



SMARTSCAPE Annual Report

July 1, 2024 –
June 30, 2025



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
Cooperative Extension
Maricopa County

Submitted by: **Emily Webb and
Ayman Mostafa**

Smartscape Program Annual Report

1. Program Summary Statement

The Smartscape program has continued to play a vital role in delivering essential educational opportunities to both industry professionals and community members throughout Maricopa County. As a cornerstone of sustainable landscape education in the region, Smartscape remains committed to equipping participants with the knowledge and tools needed to implement and maintain water-efficient landscapes that support environmental stewardship and responsible resource management.

Throughout the past year, all classes—including the foundational Basic Smartscape course as well as the more specialized Advanced Smartscape courses—have proceeded as planned, even during the transition between program coordinators. Despite this period of change, the continuity and quality of the curriculum were maintained without interruption, underscoring the program’s resilience and importance within the community. All Smartscape courses were conducted in-person during this time, providing students with the opportunity for hands-on learning, in-depth instruction, and real-time interaction with expert instructors.

In an effort to expand accessibility and convenience, we are actively exploring the option of offering several of the ten sessions within the Basic Smartscape course in a hybrid format. This change would allow busy professionals the flexibility to attend portions of the course online, making it more feasible for those with demanding schedules to benefit from the program. Our goal is to increase participation among landscape professionals by reducing scheduling barriers and improving outreach across a broader audience.

To maintain the high quality and relevance of our curriculum, we have also taken deliberate steps to enhance course content. One such initiative has been to offer increased compensation to our instructors, recognizing the value of their time and expertise in reviewing, evaluating, and enriching the course materials. By leveraging the insights and current knowledge these professionals bring from their respective fields, we are better able to ensure that our classes reflect the latest best practices, innovations, and industry standards.

In addition to these ongoing improvements, we are actively developing advanced Smartscape classes in Spanish. This initiative represents a major step toward increasing the inclusivity and accessibility of the program for Spanish-speaking professionals, who make up a significant portion of the green industry workforce. By breaking down language barriers, we aim to make the benefits of Smartscape training more widely available and equitable.

Smartscape continues to be recognized as a leader in landscape education within the green industry, especially in the greater Phoenix metropolitan area. The program is well-regarded for its comprehensive, science-based curriculum and its practical approach to training. Collaboration remains a fundamental aspect of our success—whether it's between counties, with other sustainability-focused programs, or

with our dedicated instructors. This collaborative spirit ensures our curriculum remains up-to-date and aligned with regional needs and priorities.

Ongoing coordination with other county-level Smartscape programs across Arizona offers valuable opportunities for knowledge exchange and joint innovation. These partnerships help us refine our offerings, share resources, and strengthen the program overall, ultimately enhancing the experience and outcomes for all participants.

2. Program Impact Numbers Summary

Smartscape Impact Numbers Summary				
July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025				
NAME OF COURSE	Dates	Total Instructional Hours	Percent Successfully Completed	Total Number of Certificates
Smartscape (10 classes)	July/August 2024	30	62%	25
Smartscape (10 classes)	Feb/Mar 2025	30	88%	28
Smartscape en Español (10 classes)	May/June 2024	30	79%	19
Advanced Plant Materials (4 classes)	October/November 2024	12	86%	12
Advanced Urban Forest Mgt.	January 2025	12	87%	13
Advanced Irrigation (3 classes)	March/April 2025	18	88%	23
TOTAL		132	82% avg.	120

3. Smartscape Program Graduate Numbers (indicating year and course)

Year	Course	Graduates
1994 - 2001	Smartscape	489
2002	Smartscape	41
2003	Smartscape	45
2004	Smartscape	33
2005	Smartscape	45
2006	Smartscape	44
2007	Smartscape	18
2008	Smartscape	50
2009	Smartscape	40
2010		94
	Smartscape - Spring	55
	Smartscape - Fall	39
2011		131
	Smartscape - Spring	48
	Smartscape - Fall	45
	Advanced Irrigation	38
2012		125
	Smartscape - Spring	60

Year	Course	Graduates
2017		131
	Smartscape - Spring	48
	Smartscape - Fall	42
	Advanced Irrigation	41
2018		160
	Smartscape - Spring	43
	Smartscape - Fall	45
	Spanish Smartscape	23
	Advanced Irrigation	49
2019		142
	Smartscape - Spring	52
	Smartscape - Fall	46
	Spanish Smartscape	13
	Advanced Irrigation	31
2020		81
	Smartscape - Spring	39
	Smartscape - Fall	42
	Spanish Smartscape	COVID

Smartscape - Fall	38
Advanced Irrigation	27
2013	105
Smartscape - Spring	39
Smartscape - Fall	40
Advanced Irrigation	26
2014	107
Smartscape - Spring	43
Smartscape - Fall	30
Advanced Irrigation	34
2015	137
Smartscape - Spring	52
Smartscape - Fall	48
Advanced Irrigation	37
2016	142
Smartscape - Spring	45
Smartscape - Fall	46
Advanced Irrigation	51

2024	71
Smartscape - Spring	13
Spanish Smartscape	20
Advanced Urban For.	20
Advanced Irrigation	
Smartscape – Fall	18
Advanced Plants	

2025	
Smartscape - Spring	28
Spanish Smartscape	TBD
Advanced Urban For.	13
Advanced Irrigation	23

Total Program Graduates to Date:	2647
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Advanced Irrigation	COVID
2021	114
Smartscape - Spring	36
Smartscape - Fall	21
Spanish Smartscape	22
Advanced Irrigation	16
Advanced Plants	19
2022	100
Smartscape - Spring	23
Smartscape - Fall	24
Spanish Smartscape	14
Advanced Irrigation	22
Advanced Plants	17
2023	98
Smartscape - Spring	24
Smartscape - Fall	29
Spanish Smartscape	5
Advanced Irrigation	18
Advanced Urban For.	18
Advanced Plants	4

4. Community Impact

Who we are reaching within the landscape industry

A wide range of people attend Smartscape courses. Regardless of their relationship to the landscape industry, each can increase awareness of water efficiency practices within our community.

Participants may choose from one or more of the following categories to express their background or profession:

I work for a landscaping company (supervisor, crew, designer, office personnel)

I own a landscaping, or related, business

I work for an irrigation supply company (option for Advanced Irrigation course)

I am a municipal employee (Parks department, Water Conservation, Planning, etc.)

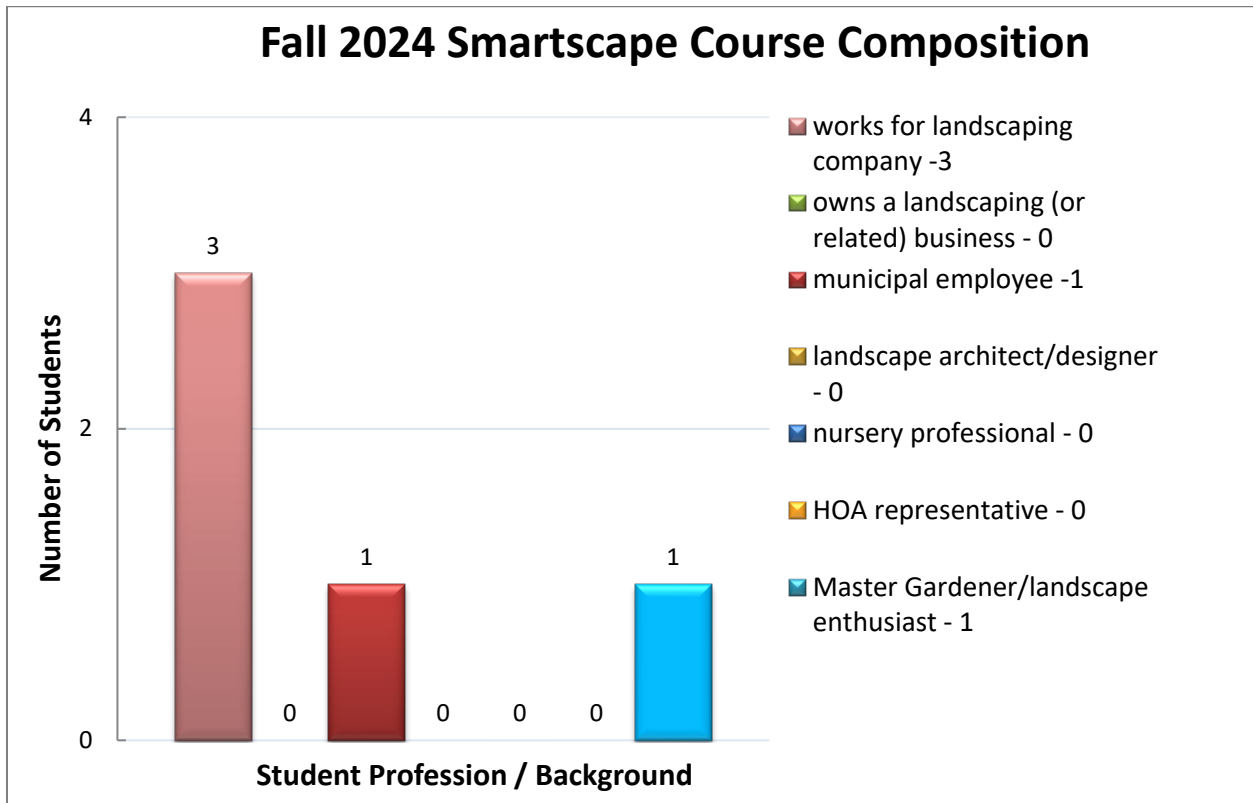
I am a landscape architect or landscape designer

I am a nursery professional

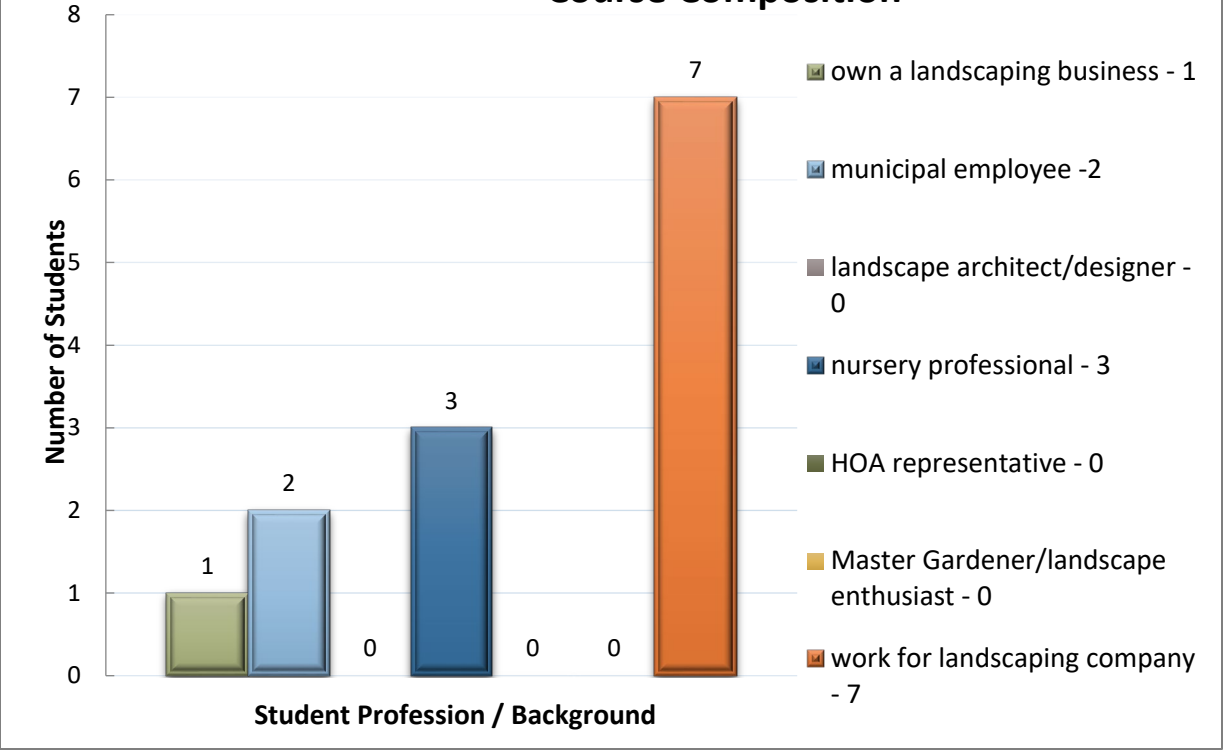
I am an HOA representative or property management employee

