V. Teaching

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh is, first and foremost, a teaching institution. In our formal education, we can do much more to ensure that students attending UW Oshkosh have taken classes that provide them with a refined understanding of sustainability, and a concrete set of skills with which to tackle these complex issues.

In the classroom, sustainability has a broad meaning that touches a wide array of disciplines and methodological approaches. It is a big-tent concept that embraces the ideas of financial security, social justice, and environmental responsibility. The Presidents Council on Sustainable Development has stated that "Education for sustainability is a lifelong learning process that leads to an informed and involved citizenry having the creative problem-solving skills, scientific and social literacy, and commitment to engage in responsible individual and cooperative actions. These actions will help ensure an environmentally sound and economically prosperous future." Education for sustainability, then, provides students with a sense of environmental and social citizenship and with the knowledge and skills needed to work effectively for sustainability. Achieving this goal requires that students encounter the key concepts of sustainability multiple times throughout their college careers, and in a variety of venues. Courses that focus on sustainability should not be limited to a few programs or to a single college; rather, they can and should be taught across all Colleges and Departments.

However, learning does not stop when students leave the classroom. It also takes place in residence halls, guest lectures, campus events, and research experiences. Therefore, this section of the report suggests a variety of ways that UW Oshkosh can improve the way that it teaches sustainability both inside the classroom and outside of it.

Long Term Vision: Link the university's formal teaching mission and informal teaching opportunities to develop understanding, attitudes and habits that promote sustainability.

A. Curriculum.

1. Introduction: The central act of a university is to offer courses that allow students to expand their knowledge, sharpen their intellectual skills, enrich their lives, and become more effective citizens. A curriculum that engages students in the issues of sustainability can achieve all these goals, and is particularly relevant to developing local and global citizenship in a troubled world.

2. Goal: Sustainability should be a recognized, emphasized, and common theme across colleges, departments and general education initiatives. Students should have extensive and diverse opportunities to study sustainability in their coursework.

3. History: Some departments have for decades been teaching courses that involve issues of sustainability, while other departments have started courses related to sustainability in recent years. Just a few examples include Anthropology 348: Economy, Nature and Culture; Biology 104: Ecosphere in Crisis; Chemistry 103: Environmental Chemistry; Economics 360: Environmental Economics and Policy; English 343: Nature Writing; Geography 314: