- There are many variations to the schedule, but keep in mind that it is easiest to take the SEE courses when they are recommended- at least for now while the program is still small

- Please note that Math 260 is the same course as Math 310. The course code was changed in fall 2020

2

Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks

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| **Fall**  | **Spring**  | **Summer**  |
| Math 150/151 Phys 140 Cmpt 130 SEE 100 SEE 101W SEE 110  | Math 152 Math 232 Phys 141 Cmpt 135 Chem 121 SEE 111  | Math 251 Math 260 SEE 221 SEE 230 SEE 241  |
| Co-op  | SEE 222 SEE 224 SEE 225 SEE 231 SEE 242 SEE 251  | Bus 238 SEE 310 SEE 324 SEE 331 SEE 341  |
| Co-op  | Co-op  | SEE 300 SEE 332 SEE 342 SEE 351 SEE 352 SEE 354  |
| REM 321 SEE 325 or 333 SEE 410W SEE Technical Elective I SEE Technical Elective II  | B-Hum Elective Geog 324 or 362W SEE 402 SEE 411 SEE Technical Elective III  |  |

So, that’s the base schedule. There are some bright and brave souls who can handle this schedule, and I applaud them for it. However, I am not one of them. Therefore, I have (somewhat) constructed alternative schedules for those who are like me(: Again, do not follow these schedules precariously; consult with an advisor first to actually see if they have the remote possibility of working. Not all courses are offered in the same semester each year, and so one wrong move could mess up everything (I might be exaggerating a little, but you get the point...hopefully).

Also note, these alternative schedules were created in lieu of alternatives provided to us. By the time you read this, there could be multiple published SEE schedules with courses being offered more than once a year. If so, lucky you, and just skip to the next section of this document.

3

Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks

**Alternative Schedule # 1: Change in Co-op Semesters**

This schedule is specific to if you can’t find a Co-op or feel that you are not ready to do a Co-op in the recommended semester. Again, this is presently based on the lives of myself and my peers and so the courses that I suggest taking might not be available by the time you get to this point.

Some things to keep in mind:

- You can’t graduate on a Co-op term (Honestly, I don’t know why, you just can’t) - Taking non-SEE courses is the easiest way to go if you don’t do a Co-op during the suggested semester. These courses are typically offered more than once a year. - Unfortunately, as of 2020 the SEE courses aren’t offered multiple times a year and so it can be difficult to make up a whole semester when you don’t do a Co-op, especially in the fall

- If you can’t find a Co-op it’s ok. Life will go on. Getting a Co-op can be hard, especially right after your first full year. Don’t stress it, believe me, I had to apply for Co-ops in the middle of a pandemic

- From what I understand, the easiest time to take a Co-op (besides the suggested semesters) is in the summer because you will have the space to bump courses back by one semester without much consequence

- In this schedule you can either start or end with a summer Co-op

- You can either do a 12-month Co-op or a 4-month and 8-month Co-op in this alternative schedule

4

Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks

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| **Fall**  | **Spring**  | **Summer**  |
| Math 150/151 Phys 140 Cmpt 130 SEE 100 SEE 101W SEE 110  | Math 152 Math 232 Phys 141 Cmpt 135 Chem 121 SEE 111  | Math 251 Math 260 SEE 221 SEE 230 SEE 241  |
| Bus 238 B-Hum Elective REM 321 Extra Course  | SEE 222 SEE 224 SEE 225 SEE 231 SEE 242 SEE 251  | Co-op  |
| Co-op  | Co-op  | SEE 310 SEE 324 SEE 331 SEE 341 SEE 300 \*\*Could also do co-op here\*\*  |
| SEE 325 or 333 SEE 410W SEE Technical Elective I SEE Technical Elective II  | Geog 324 or 362W SEE 402 SEE 411 SEE Technical Elective III  | SEE 332 SEE 342 SEE 351 SEE 352  |

**Alternative Schedule #2: 8-Month Co-op**

This is a possible schedule if you land an 8-month Co-op in your first Co-op term. I’ll be honest, this schedule is probably my least favourite out of all because the second year spring courses are pretty important. However, if you don’t mind a weird “in between” summer semester then there’s no problem at all.