I am a Master Gardener, or a home gardening / landscaping enthusiast

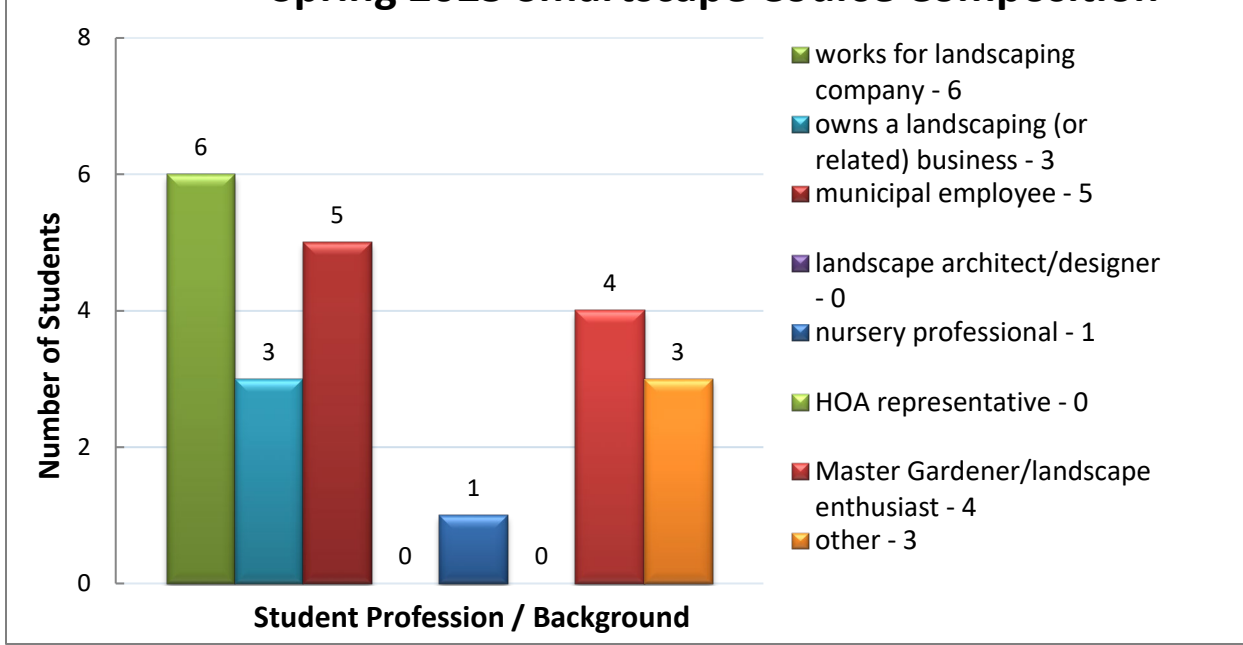
Other (with explanation)



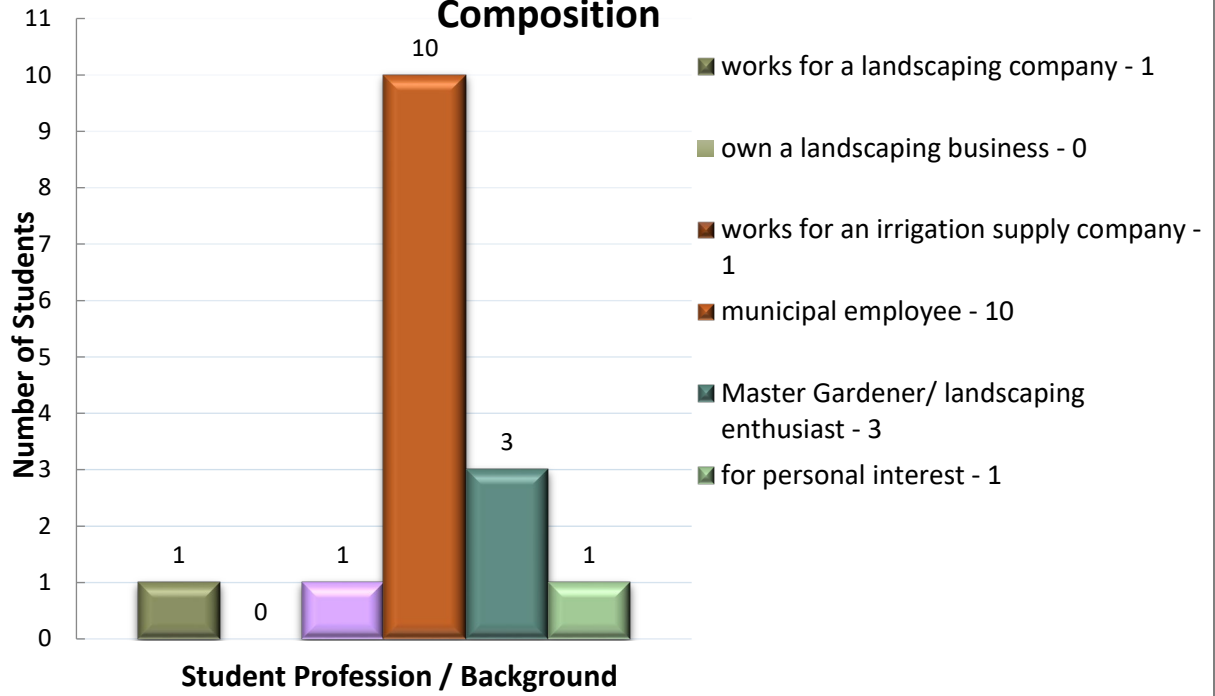
2024 Advanced Smartscape: Plant Materials Course Composition



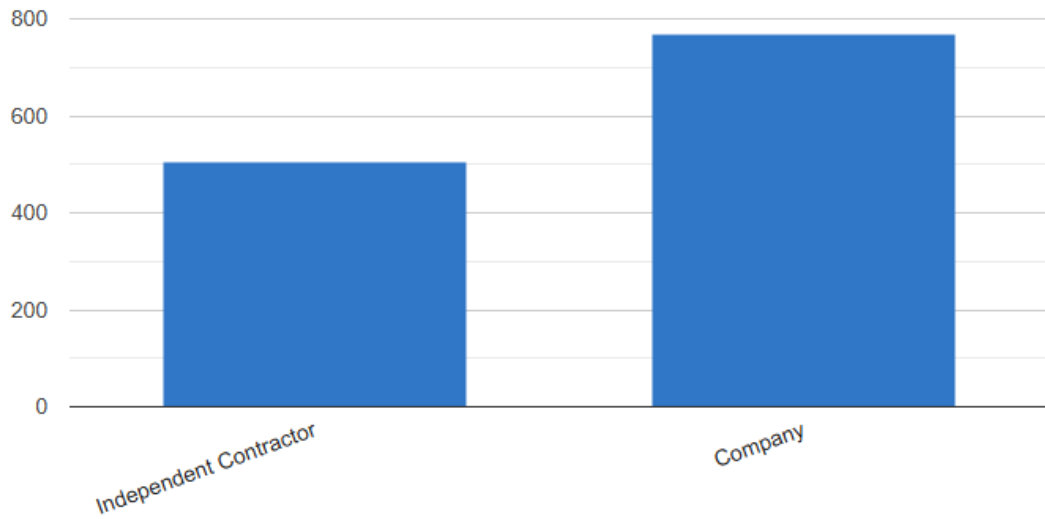
Spring 2025 Smartscape Course Composition



2025 Advanced Smartscape: Irrigation Course Composition



Please indicate if you work for a company or if you are an independent contractor.



Why the participants attended the course

People enroll in Smartscape courses for a variety of reasons, both personal and professional. Regardless of their motivation, each participant helps promote sustainable landscaping and water efficiency in our community.

Participants may select one or more of the following reasons for attending:

My employer sent me

To meet customer demand for water efficiency

To receive a certificate

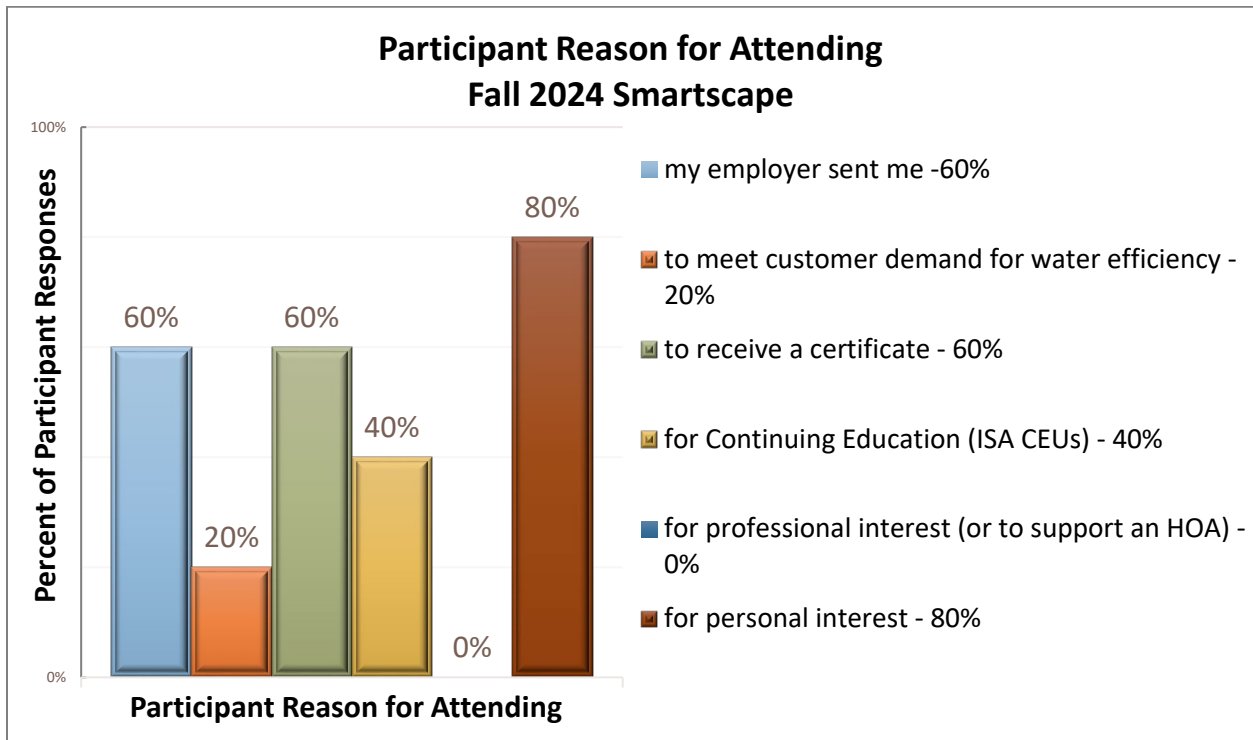
For continuing education (ISA CEUs)

For continuing education (ADA pesticide applicator CEUs)

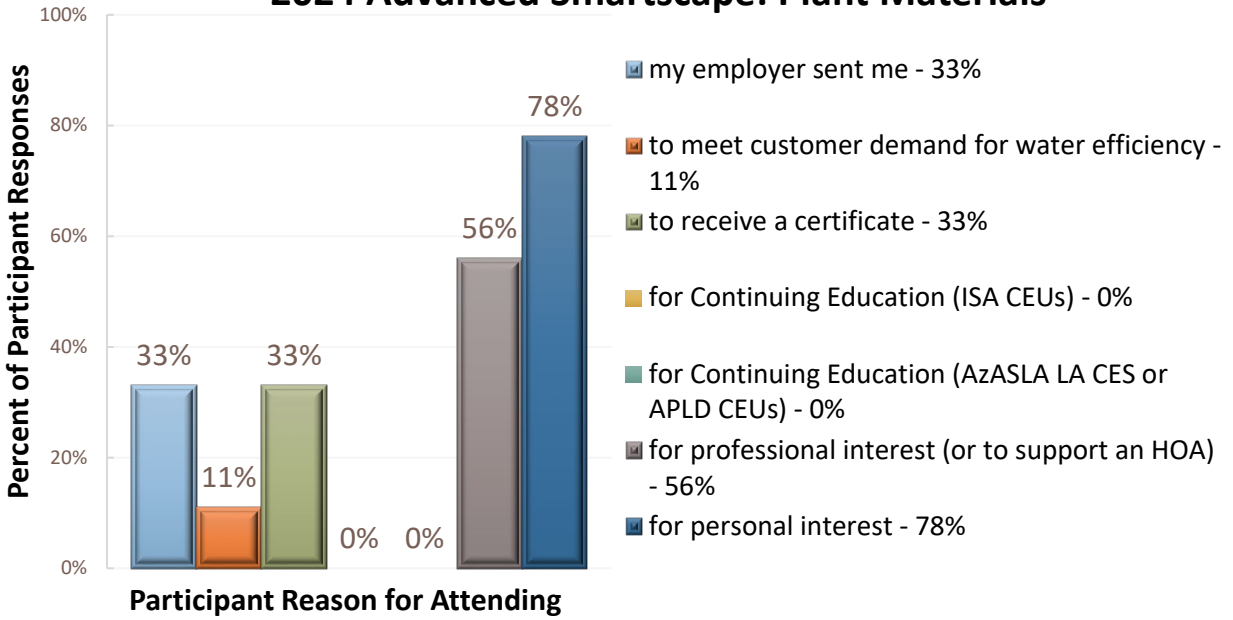
For continuing education (AzASLA LA CES or APLD CEUs)

For professional interest (or to support an HOA)

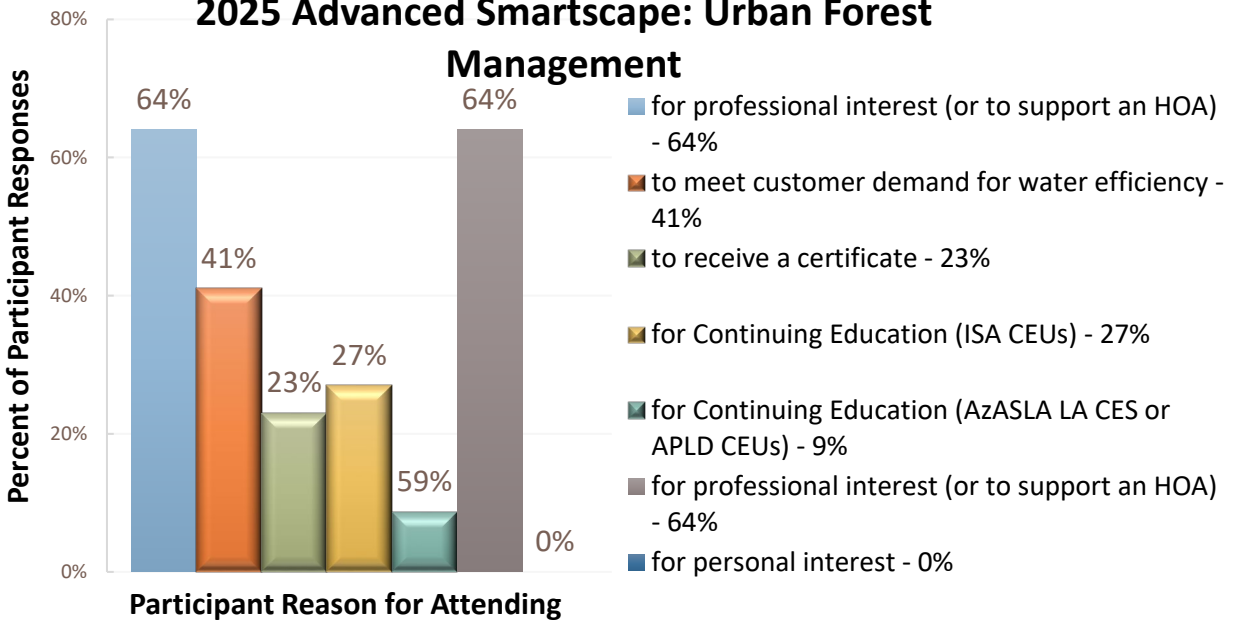
For personal interest



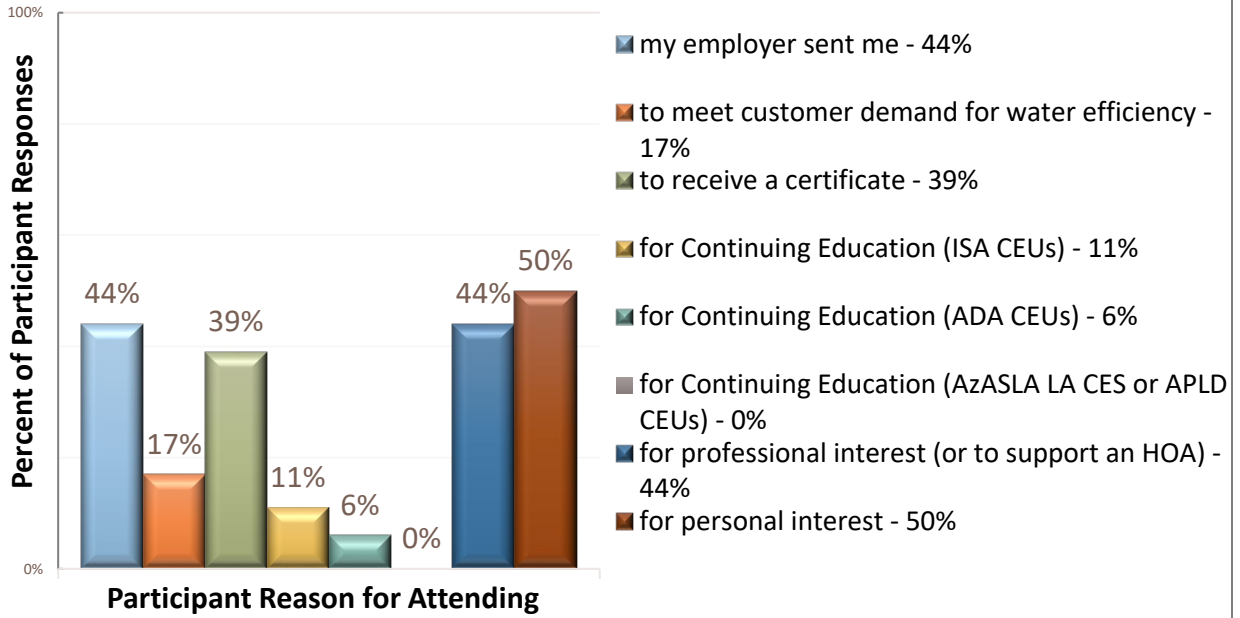
Participant Reason for Attending 2024 Advanced Smartscape: Plant Materials



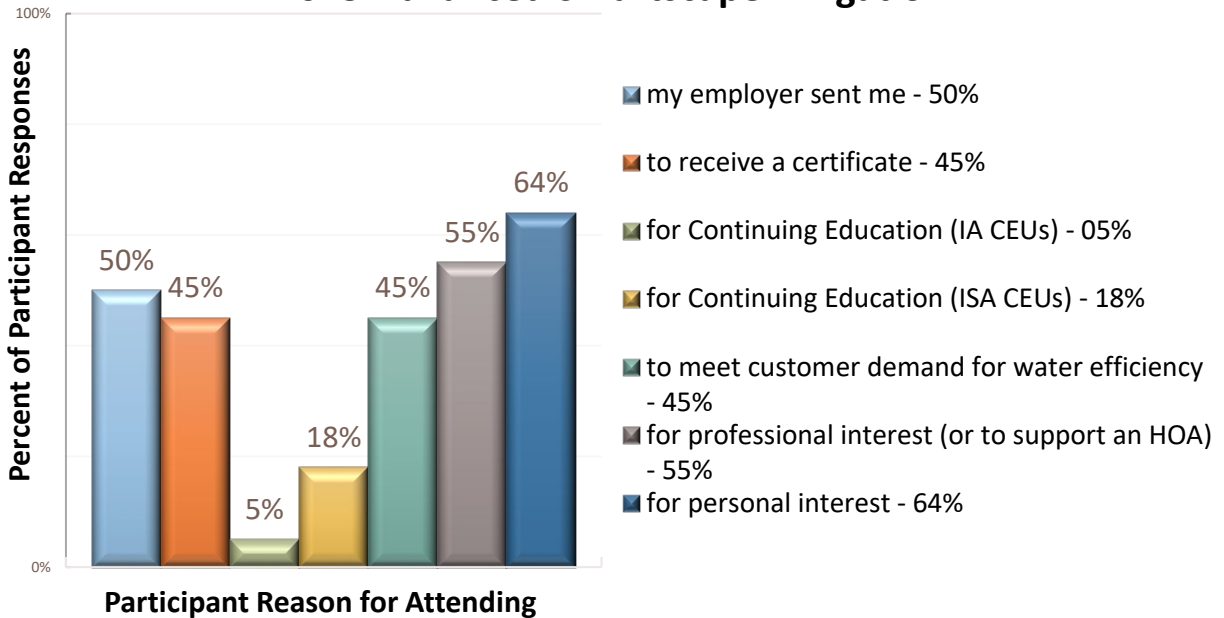
Participant Reason for Attending 2025 Advanced Smartscape: Urban Forest Management



Participant Reason for Attending Spring 2025 Smartscape



Participant Reason for Attending 2025 Advanced Smartscape: Irrigation

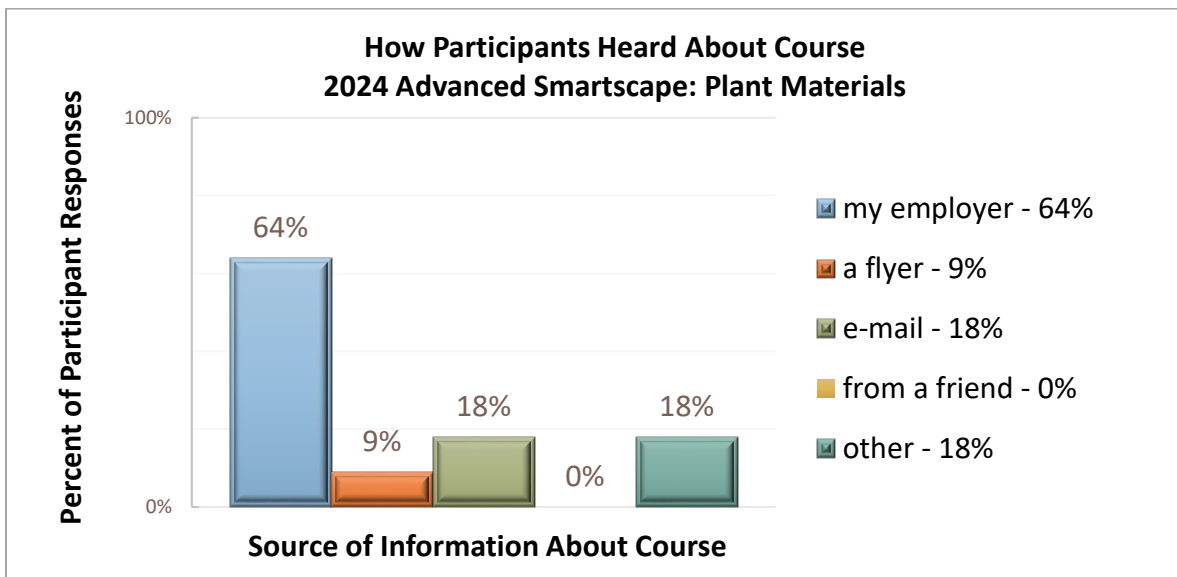
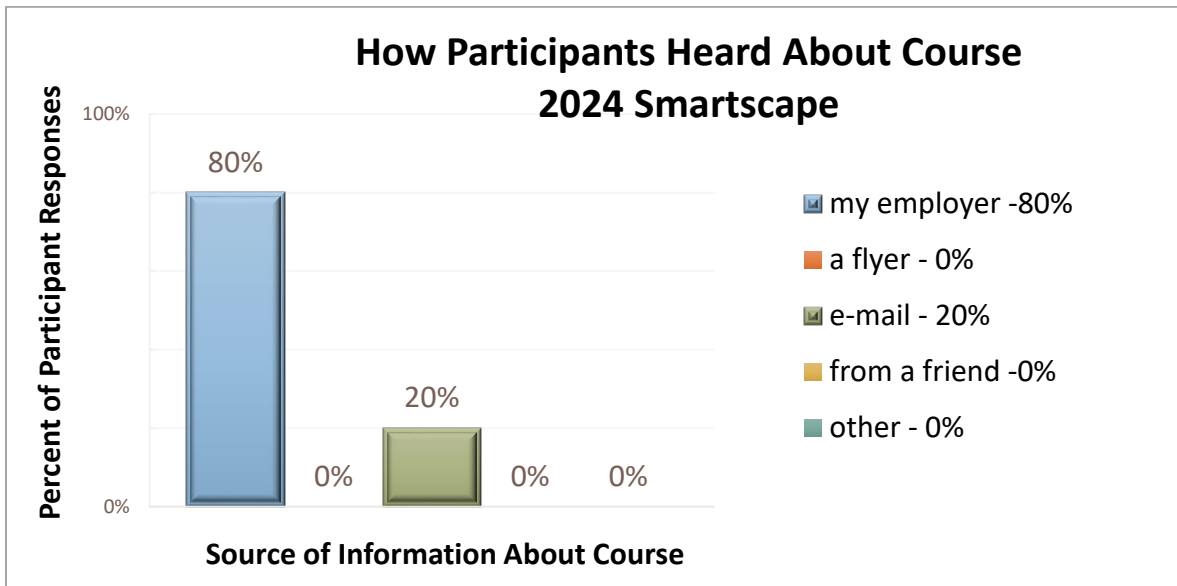


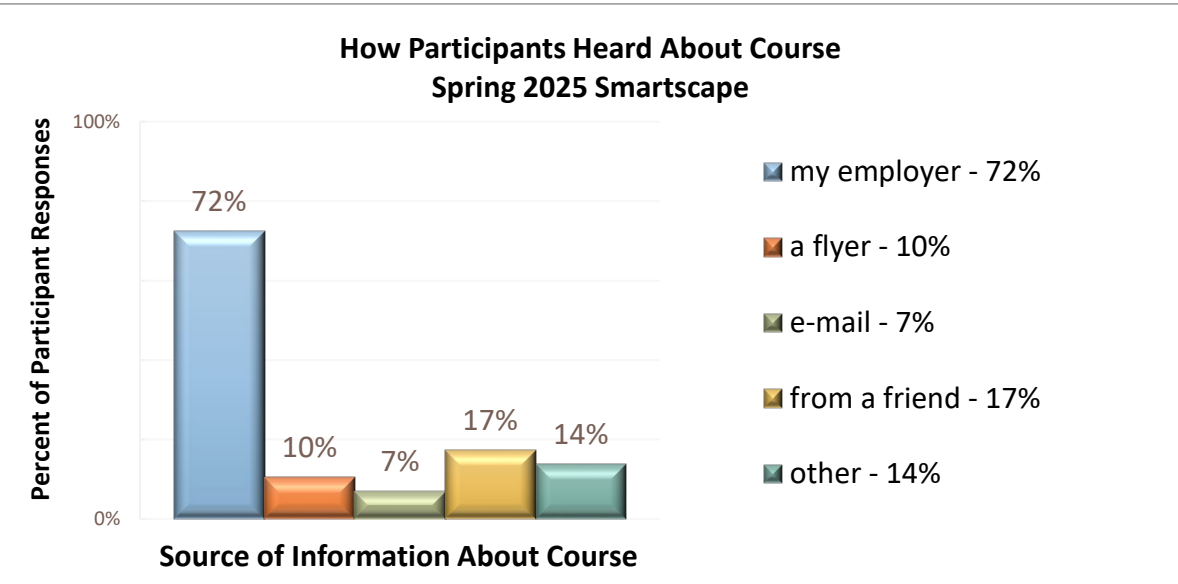
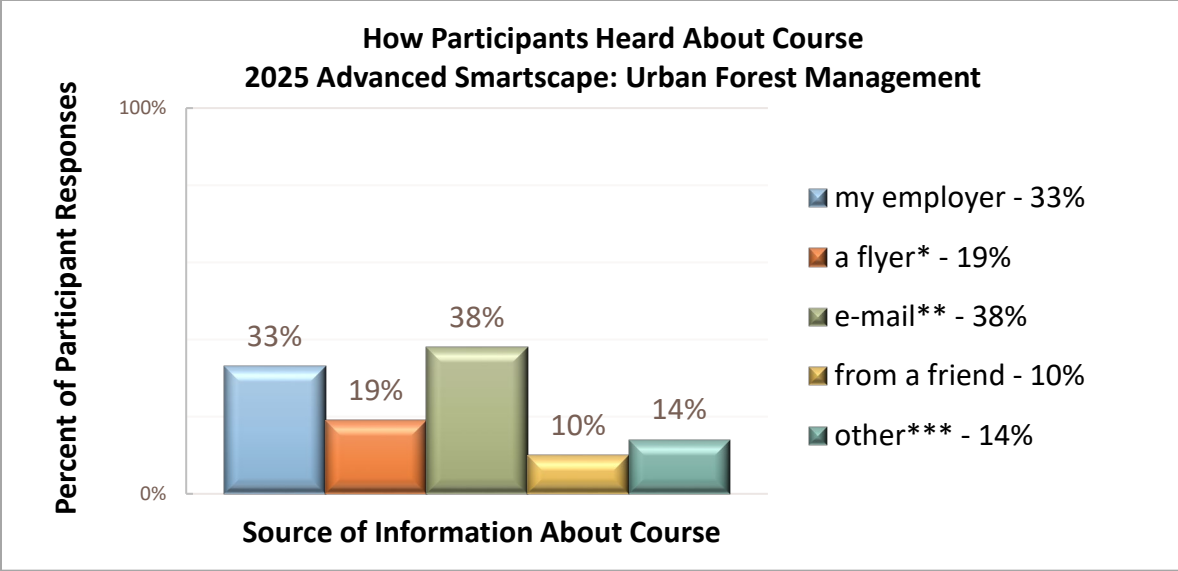
How the participants heard about the course

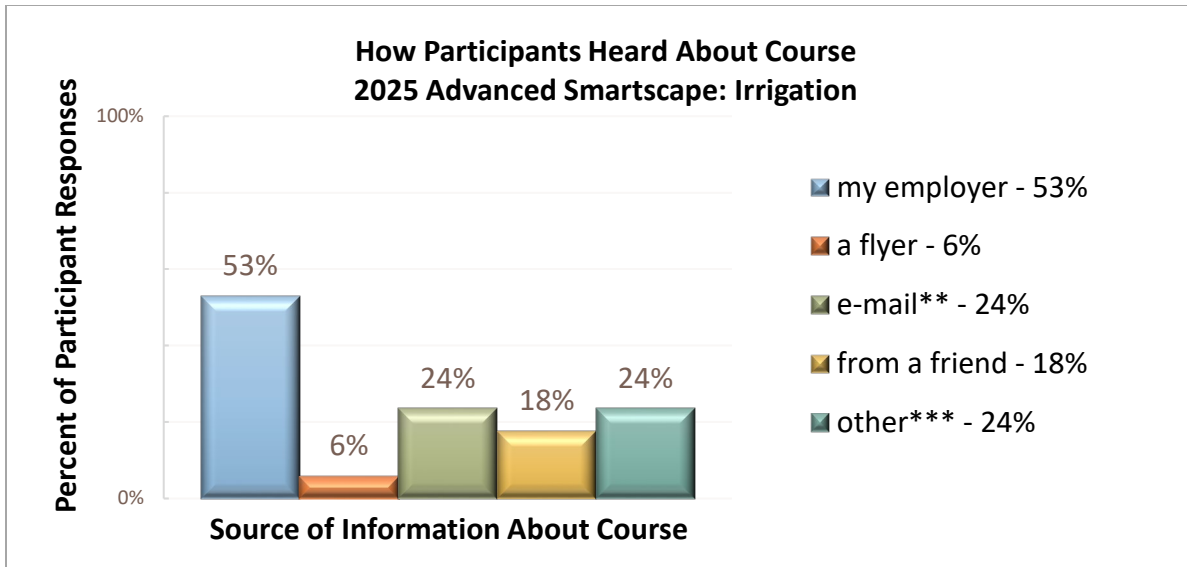
Smartscape reaches a diverse audience through various channels. Understanding how participants learn about the program helps us improve outreach and expand our impact.

