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Transforming Students Through Two Literacies: The Integration of Sustainability Literacy into Information Literacy Classes

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Transforming Students Through Two Literacies: the integration of sustainability literacy into information literacy classes

Toni M. Carter
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Georgia International Conference on Information Literacy August 2013
Why Sustainability?

• American College & University Presidents’ Climate Commitment (ACUPCC)
  ➢ Institutional “climate neutrality”
  ➢ Sustainability in the curriculum

• Sustainability literacy
  ➢ A socio–environmental concept
  ➢ Thinking, problem solving, decision making, and actions
Auburn University: Sustainability at the Institution

- Historic: crop rotation, soil tillage, energy efficiency
- 2004: Sustainability initiative
- 2008:
  - Office of Sustainability organized
  - Sustainability Studies minor created
- 2010: AU Libraries and academic sustainability
  - Librarian liaison
  - Materials budget
Megan R. Stark (2011) “...little has been written on the connections between library instruction and sustainability.”

- Higher education engagement
- Embedding the green message
- Various names for sustainability literacy
- Interdisciplinary courses
- Librarians sometimes left out of curriculum
English composition

• Students have choice of themed class
• Two to three library sessions
• Similar outcomes (based on ACRL) covered in most classes
• Active learning
English composition

Topic development
- Introduction to sustainability vocabulary

Keywords/synonyms
- More exposure to sustainability vocabulary

Databases
- How and where to find scholarly sources on sustainability

Evaluating sources
- How to evaluate sustainability sources on the Web
- Sustainability is a legit academic pursuit
Sustainability Studies

- Sustainability Studies minor
  - SUST2000 – Introduction to Sustainability
  - 9 hours of electives
  - SUST5000 – Senior capstone

- Library instruction for SUST courses
  - Interdisciplinary
  - Fundamental skill development
    and exposure to subject databases
    as needed.
Introduction to Sustainability - 2 session program

• Session One
  ➢ Objective: reinforce information literacy outcomes
  ➢ Topic development, keywording, source evaluation

• Session Two
  ➢ Introduction to sustainability–specific resources
  ➢ Subject–specific databases: social sciences, engineering, business.
Sustainability departmental electives

- 9 hour requirement

- 41 courses; 19 academic units

- Courses not restricted to students in the sustainability minor

- Library instruction infrequent

Environment:

- **FORY 4970 / 7970**: Urban Ecology (3)
- **ARCH 4900**: Readings in Landscape Architecture (3) PR permission of instructor
- **CPLN 5500 and 5600**: Environmental Planning (3) PR junior or senior standing
- **HIST 3550**: American Environmental History (3)
- **HIST 3620**: Landscape and Culture (3)
- **RSOC 5650**: Sociology of Natural Resources and the Environment (3) PR junior or senior standing
- **GEOG 2020**: Physical Geography (3)
- **GEOG 5010**: Urban Geography (3)
- **GEOG 5210**: Climatology (3)
- **AGRN 5000**: Soils and Environment Quality (3) PR AGRN 2040
- **AGRN 5400**: Bioenergy and the Environment (3) PR junior standing
- **BIOL 3060**: Ecology, PR 8 hrs Biology (3)
- **BIOL 5090**: Conservation Biology (3) PR Ecology
- **BSEN 3230**: Natural Resource Conservation Engineering (3) PR CIVL 3110
Urban Geography (GEOG5010)
Library instruction and collaboration

Research project – sustainability proposal for Auburn, AL

- Library Instruction
  - 50 Minutes
  - Light on fundamentals
  - Focus on useful resources

- Librarian Participation
  - Project scope
  - Presentation reviewer
The future

- Library engagement with academic sustainability
  - Continued outreach effort to Sustainability Office
  - Departmental elective courses

- Assessment
  - Seek out collaborative relationships
  - Assessment within library instruction classes
Chapter in *Focus on Educating for Sustainability: Toolkit for Academic Libraries* (Maria A. Jankowska, editor) 2013

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