



ASEE ENVIRON 2025 Division Awards

2025 Best Faculty Paper Award

This award recognizes the best paper submitted to the Division. The author must be a current member of the ASEE ENVIRON Division. The author (not a graduate student or colleague) must present the paper. For multiple authors, at least one author must be a division member, and the presentation at the conference must be made by a division member.

Paper Title: On the Symbiotic Nature of Science, Sustainability, and Systems Thinking in an Introductory Course on Sustainability Concepts

*Presented in Session M325
Monday 23 June 11:00 AM
515C, Palais des congrès de Montreal*

Christopher Papadopoulos, PhD is Professor of Engineering Sciences and Materials at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez (UPRM). He earned B.S. degrees in Civil Engineering and in Mathematics from Carnegie Mellon University (1993) and a Ph.D. in Theoretical and Applied Mechanics at Cornell University (1999). At UPRM he is a member of the steering committee of the



Sustainability Engineering initiative, which seeks to develop new Minor, Bachelors, Masters, and professional certificate programs. In this regard he is PI of A New Paradigm for Sustainability Engineering: A Transdisciplinary, Learner-Centered, and Diversity-Focused Approach, (de)funded by the NSF HSI program and he is a member

of the Engineering for One Planet Network. He also co-chaired the 18th International Conference on Nonconventional Materials and Technologies (NOCMAT2022). Papadopoulos brings a systems thinking, transdisciplinary, circular-economic/cradle-to-cradle mindset to sustainability innovation, curricular design, and pedagogy, and personal lifestyle, actively collaborating with several faculty, students, and sustainability-focused organizations in Puerto Rico and in the US.

Christopher Jensen, PhD is a Professor in the Department of Math and Science at the Pratt Institute in New York where he teaches a variety of environmental science, ecology, and evolutionary biology courses to Pratt students. In addition to his technical research in cultural and biological system interactions, he conducts pedagogical research aimed to identify best-practices for scientific learning in non-majors and fostering their application of scientific learning in professional and personal lives.



Ivan Baiges-Valentin, PhD is a Professor at the University of Puerto Rico– Mayaguez. (UPRM) His technical research in material science and engineering focuses on the relationships between plastics, industrial ecology, and sustainability. At UPRM, he was part of the team responsible for developing and implementing the campus's Environmental Management System and the Materials Impact Management System.



Krystal Colón Rivera, M.S., Licensed Psychologist (P.R), is a doctoral student in the School Psychology Program at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez Campus. She holds a master's degree in School Psychology. Her professional experience includes psychological assessments, socioemotional interventions, and applied research in school and university settings. She has collaborated on interdisciplinary projects related to sustainability in engineering, executive functions, and mental health. Her doctoral research examines the impact of a sustainability-focused engineering curriculum on students' mindset, executive planning, and academic performance. Her areas of interest include executive functions, physical activity, how children and youth learn, and the development of culturally responsive interventions.