Participants may select one or more of the following sources:

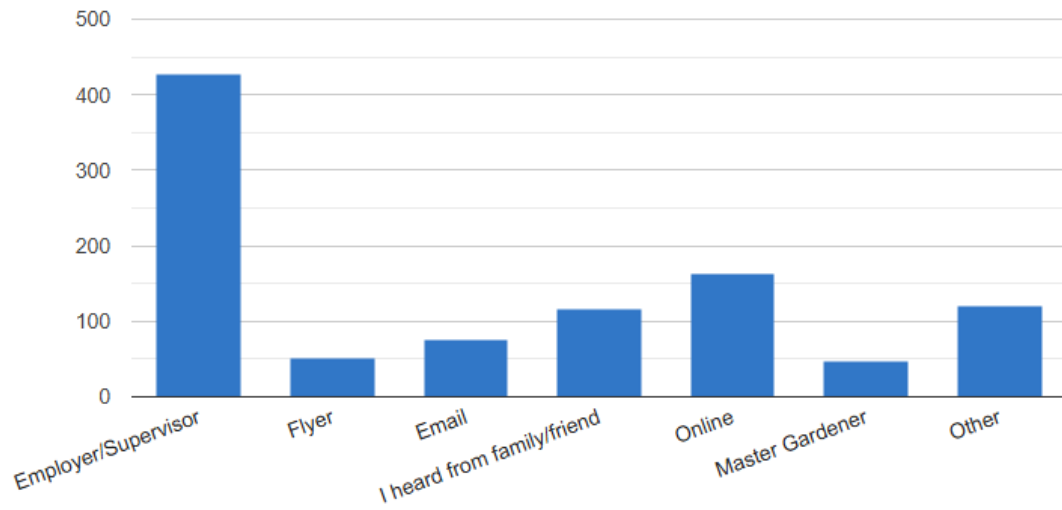
- My employer
- A flyer
- An email
- From a friend
- Other





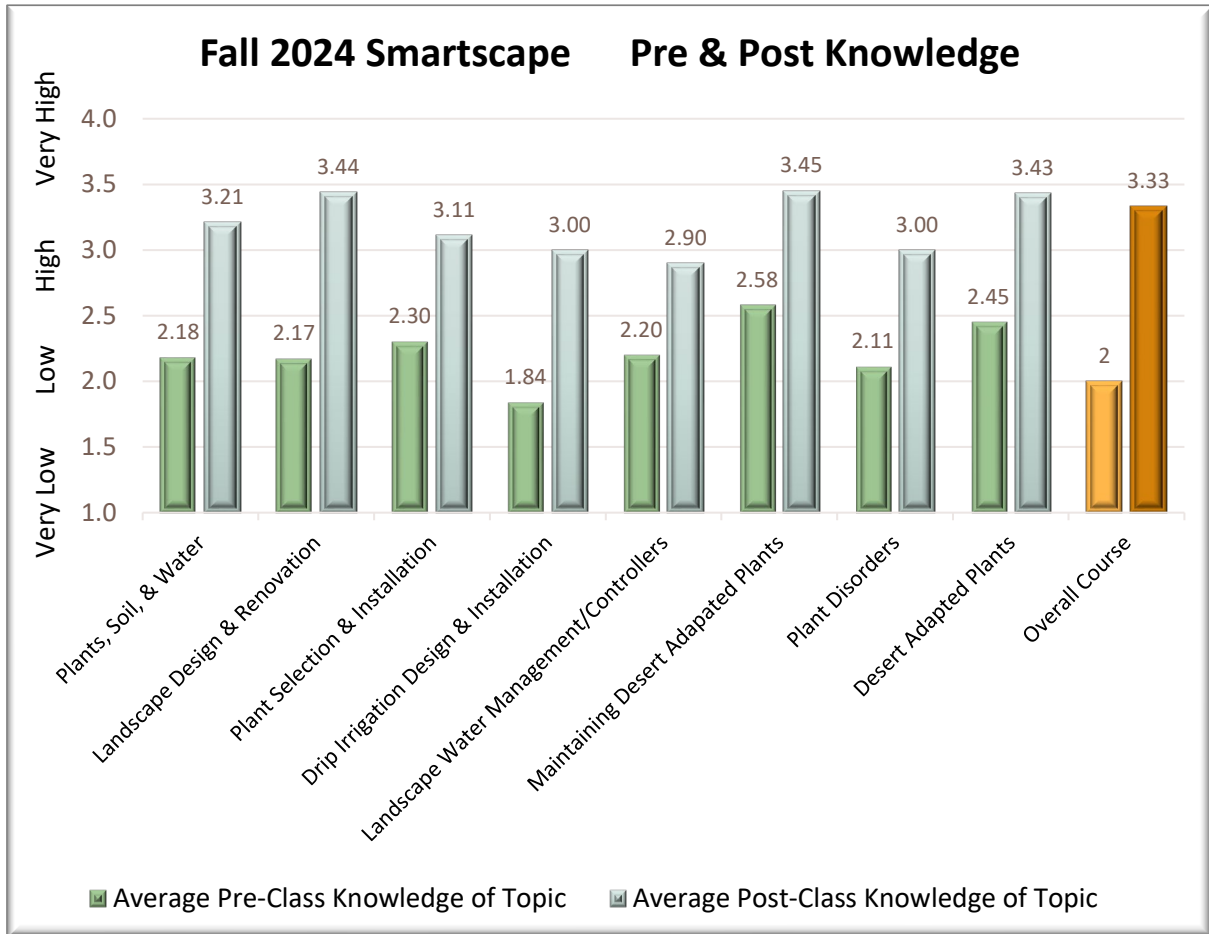


How did you hear about us?

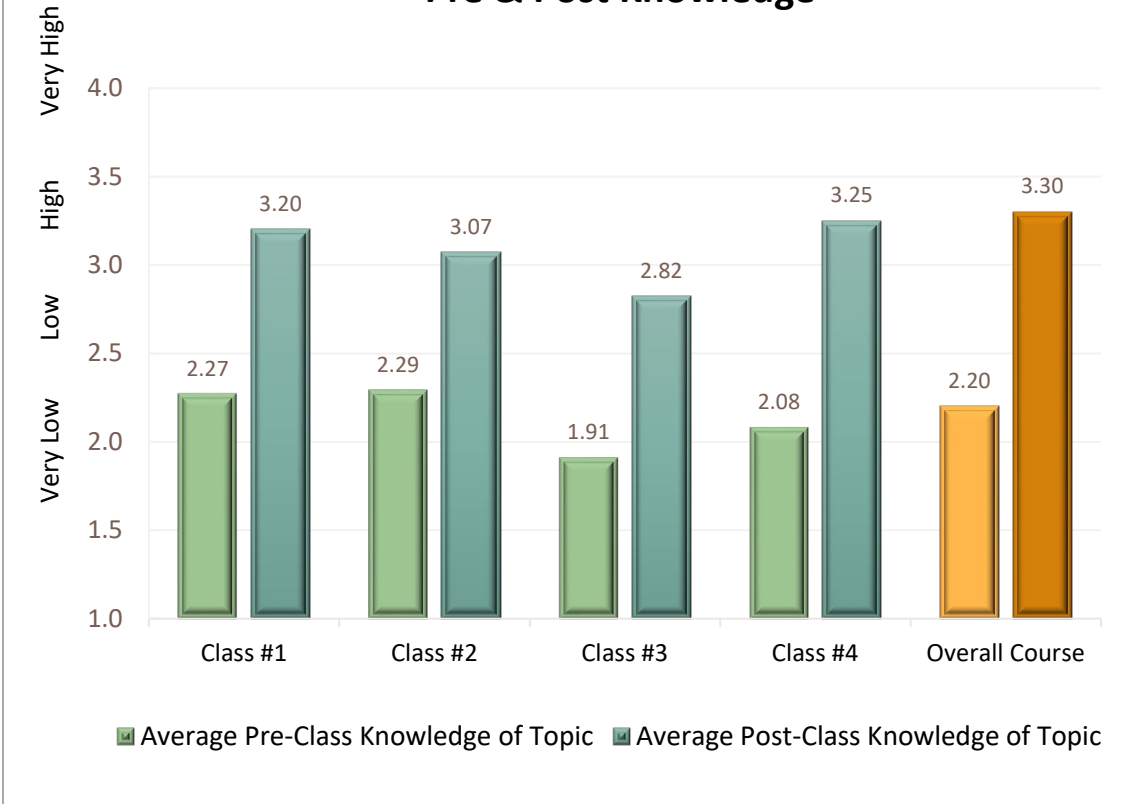


Evaluation Data

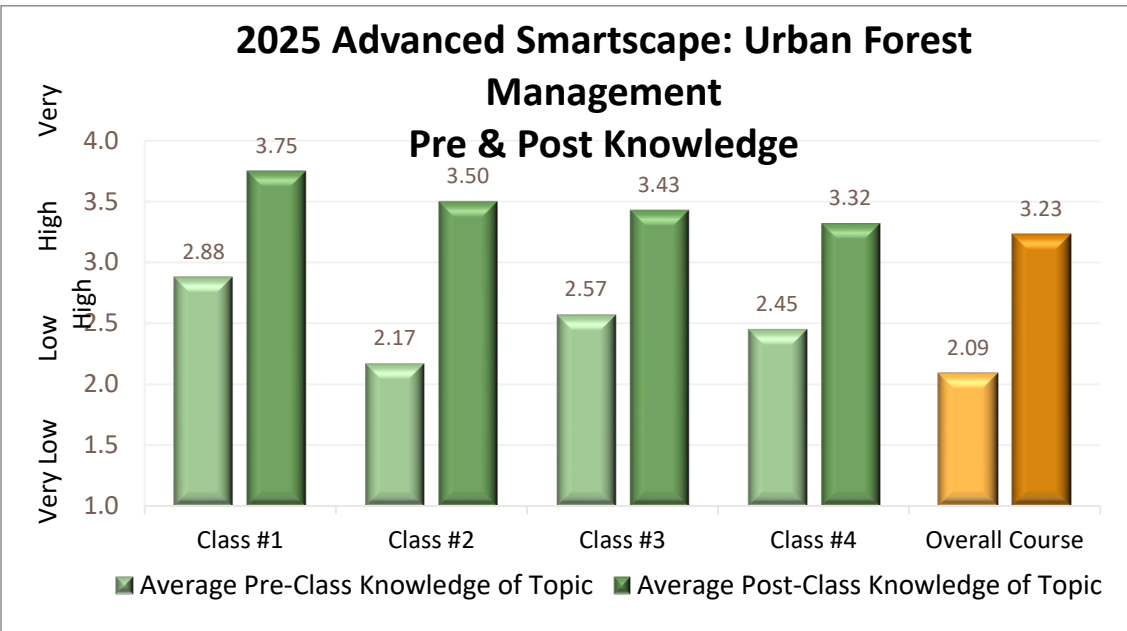
Participant-Reported Pre & Post Knowledge (level of knowledge before and after individual classes and overall course. A Likert scale of 1-4 (Very Low, Low, High, Very High) was used.