Some things to keep in mind:

- There is an option to take the summer of second year off as both Bus 238 and the B-hum elective can be taken at any time during the year; however, that also means that you would be doing the three Co-ops all together without getting any new skills from classes in between

5

Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks

- 8-month Co-ops are quite abundant and so it definitely is possible to get one for your first Co-op term

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Fall**  | **Spring**  | **Summer**  |
| Math 150/151 Phys 140 Cmpt 130 SEE 100 SEE 101W SEE 110  | Math 152 Math 232 Phys 141 Cmpt 135 Chem 121 SEE 111  | Math 251 Math 260 SEE 221 SEE 230 SEE 241  |
| Co-op  | Co-op  | Bus 238 B-Hum Elective Extra Courses  |
| Co-op  | SEE 222 SEE 224 SEE 225 SEE 231 SEE 242 SEE 251  | SEE 310 SEE 324 SEE 331 SEE 341 SEE 351  |
| REM 321 SEE 325 or 333 SEE 410W SEE Technical Elective I SEE Technical Elective II  | Geog 324 or 362W SEE 402 SEE 411 SEE Technical Elective III  | SEE 300 SEE 332 SEE 342 SEE 352 SEE 354  |

**Alternative Schedule #3: Five Year Degree**

Most people, myself included, will take around five years to graduate from SEE. It’s a work-intensive program and some of us want lives. Here is my rendition of a five-year schedule, slightly modelled after the five-year MSE schedule.

Some things to keep in mind:

- Again, non-SEE courses should be the easiest ones to move around, but check to see when they are offered (just in case)

6

Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks

- \*\*I am not sure if you will be able to take SEE Technical Elective II in your last semester. In the original schedule it is during the fall of the last year. It should be takeable seeing that it’s an elective of all things, but check to make sure

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Fall**  | **Spring**  | **Summer**  |
| Math 150/151 Phys 140 SEE 100 SEE 110  | Math 152 Math 232 Phys 141 Chem 121 SEE 111  |  |
| Math 251 Math 260 Bus 238 Cmpt 130 SEE 101W  | Cmpt 135 SEE 222 SEE 224 SEE 225 SEE 242  | SEE 221 SEE 230 SEE 241 SEE 324  |
| Co-op  | B-Hum Elective SEE 231 SEE 251 Geog 324 or 362W  | SEE 300 SEE 310 SEE 331 SEE 341  |
| Co-op  | Co-op  | SEE 332 SEE 342 SEE 351 SEE 352  |
| REM 321 SEE 325 or 333 SEE 410W SEE Technical Elective I  | SEE 402 SEE 411 SEE Technical Elective II\*\* SEE Technical Elective III  |  |

**Alternative Schedule #4: Degree With Certificate**

If you decide to do a certificate or a minor in addition to your SEE degree then super cool. Some of the shorter certificates are around five to ten courses. You might be thinking, ‘why would anyone want to bestow even more courses and stress upon themselves??’ I guess the logic behind it is that it’s cool to have a degree and a certificate, and also we’re here for 4+ years, so what’s one or two more semesters?

7

Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks

Some things to keep in mind:

- This schedule is based on a six-course certificate; certificates can be longer or shorter than this

- The schedule assumes that certificate courses are offered in these semesters, but they might not be. These extra courses can be moved around in this schedule, as long as you’re ok with taking six courses at a time

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| **Fall**  | **Spring**  | **Summer**  |
| Math 150/151 Phys 140 Cmpt 130 SEE 100 SEE 101W SEE 110  | Math 152 Math 232 Phys 141 Cmpt 135 Chem 121 SEE 111  | Math 251 Math 260 SEE 221 SEE 230 SEE 241  |
| Bus 238 B-Hum Elective REM 321 **Certificate course** **Certificate course** **Certificate course**  | SEE 222 SEE 224 SEE 225 SEE 231 SEE 242 SEE 251  | Co-op  |
| Co-op  | Co-op  | SEE 310 SEE 324 SEE 331 SEE 341 SEE 300 \*\*Could also do co-op here\*\*  |
| SEE 325 or 333 SEE 410W SEE Technical Elective I SEE Technical Elective II **Certificate course**  | Geog 324 or 362W SEE 402 SEE 411 SEE Technical Elective III **Certificate course**  | SEE 332 SEE 342 SEE 351 SEE 352 **Certificate course**  |

8

Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks

**Alternative Schedule #5: Lighter Workload in Second Year I**

This variation of the base schedule is to move SEE 222 out of the second year spring schedule. SEE 222 is a prerequisite for SEE 460 and 325 (both of which are optional/electives), and SEE 352 and 354 (these are mandatory). So, theoretically, SEE 222 could be moved to the spring semester of fourth year, and both 352 and 354 would be taken in the summer semester of that same year. This alternative schedule is very similar to the base schedule except for the last year.

Some things to keep in mind:

- Some pre-reqs for fourth year courses might change so it would be smart to check in with advisors in case there are any updates later on

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| **Fall**  | **Spring**  | **Summer**  |
| Math 150/151 Phys 140 Cmpt 130 SEE 100 SEE 101W SEE 110  | Math 152 Math 232 Phys 141 Cmpt 135 Chem 121 SEE 111  | Math 251 Math 260 SEE 221 SEE 230 SEE 241  |
| Co-op  | SEE 224 SEE 225 SEE 231 SEE 242 SEE 251  | Bus 238 SEE 310 SEE 324 SEE 331 SEE 341  |
| Co-op  | Co-op  | SEE 300 SEE 332 SEE 342 SEE 351  |
| REM 321 SEE 325 or 333 SEE 410W SEE Technical Elective I SEE Technical Elective II  | SEE 222 Geog 324 or 362W SEE 402 SEE 411 SEE Technical Elective III  | SEE 352 SEE 354 B-Hum Elective Extra Course  |

9

Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks

**Alternative Schedule #6: Lighter Workload in Second Year II**

This is a schedule for those who have completed all of first year and need a bit of a break. Of course, it’s not a true break, you still have to take classes /: However, with this schedule you hopefully won’t have to take more than five classes in a semester after first year. I’ll be honest, it’s tricky to maneuver the course schedule for spring of second year because all the classes are pre-reqs for later classes. The two that are easiest to move are SEE 222 and SEE 242. Unfortunately, the others are pretty much stagnant.

Some things to keep in mind:

- Your second co-op semester would be earlier and so there would be some skills that you would miss from the summer courses for that semester

- Some of the non-SEE courses can be moved around, especially in the spring semesters

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| **Fall**  | **Spring**  | **Summer**  |
| Math 150/151 Phys 140 Cmpt 130 SEE 100 SEE 101W SEE 110  | Math 152 Math 232 Phys 141 Cmpt 135 Chem 121 SEE 111  | Math 251 Math 260 SEE 221 SEE 230 SEE 241  |
| Co-op  | SEE 224 SEE 225 SEE 231 SEE 251  | Co-op  |
| Co-op  | SEE 242 SEE 222 B-Hum Elective BUS 238  | SEE 310 SEE 324 SEE 331 SEE 341 SEE 351  |
| REM 321 SEE 325 or 333 SEE 410W SEE Technical Elective I SEE Technical Elective II  | Geog 324 or 362W SEE 402 SEE 411 SEE Technical Elective III  | SEE 300 SEE 332 SEE 342 SEE 352 SEE 354  |

10

Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks

**Alternative Schedule #7: Lighter Workload After First Semester**

This schedule is for people who took six courses during their first semester in SEE and found it to be too much. This schedule is quite desirable, especially considering it only takes one extra semester to graduate.

