

Workshops to help implement sustainability

by Jennifer Monroe - Wednesday, January 12, 2011

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/8278/workshops-to-help-businesses-implement-sustainability/>

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh announces a new workshop series, Sustainable Systems at Work, to help businesses, nonprofit organizations and local governments develop and implement organizational sustainability initiatives from social, ecological and economic perspectives.

Dates for the workshop are Tuesdays, 6-8 p.m. Jan. 25 to Feb. 22 or Thursdays, 7-9 a.m. Jan. 27 to Feb. 24. The Tuesday series fee is \$129. The Thursday series fee is \$159, which includes a light breakfast. Both series include an instructional guide.

This five-part program will help participants consider the case for sustainability from a social, ecological and economic perspective.

Michael Lizotte, sustainability director at UW Oshkosh, will facilitate the workshop series. He said the program is aimed at small- to medium-sized companies that are considering or are already implementing sustainable practices.

“We know companies are thinking about incorporating sustainability into their policies, and most big corporations are already doing it. We want to help local businesses see that the trends in this area can really help them too,” Lizotte said. “At the very least, this program will help businesses decide if now is the time for action or if now is the time for planning for future change.”

Participants will examine the concept of sustainability from an organizational perspective, evaluate principles for guiding a vision, and develop an action plan to advance organizational change.

“Sustainability can start with changing light bulbs, but it doesn’t have to end there,” Lizotte said. “There are natural steps companies and groups can take to make their practices more sustainable.”

Lessons in the workshop series will include reducing energy use, successful implementation case studies, and employee leadership in promoting sustainability. Lizotte will also cover tools and resources needed for the transition to sustainability.

The course materials consist of small articles and evaluations that allow participants to assess their own sustainability efforts and opportunities. Each workshop includes a discussion that revolves around the week’s reading.

Lizotte hopes to share the successes and obstacles he’s experienced at the University to help local businesses switch to a culture of sustainability.

“This workshop is not about telling people how to do it right,” Lizotte said. “It’s about sharing lessons learned and identifying ways each participant can implement successful sustainability strategies.”

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For more information on Sustainable Systems at Work or to register, visit www.uwosh.edu/go/ssw or call the Office of Continuing Education at (920) 424-1129 or toll-free (800) 633-1442.