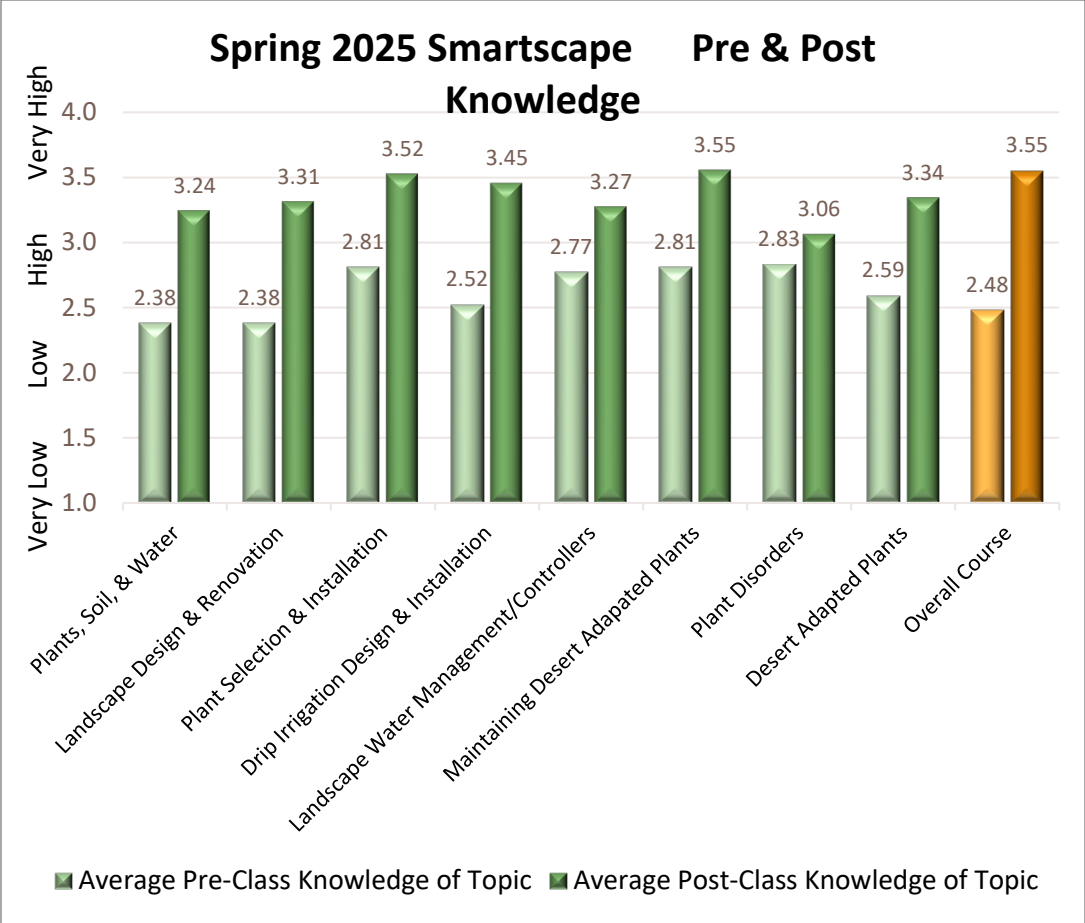


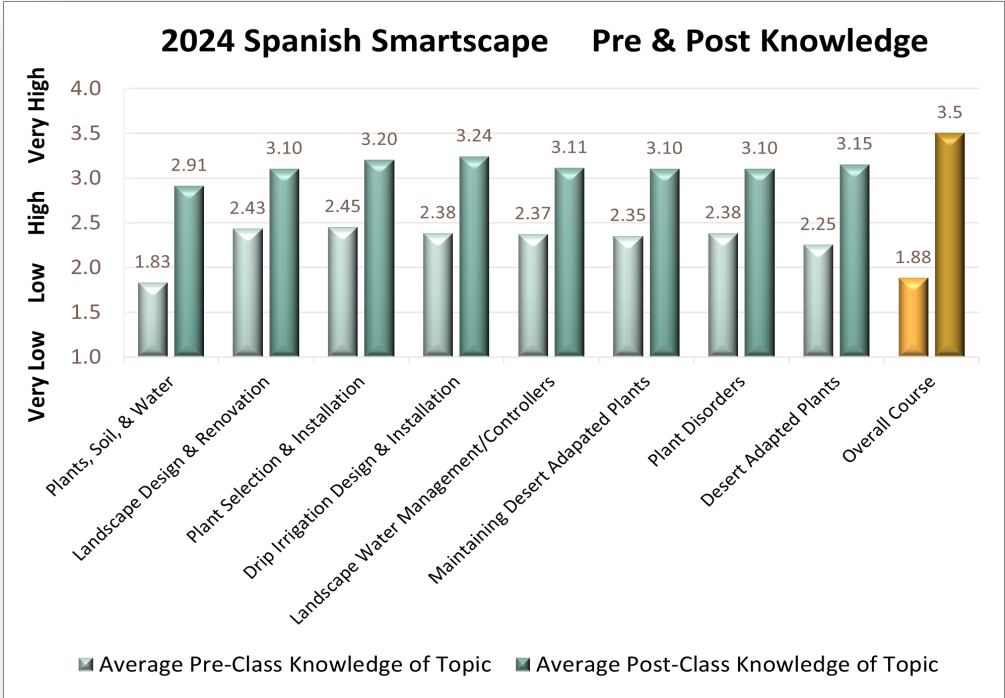
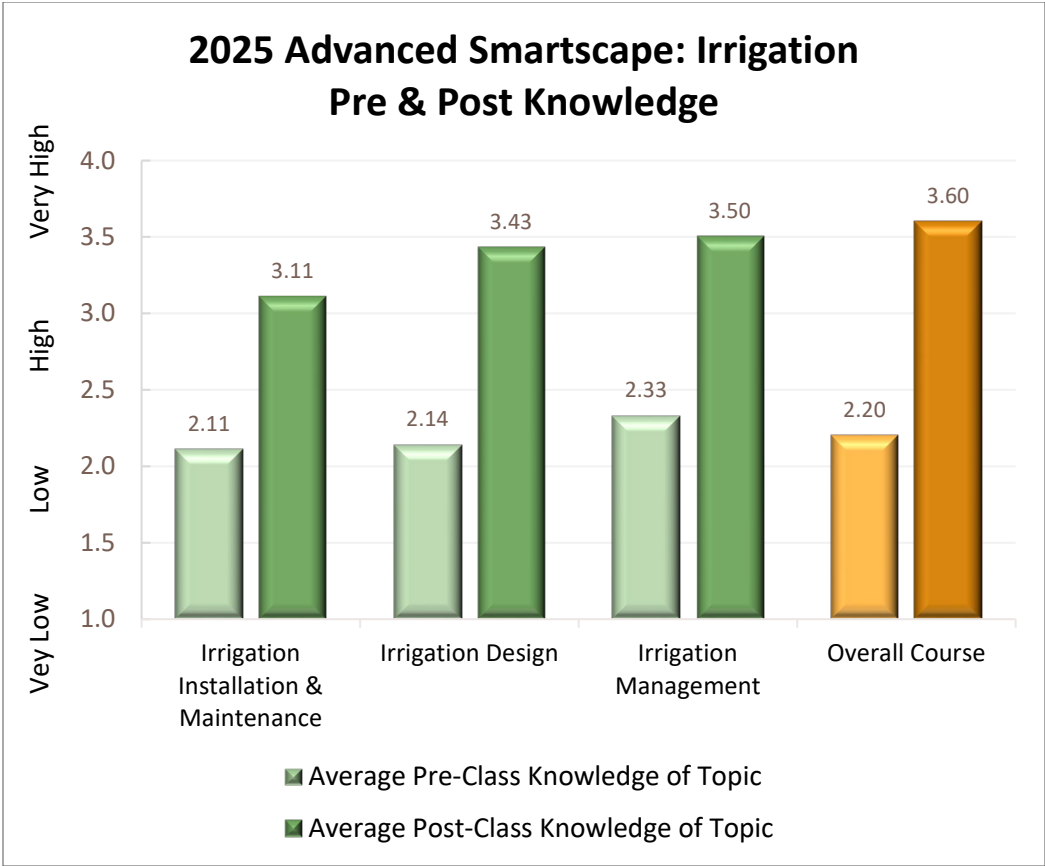
2024 Advanced Smartscape: Plant Materials Pre & Post Knowledge



2025 Advanced Smartscape: Urban Forest Management Pre & Post Knowledge



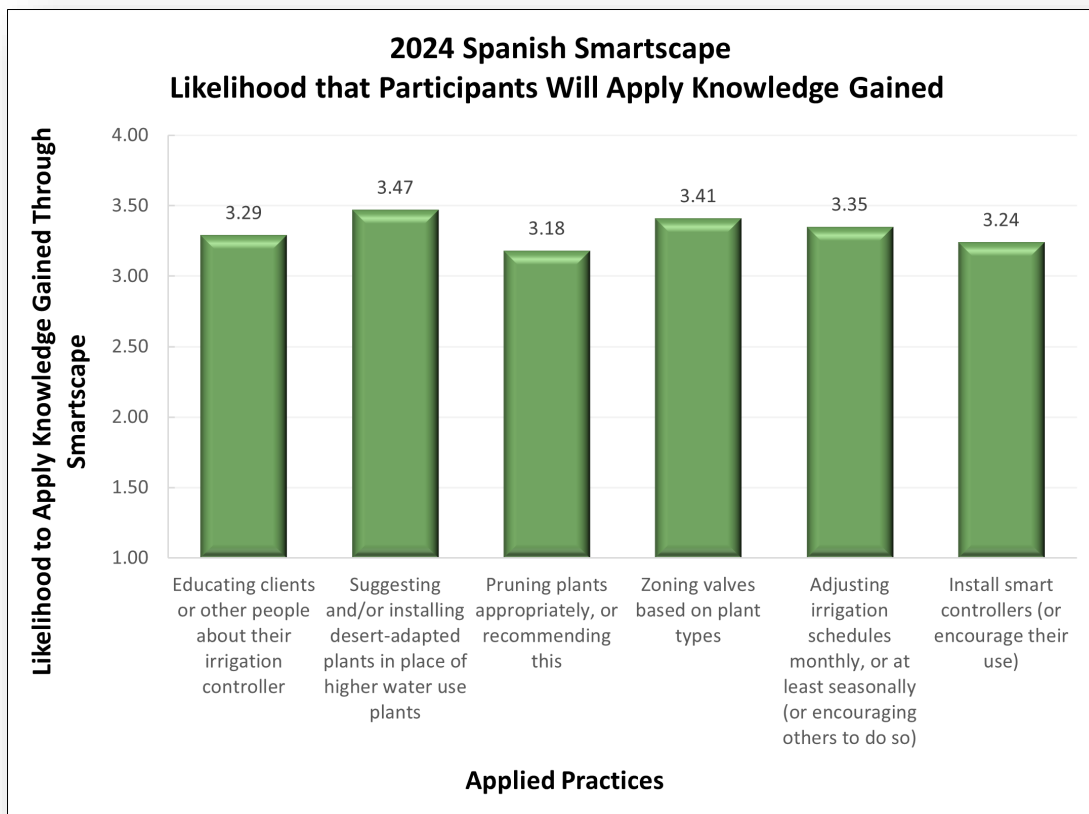




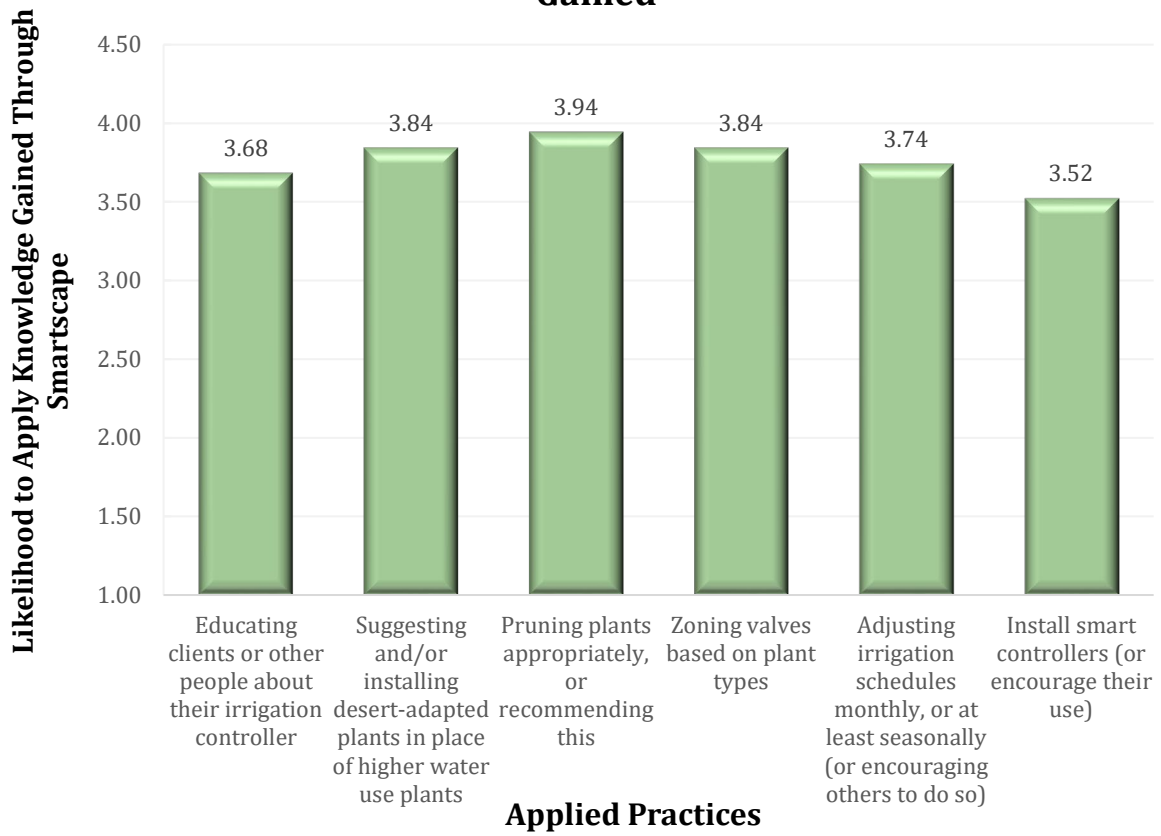
Likelihood of Participant Application of Knowledge/Skill Transfer Following Course

This data was collected for the annual Smartscape report to assess the effectiveness of the program in promoting the practical application of learned knowledge and skills. By evaluating participants' self-reported likelihood of applying what they gained from the course, Smartscape can gauge the program's real-world impact.