Some things to keep in mind:

- Chem 121 is offered every semester and so can be moved around

- Chem 121 is a four unit course and incorporates a lab which can be found to be hard so choose wisely when to take it

- SEE 222 has Chem 121 as a prereq

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| **Fall**  | **Spring**  | **Summer**  |
| Math 150/151 Phys 140 Cmpt 130 SEE 100 SEE 101W SEE 110  | Math 152 Math 232 Phys 141 Cmpt 135 SEE 111  | Math 251 Math 260 SEE 221 SEE 230 Chem 121  |
| Co-op  | SEE 224 SEE 225 SEE 231 SEE 242 SEE 251  | Bus 238 SEE 310 SEE 324 SEE 331 SEE 341  |
| Co-op  | Co-op  | SEE 300 SEE 332 SEE 342 SEE 351  |
| REM 321 SEE 325 or 333 SEE 410W SEE Technical Elective I SEE Technical Elective II  | SEE 222 Geog 324 or 362W SEE 402 SEE 411 SEE Technical Elective III  | SEE 241 SEE 352 SEE 354 B-Hum Elective  |

11

Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks

**Alternative Courses**

I didn’t add equivalent courses into any of the alternative semesters; however, there are courses that you can take instead of the SEE courses in the schedule. This section is really only important if you are a transfer student stuck between years like myself, or maybe you failed a course (it’s okay if you do) and don’t want to wait a year to take it again. Or maybe you just want something outside of the SEE program- whatever the reason, this section is for that.

Keep in mind that some of these courses (other program courses) have seats designated to their respective students, and so you’d automatically be placed on the waitlist. Also, because none of these courses are on the official SEE schedule, you’d have to fill out an appeal form (link in Appendix) and receive approval from SEE and the faculty of the alternative course. Make sure to talk to an advisor if you plan to do this; they can show you all the steps needed to do this.

Here is a list of potential alternative courses (primarily) in first year that you may take. It is obviously not exclusive, but I think that I’ve gathered most of the main, ‘easiest’ alternatives that I’ve seen people take before:

**Cmpt 130 →** Cmpt 120

**Cmpt 135 →** Cmpt 125 + 127

If you take Cmpt 120, 125, and 127 you can get credit for both 130 and 135. The difference? While Cmpt 130/135 use the C++ coding language, Cmpt 120/125 use Python. Cmpt 127 is an introductory course to C++ and goes over the basics. Although you have to take three courses instead of two if you do the 120 + 125 + 127 route, these computing courses are easier than 130 and 135. Not by a lot, but definitely easier. You’re not at a huge loss if you take the alternative courses over the recommended ones, the industry uses both languages and you’re likely to learn both at some point in your career anyway.

**Phys 140 →** Phys 120 + 132

**Phys 141 →** Phys 121 + 133

2020 first year students already have to take the Phys 140 alternative, 120 + 132. In these courses you learn exactly the same material. The only difference is that the lab portion of 140 and 141 is integrated with the lectures while you have to take separate labs and lectures for the alternatives. Also 140/141 are offered at the Surrey campus whereas 120/121 + 132/133 are offered at the Burnaby campus (guess this is only relevant when there isn’t a pandemic). When I did first year physics I took Phys 140 and then switched over to 121 + 133 because those courses worked better with my schedule. I found that 140 was easier to sit in and do hands-on lab work;

12

Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks

however, I often found that I didn’t do much work during the lab time portion of the class. I really liked the structuring of 121 + 133, but felt that the four-hour lab was a lot. This of course is my opinion, ask other people before deciding which courses to take.

VERY IMPORTANT: If you do end up taking Phys 120 and 121 (by choice), make sure to take the labs too to get full credit for the appeal. Phys 140 and 141 are four units each because they include the lab, so take 120 + 132 and 121 + 133. Together, those sets of courses are also four units each.

