The University of New Hampshire has launched Semester for Impact, a new initiative that pairs UNH undergraduates with Granite State organizations to support projects related to positive environmental and social impact and enhance the overall well-being of local communities. There will be four UNH students in the initial cohort.

Students will spend 15 weeks working 30 hours per week for businesses, non-profits and municipalities across the state while earning credit toward their undergraduate degrees and participating in workshops and courses designed to prepare them for and support their experience in their placements.

"Organizations across the Granite State need capacity to advance strategic projects, and our students are looking for educational experiences that allow them to apply classroom knowledge to the real world, while building professional skills," UNH Provost Wayne Jones says. "Semester for Impact is a win-win for everyone involved."

The inaugural group of students includes Skye Loto ’25, Abigail Gilbert ’25, Dan Markowski ’25 and Suzanne Scharff ’24.
Loto, an analytical economics and political science dual major, will assess the local impacts that socially responsible businesses can have on their communities for the statewide non-profit membership organization New Hampshire Businesses for Social Responsibility.

Gilbert, an environmental and resource economics major, will work with the city of Dover Office of Business Development, to help launch a small business incubator.

Markowski, a community and environmental planning major, will work with the city of Manchester to conduct a parking audit of the city’s downtown. The insights gathered will inform future projects and sustainability initiatives for the city.

Scharff, a women’s and gender studies and sustainability dual major, will work with The Freedom Café in Durham, raising awareness about the cafe’s commitment to sourcing materials and ingredients free from human trafficking.

Unlike traditional internship programs which take place outside the regular academic year, or are part-time, Semester for Impact recognizes the transformative nature of high-quality immersive experiential learning, embedding it in the core academic experience. Students stay on-track to graduate while developing their career goals, building valuable career-ready skills and enhancing their professional networks in the state.

UNH is expanding its partnership with the non-profit College for Social Innovation (CFSI) to launch and deliver this program. Over the last seven years, 190 UNH students have completed Semester in the City, community-based learning semesters in Boston through CFSI. Students who have completed the program have demonstrated significant gains in key workforce and academic competencies and have landed career-track jobs at higher rates than their peers.

"We are excited to continue our long-standing partnership with the University of New Hampshire and introduce the Semester for Impact program, which provides students with the opportunity to contribute significantly to local organizations and earn academic credit while doing so," said Eric Schwarz, co-founder and CEO of CFSI. "We invite local non-profit, government organizations and mission-driven for-profits to consider hosting a Semester for Impact student and benefit from their insights and energy."
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Kick-starting Carbon Footprint Analysis
(https://www.unh.edu/unhtoday/2022/04/kick-starting-carbon-footprint-analysis)

Ready to Ride
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