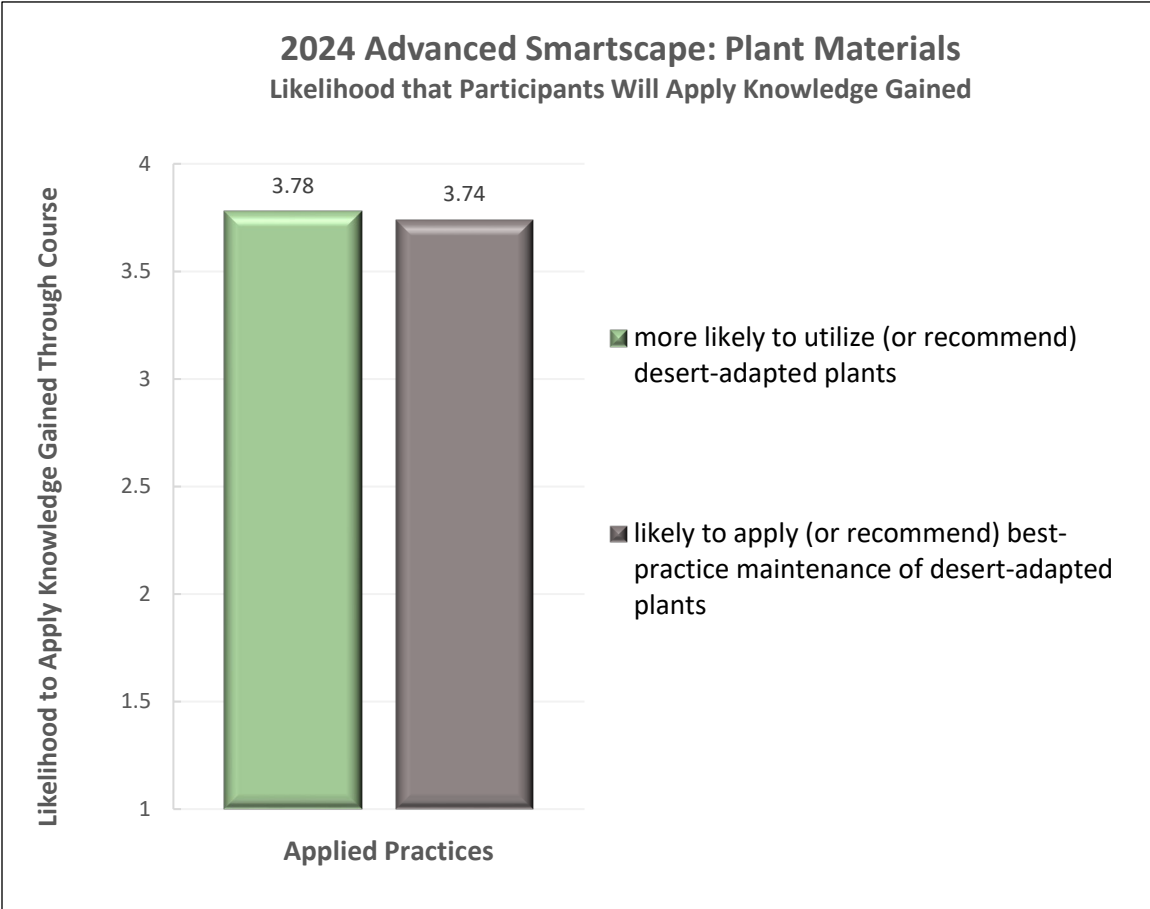
A Likert scale of 1-4 (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree) was used.



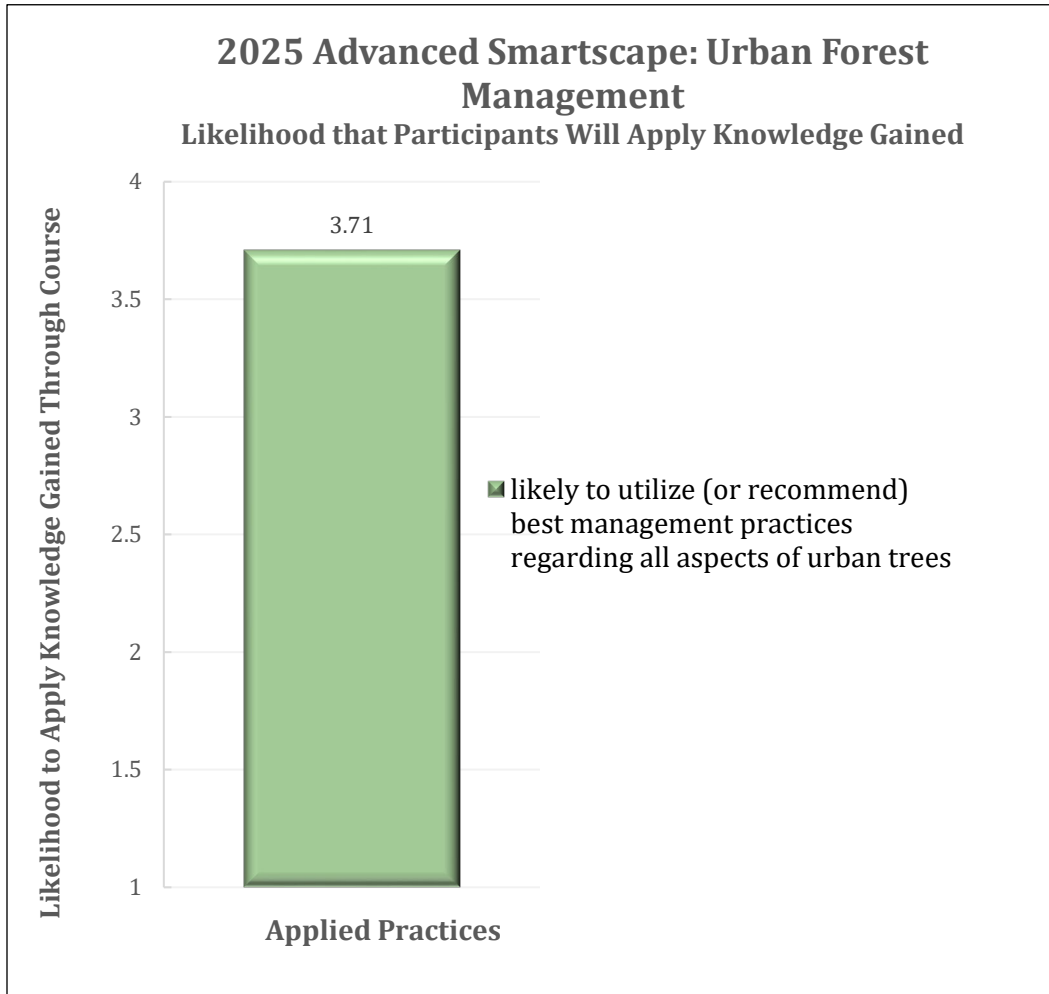
Spring 2025 Smartscape Likelihood that Participants Will Apply Knowledge Gained



Participants are more likely to utilize (or recommend) desert-adapted plants as a result of taking Advanced Smartscape: Plant Materials
A Likert scale of 1-4 (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree) was used.



Participants are more likely to utilize (or recommend) best management practices regarding all aspects of urban trees as a result of taking Advanced Smartscape

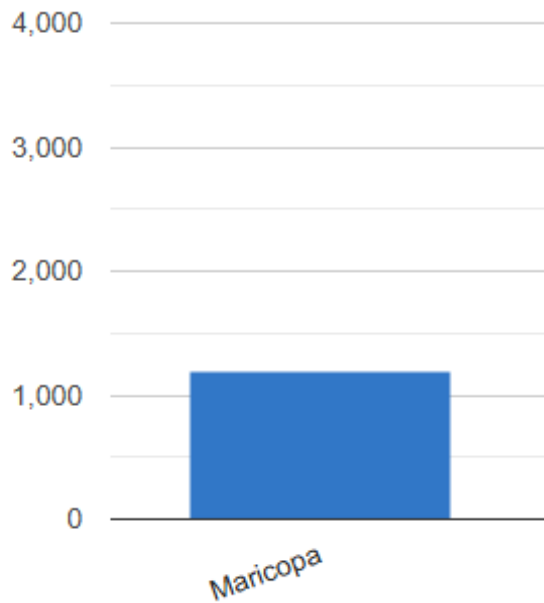


Areas of Service Reached

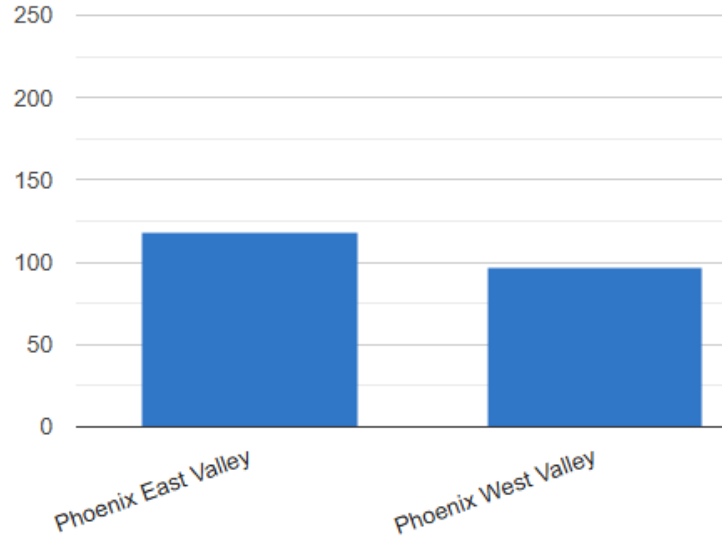
Areas of service represented by Smartscape participants.

Smartscape participants serve communities across a wide range of geographic areas and professional sectors. Understanding where participants work or provide services helps us measure the program's regional impact and guide future outreach.