**SEE 100:** MSE 100, IAT 106

**SEE 101W:** Cmpt 105W, ENSC 105W, MSE 101W

There are a handful of MSE/ENSC course equivalents. As I said above, at the time that I am writing this document, SEE courses are only offered once a year, and so it’s very helpful to recognize what other options you may have throughout the year. As courses in MSE and ENSC are prioritized for their own students you would automatically be put on waitlists right away.

I’m not making a list of alternatives to SEE courses because there are too many. If you are interested in taking some, you’ll have to visit the SFU course website and check the equivalents in the SEE section. This link can be found below in the Appendix. However, it’s also best to take SEE courses over equivalent courses in other programs because although you can get the same credit, you may not be learning the exact same material. We’re all in the SEE program for a reason, and it doesn’t make sense to take equivalent outside courses unless we have to.

**Which Courses You Can Drop**

As we already know, the current SEE curriculum schedule is pretty condensed and not everyone particularly wants to take five or six courses every semester. This section is kind of a follow-up to the alternative course schedules and provides more details about the courses that are easiest to drop in early years and take later on in the degree. Here is a list of some courses that you have more flexibility with and that you can more easily drop if you don’t mind taking longer than four years to graduate. Make sure to speak with an advisor about dropping courses too because they know a lot on this subject matter. Please note that this list primarily consists of lower level courses; however, will (hopefully) be updated as more people start taking upper year courses.

13

Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks

**First Year**

**Cmpt 130 + 135:**

Neither one of these courses is an important prerequisite for SEE courses (I believe that there is currently one course that needs Cmpt 130, and it’s an elective too). However, you can gain very useful skills from both 130 and 135 which can help immensely with getting a Co-op. If you decide not to take Cmpt 130 and 135 in first year then the ideal time to take them is in the fall and spring semesters of fourth/ last year.

**Chem 121:**

Chem 121 is one of those extra courses that people often forget about. Again, it’s not a prerequisite for many SEE courses- only SEE 222 which I will talk about below. Chem 121 is not a SEE-specific course and is offered multiple times a year, so you have more flexibility with when you want to take it.

**SEE 241:**

SEE 241 is kind of an odd duck because it isn’t a prerequisite for anything. Theoretically, you could take this course in your very last semester before graduating and be fine. However, like the computing courses the skills that you gain from this class are very helpful for resumes and potentially Co-ops. As of now, the only time to take SEE 241 is in the summer; however, there are one or two equivalent stats courses that you could take during other semesters of the year.

**Second Year**

**SEE 222:**

I talked about this course in one of the alternative schedules, and yeah, if you want to drop a course in spring of the second year then this is the one. It is a prerequisite for the least amount of follow-up courses as compared to the rest of the spring schedule and is also one of the SEE courses that has an MSE equivalent. Remember, it’s still better to take the SEE courses, but it is nice to know that you have a few options for choosing when to take a course- at least for the lower division courses.

**Bus 238:**

Bus 238 is kind of an extra course that you take. Obviously, it’s very different from your regular engineering courses and often has students from multiple disciplines, which is pretty cool. You have to take it at some point, but it doesn’t matter when. It’s not a prerequisite for any courses and its only prereq is to have 12 units. It is also offered every semester. The only thing to watch out for with this course is the amount of seats it has, and they fill up quickly.

14

Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks

**Third Year**

**SEE 300:**

This course is similar to Bus 238 as it focuses on the business side of engineering. Also, like Bus 238, it is not a prerequisite for anything and only asks for 75 units to take. It is only offered in the summer, but there are some MSE and ENSC course equivalents offered during other times of the year.

**Fourth Year**

This year is the most flexible out of all the years because most of the courses that you take are electives. Since it’s also the “last year” before graduation the courses aren’t prerequisites for other courses in the bachelor’s degree. I’m not going to name any specific courses that you could drop.

