

11/4/2020 Education SWATeam Meeting

Agenda:

1. Discuss strategies to implement freshmen orientation courses and sustainability in 100-level courses
2. Questions from sustainable scholars recommendation

Members in attendance: Gillen Wood (Chair), Mallory Mahen (Clerk), Sean Kennedy (Faculty), Cheelan Bo-Linn (Faculty), Anna Mehl (Staff), Natalie Bosecker (Staff), Eric Green (Staff), Blaise Torrence (Student), Gretchen Forman (GFX), Creen Ahmad (ISG)

Members not in attendance: Anna Riedl (Student), Jayce Carlson (Student)

Meeting:

- Team discusses goal of enriching the first-year experience through sustainability education-> sustainability in freshman orientation courses and 100-level courses
- Gretchen Forman of the Grainger College of Engineering First Year Experience (GFX) office shares the success of the GFX program
 - GFX elective courses (ENG 177) are interdisciplinary and exploratory in nature
 - 10 concentrations, one of which is Sustainability
 - Students from any engineering major, pre-engineering, and engineering undeclared may take these courses
 - Allows for collaboration and perspectives of students from different knowledge bases
 - Differs from ENG 100, which are separated by major
 - EX: all CEE majors take ENG 100 with other CEE majors
 - Allows students to explore a passion or interest as soon as they come to campus, regardless if this is something that fits directly in their major or not
 - ENG 177: Sustainability- about 10 students learn about sustainability and contextual engineering and complete a project on campus
 - EX: Handbook on sustainability
 - These projects make students highly engaged and are highly rewarding for them
 - These students stay involved in sustainability on campus, even some going on to become SWATeam members
 - (Later conversations during this meeting echo how impactful hands-on projects with a tangible product on campus are to students)
- Student members and Creen Ahmad from ISG speak to their own first-year experience and how they came to be involved in sustainability on campus
 - Often students become “accidentally” involved in sustainability later in their college careers through course work that is of interest or RSOs

- Alternatively, a clear pathway for first-year students to follow can be developed
 - RSOs are a largely untapped resource
 - Students who may be interested in sustainability but not in a related major join applicable RSOs to develop their passion and become involved on campus
 - The community of students passionate about sustainability -regardless of major- is concentrated in RSOs
 - **A list of sustainability-related RSOS should be made available to students in all 100-level courses**
 - Students want to feel supported by staff/the campus community -> that their efforts are culminating to something bigger than themselves and that is making a real difference
 - Students who are involved in sustainability projects feel much more fulfilled and motivated
 - **Are adequate resources available for students to reach this level of fulfillment? Do existing resources need to be advertised more?**
- Team discusses best course of action for getting students involved in sustainability
 - There exists two target groups of students:
 - Those who come to campus with a pre-existing knowledge base and passion for sustainability
 - This is the population that ISEE programs typically serve, and that programs such as GFX ENG 177 are effective for
 - Those who are not clearly interested in sustainability and possibly will never be
 - EX: Music majors
 - Requirements such as a sustainability Gen-Ed or workshops reach this population, but are they effective?
 - Some faculty and staff team members speak to their experience hosting mandatory lectures for such students, and have found them to be largely ineffective
 - There are two main goals to be accomplished by getting all groups of students involved in sustainability:
 - Students become generally educated and develop eco-conscious habits to implement in their daily life in college and beyond
 - Students become prepared to be innovative leaders in sustainability careers
- Specific discussion on a sustainability unit in 100-level courses
 - Each college has a required 100-level course (LAS 100, ENG 100, ect)
 - Team would like to ideally implement a unit (one week or one class period) into every 100-level course to increase awareness of sustainability on campus and showcase the interdisciplinary nature of sustainability

- This unit will be most effective if developed to be catered to each college, not a one-size-fits all crash course
 - “What would you say if you only had 15 minutes in a class to talk about sustainability?”-> it is not an easy topic to condense, and certainly proposes a challenge
- A recommendation on this was submitted in the Spring of 2020
 - The team would like to further expand on this idea and continue to make progress on it
- There was not enough time in the allotted hour to discuss Recommendation Edu005 (sustainable scholars program, submitted Spring 2020)
 - Team members can individually look at the questions the IWG had about this recommendation and discuss answering them either remotely or in a future meeting

Action items:

1. Continue to fill out “Recommendations Wish List” form
2. Try to answer questions about Edu005 for the IWG