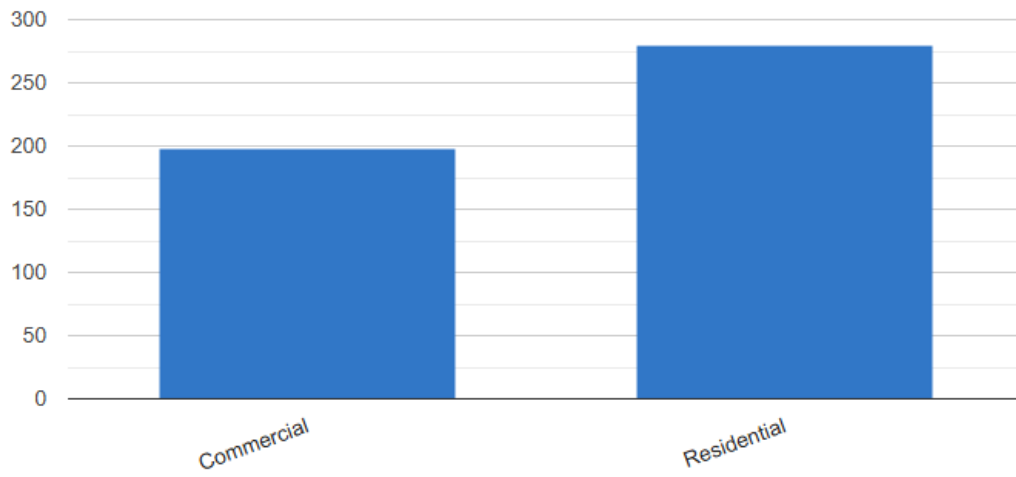
County



Service Area

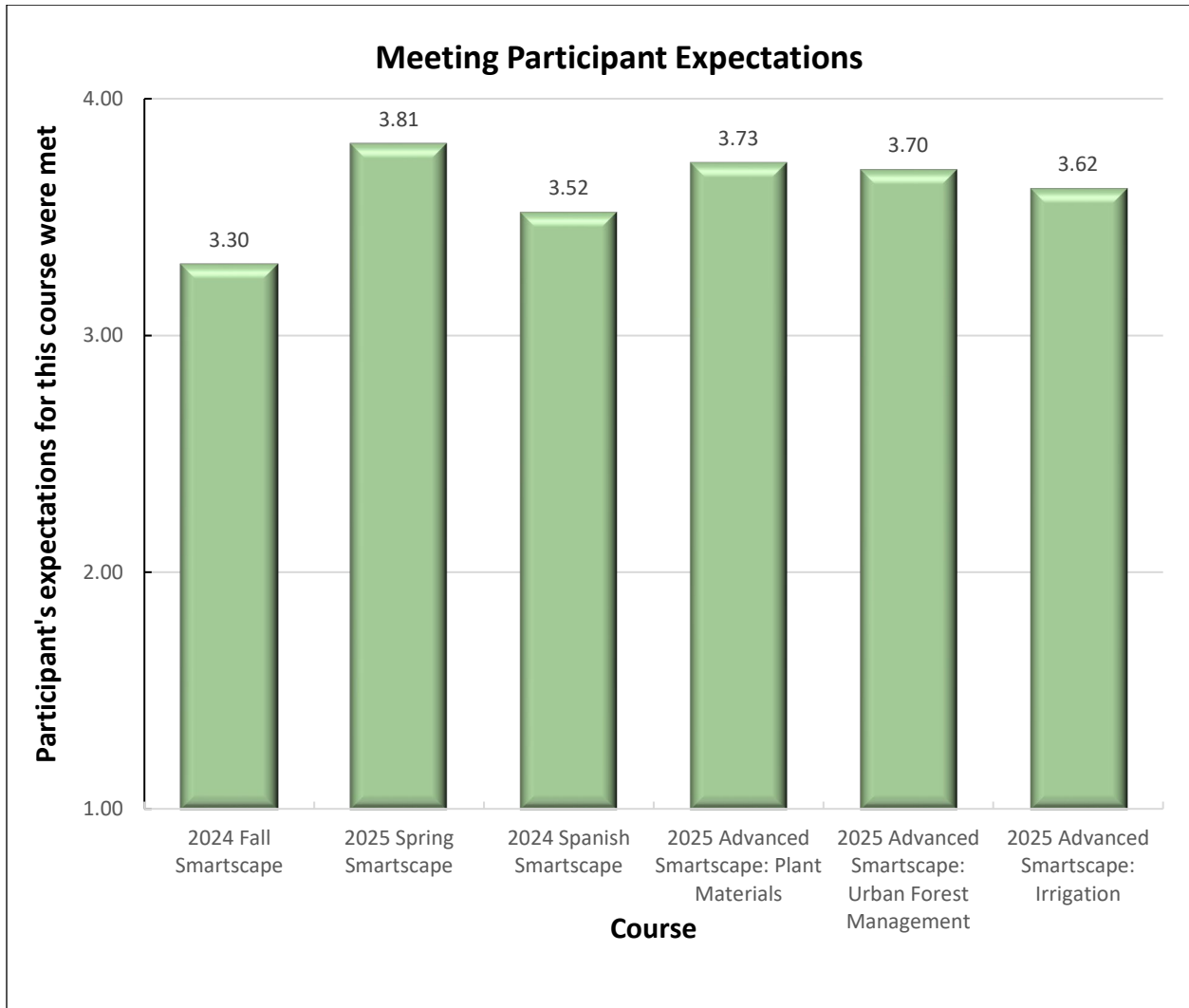


Service Type



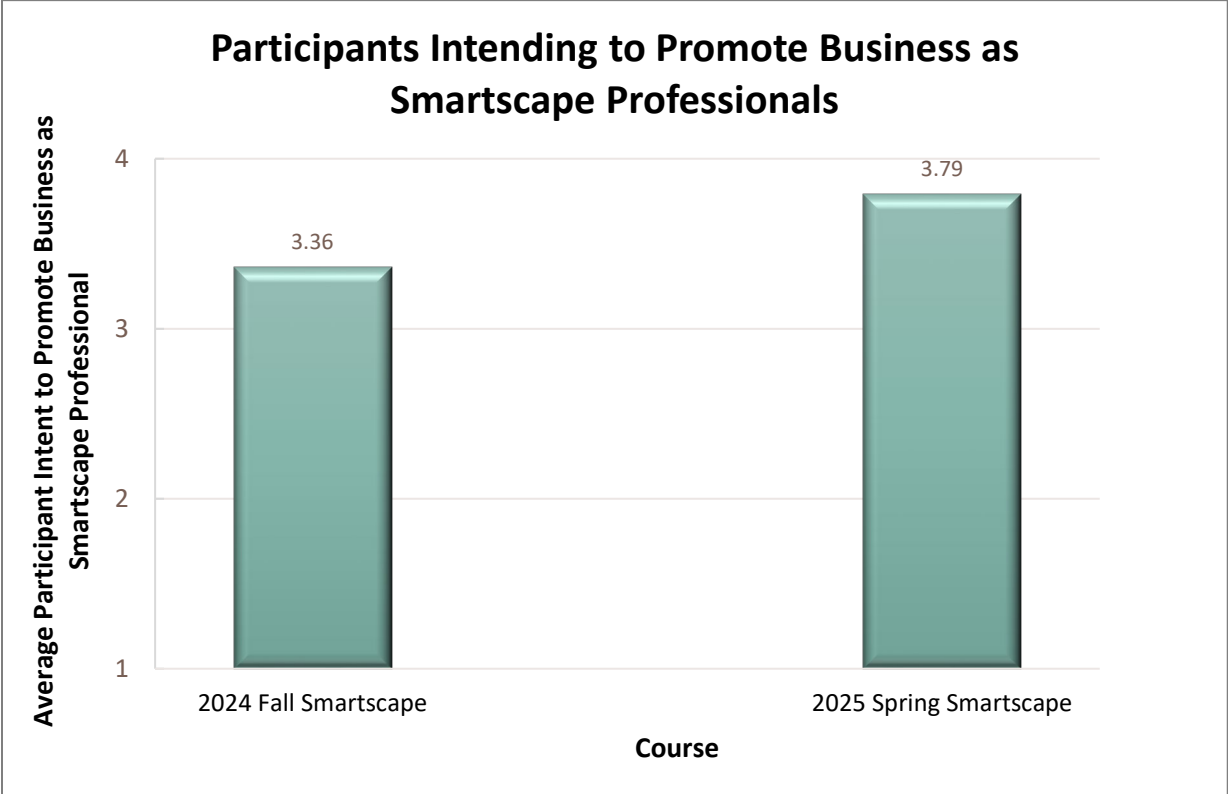
Overall Course Evaluation

A Likert scale of 1-4 (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree) was used.



Business Promotion: Participant intent to use Smartscape training to promote business.

A Likert scale of 1-4 (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree) was used.



5. Innovations and Achievements

a. Curriculum Development and Changes

- Continued development of curriculum and other improvements to the program with the new Smartscape coordinator for Maricopa County.
- Tools and equipment bought with last year's grant continue to provide valuable hands-on activities and learning stations for students in all the Smartscape classes.
- The switch to the new Trellis platform is in the works and will provide a better service for collecting payments.
- The start of a monthly email newsletter has begun and will be sent out on the first of every month. The information in the newsletter will contain updates about the program, new publications from the University of Arizona, helpful tips and tricks for sustainable landscapes and more.
- The notebooks are the main cost for the program, however having the notebook as a physical tool, which is primarily the PowerPoint slides in a printed form that allows students to take notes, is one of the most important hands-on additions to the class. The end of class survey was utilized in the decision to print the notebooks in color for a couple dollars extra per printed book. The decision was immediately met with positive feedback from the students
- Moving towards having the advanced classes translated into Spanish. The Smartscape program received an intern for an 8-week period and has been utilizing this valuable addition to the team to translate the PowerPoint presentations and other course material.
- We have included a reference library in the form of a mobile bookshelf to our class setup. This was donated by the late Kirti Mathura and includes many helpful guides, printed publications, and books available to the students for use during the classes.

b. Hiring

- Actively recruiting industry experts as replacement and backup instructors for Smartscape and Advanced Smartscape classes, with a focus on adding Spanish-speaking presenters to enhance accessibility and inclusion.
- Hired a new Program Coordinator to support program operations and growth, enhancing team capacity and service delivery for the fiscal year.

6. Outreach and Communication

a. Program Promotion

- Course flyers
- E-mailed flyers to Smartscape past program participants has been a good source of reaching new students and reconnecting our graduates to the program. Additionally, city employees within the AMWUA circle have been promoting the program to their contacts and fellow employees.
- Hard copies of the flyers were sent out to local businesses associated with the landscaping and agriculture industry.
- Social media outlets like Facebook have been utilized in making updated posts about upcoming classes and what they have to offer.

b. Additional Outreach

- The new coordinator has been introduced and involved with the green industry partners: Arizona Community Tree Council, Arizona Landscape Contractors Association, Arizona Nursery Association and the Western Chapter of International Society of Arborists.

c. Community Events and Involvement

- Tabling event at the 2025 SRP Water Conservation Expo.
- Attended the Arizona Agribusiness Round Table for education in policies and to meet more people in the industry. Also shared a table with the Urban Ag program to promote the classes.
- Tabling event at the Desert Horticulture Conference in Tuscon to promote Smartscape and further educational development.

7. Testimonials

- “Thanks again for the Smartscape program this spring. It made me feel a lot more confident in the information I’m giving my landscape customers.”
 - Smartscape Basic Spring 2025 graduate
- “I encourage our people to become Smartscape certified. It is a small investment for ongoing career long returns. The material is divided into logical sections easy for future access and reference.”
 - Smartscape Advanced Irrigation 2025 graduate