**Certificates**

For many of us, the SEE degree will take a while to do. Some people see this as an opportunity to do more than just get the degree such as doing minors or certificates. Certificates are nice ways to take some extra courses and get credit for them. Unlike minors, they don’t require you to take a vast amount of additional courses. The amount of courses you take for a certificate varies, but there are some that only ask for five or six courses, so essentially one additional semester (and maybe not even if you don’t plan to graduate within four years). They also cover some interesting topics like other languages or Sustainable Development. Some of my peers and I are very interested in doing the Sustainable Development certificate, which only asks for four additional courses (the fifth elective counts as the geography elective that we have to take in SEE). Another certificate that people are looking into is Innovation and Entrepreneurship. A list of links to find certificates and minors within different faculties at SFU can be found below in the Appendix.

15

Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks

**Extras**

**CourseDiggers and RateMyProf**

These are two very helpful websites when planning which courses to take each semester. Although they are specifically helpful for SEE courses (there aren’t any reviews yet), you can use them for other courses that you take (Math, Cmpt, Phys etc.). Like I’ve said before, these courses are typically offered multiple times a year and so you have more flexibility in deciding when to take them. If you know that a course is going to be hard then maybe take it during a lighter-course load semester. If you hear that a prof has bad reviews then maybe see if you can take the course another time.

One thing to take note of is that the reviews on both websites are obviously relative. I have taken multiple courses that were supposed to be super hard, but were actually quite easy. Same goes for profs: Some of the profs that I’ve loved had horrible reviews. My suggestion, if you’re tentative about a course or a prof is to go to the first week of classes to get an idea of what they’ll be like, and, if necessary, then drop. Both these websites can be found in the Appendix.

**Breadth-Humanities Elective**

This elective is recommended to be taken in the fourth year of the SEE degree; however, many people have/are taking it earlier. There is a long list of possible courses that you can take, many of which are in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Because the list is quite extensive you have the choice of taking an easy or difficult course (although I don’t really see why anyone would want to take a difficult course…). You can find this list in the Appendix.

**Conclusion**

So, that’s kind of it for what I can try to offer as a somewhat resource. This is a document that I would like to have updated every few semesters or so, so that it can remain a helpful tool for SEE students throughout their degrees. I’ve iterated this many times already, but this document is in no way a replacement for advising, it is simply a resource to help you prepare before meeting with advisors to discuss your future plans. While reading this doc you’ve probably realized how passionate I am about the flow of the SEE schedule, and so, if you have any questions or suggestions for future updates please contact me at techang@sfu.ca . I would love to hear any of your input. Thanks for reading and I hope that you now feel a little less stressed about course planning!

16

Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks

**Appendix**

**Forms**

Forms concerning the SEE program including appeals can be found at the bottom of this page: https://www.sfu.ca/see/current-students/undergraduate-students.html

**All SEE Program Courses**

This website is particular to the fall 2020 semester; however, the course descriptions and equivalents should be the same as in any semester.

https://www.sfu.ca/students/calendar/2020/fall/courses/see.html

**Certificates and Minors**

Each faculty has a variety of certificates that students can complete. Here are some of the websites for each.

Beedie School of Business

https://beedie.sfu.ca/programs/undergraduate/business-certificates

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

https://www.sfu.ca/fass/students/current-students/undergraduate-students/plan-your-program/cert ificates.html

Faculty of Environment

http://www.sfu.ca/fenv/programs/undergraduate/certificates.html

Faculty of Education

https://www.sfu.ca/education/gs/degreediploma.html

**Course and Prof Reviews**

Course Diggers

https://coursediggers.com/

Rate My Professors

https://www.ratemyprofessors.com/

17

Sustainable Energy Engineering Schedule Tips and Tricks

**Breadth-Humanities Course List**

This page also includes other breadth courses

https://www.sfu.ca/ugcr/for\_faculty/certified\_wqb\_courses/certified\_designated\_breadth\_courses .html

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18