FIRST STEPS TO SUSTAINABLE LEARNING

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The Big Question: How do we integrate Sustainable Learning into the General Curriculum?
Taking a Cue from a Sustainable Project:

**THE FOOTHILL ORGANIC GARDEN PROJECT**

- Housing materials from Campus
- Composting to divert waste
- Demonstrating an ecosystem on campus
- Bringing groups together in collaboration

Join us as we finish building and get ready to plant!

If your club or group would like to participate in a volunteer work day email us at: enviroclub@gmail.com
The Organic Garden

- Diverse Volunteers
- The Garden as a Community
- The Campus as a Classroom
With this example in mind, we posed another question:

How do we fully integrate the ‘Garden’ into campus life?
...and incorporate this new element into our existing culture?

- Collaboration/partnership between the sustainability office & educators on campus is vital
- Tying in to our core values, basic skills effort, and our global consciousness rubric is a key to success
- The sustainability officer can facilitate co-curricular activity planning and provide logistical support for faculty
- It is important to provide a pathway for faculty to develop curricula and build supportive relationships across divisions
At Our Spring Planning Workshops, We...

- Created a logo/brand for the project to help build identity and community
- Selected a theme for the Fall Quarter
- Chose a confluent model of learning community
- Introduced material around topics
- Provided resources and a social networking tool
- Sent faculty forth to develop curriculum during the summer
The Theme for Fall

- Selected an overarching theme of FOOD
- Used the garden as a focal point / active learning
- Developed topics under that larger umbrella:
  - Organics
  - Food Production
  - Eating Locally
  - Slow Food Movement
  - World Hunger
The Confluent Learning Community

- Allowed us to bypass scheduling issues
- Accommodated levels of involvement
- Encouraged “out of the box” collaborations
- Provided an easy introduction to learning community planning
A World of Possibilities

- Shared Speakers
- Expert Lectures (An Economist’s View of...)
- Confluent Model (2-3 meetings of classes)
- Common Reading and a Panel of Us
- Common Done-In-A Day Project
- Good Conversation meetings — Just us
Introduction of Materials

- Michael Pollan’s *Food Rules*
- The Botany of Desire
- TED talks
Michael Pollan’s
Food Rules

Rule #19
If it came from a plant, eat it; if it was made in a plant, don’t.

*Check your handout!
The Botany of Desire

Have you ever wondered what we have in common with bees? Look no further than the tulip, whose beauty has bewitched us for thousands of years.

more >

The Botany of Desire Website
How to Start a Movement…

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V74AxCqOTvg
Providing Resources:

- DVDs
- Books
- Resource Binder
- Website
- Social Network
Providing Resources: DVDs

- Botany of Desire
- Supersize Me
- Food, Inc.
- The Future of Food
Providing Resources: Books

- Books for Review
  - Omnivore’s Dilemma
  - Fast Food Nation
- In Defense of Food
  - Stuffed & Starved
The Resource Binder

Food First
Institute for Food & Development Policy

Organic Center

Environmental Working Group
Resources/Links on the Sustainability Website:

[Sustainability Website Screenshot]

Sustainable Learning Community Resource Page

Workshops Schedule for Spring 2010:
- May 21 (Informational); June 4 (Development); June 21 (Implementation)

Fall 2010 Learning Community:
Cultivating Community

Focus Areas/Themes:
- Organic Gardening, Food Production, World Hunger, Slow Food Movement

**LIST OF RESOURCES:**

- *Books:
  - Food Rules
  - Stuffed & Starved
  - Food Revolutions: Crisis & the Hunger for Justice
  - Omnivore's Dilemma
  - Enough: Why the World's Poorest Starve in Age of Plenty
  - Full Moon Feast
  - World Hunger, 12 Myths
  - The One Straw Revolution

- *Movies/Documentaries:
  - The Botany of Desire
  - Food Inc.
  - Supersize Me

- *Websites:
  - The Botany of Desire/FSIS site (lots of interactive info)
  - FoodFirst Organization (local "food think tank")
  - Slow Food USA (all about the slow food movement)
The Foothill Sustainable Learning Community Network
Successes & Hurdles

- **SUCCESS**: Several faculty across divisions incorporated the theme into their curriculum

- **SUCCESS**: First Large Group Activity—Lecture by Raj Patel, author of *Stuffed and Starved*
  - Great attendance/ good feedback from faculty & students

- **HURDLE**: Participation & Commitment
  - Need more work on building the community
  - Timing for group meetings is difficult
  - Get participants on board with social networking
Time to Brainstorm!!

It’s your turn to create a new Sustainable Learning Community on:

WATER!
Brainstorming...

- Consider your college
- What assets or experiences could you use to develop a learning community?
- Who might your first followers be?
- What aspects of your college culture might you leverage to create community?
- What hurdles might you need to jump?
- What might be your first event?
What are Our Next Steps???
The Slow Food Feast

- Planning is going on now for our last large group event… the Slow Food Feast
- The Slow Food Movement started in Italy, as a protest against Fast Food…
- To be held during ‘dead’ week (just before finals)
- A feast that provides healthy/organic foods for students
- Cooking demonstrations, panel discussion, other possible activities
Future Sustainable Learning Communities

• Four major theme areas:
  FOOD • WATER • ENERGY • WASTE

• If each is covered 1x either Fall or Spring, the four themes could be completed during the 2-year cycle.

• Fresh material that is relevant to students can enhance/revitalize the GE curriculum!!
THANKS!