

Sustainability Residential Community Cluster

Section 1: Overview

The Sustainability Residential Community Cluster will consist of a group of students who are passionate about protecting and preserving the environment. The cluster will be dedicated to living and promoting a sustainable lifestyle that includes recycling, composting, and participation in environmental activities. Members of the RCC will have a unique opportunity to live, work, and share environmental ideas together. We will be active members of American University's green movement by promoting AU's sustainability club, Eco-Sense and planning environmental-themed events such as movie nights, speakers, and service activities. In addition, we plan to promote sustainable eating habits by supporting local farmers markets and having monthly community dinners with locally grown food. We will also volunteer at AU's community garden. Overall, the Sustainability Residential Community Cluster will provide an enriching experience for students interested in living a sustainable lifestyle and enhance AU's reputation as a leader on issues of sustainability.

Section 2: The Educational Purpose

Learning Objectives:

1. Increase participants' awareness of sustainable living

Curriculum:

- Participants will actively recycle and promote recycling to other members of the floor.
- Participants will post environmental education materials on the floor such as posters in the bathroom regarding water use, recycling information, and composting tutorials.
- Participants will work to conserve energy and reduce electricity consumption. Residents will work with Eco-Sense to promote energy conservation campus wide.
- Participants will take public transportation as much as possible. In addition, residents will have a fall and spring outing in which they rely on "people powered" transportation such as cycling or walking for a day.
- The Sustainability RCC will cook a dinner once a month made entirely from seasonal ingredients bought from local farmers markets in order to support local farmers as well as to promote a lower carbon footprint diet.

Assessment:

- The Sustainability RCC will conduct an online survey (in order to save paper) at the end of each semester where community members will evaluate the success of the sustainability efforts of the floor.
- The Sustainability RCC will record the recipes of the meals made each month and keep a running list of produce that is in season for each of the four seasons to track the community's efforts to reduce its carbon footprint.

2. Promote and participate in campus environmental activities

Curriculum:

- Participants will be active members of AU's sustainability organization, Eco-Sense.
- Residents will organize an event to raise awareness and funds for the AU Clean Energy Revolving Fund in conjunction with Eco-Sense.
- Participants will help mentor members of the 2010-2011 Sustainable Earth University College by introducing them to AU's environmental community. We will also invite them to one of our monthly "eat local" dinners.
- Residents will volunteer at AU's community garden and participate in on campus service activities such as campus beautification day.

Assessment:

- At the end of each semester, the Sustainability RCC will survey members of Eco-Sense who are not members of the community on their views of the impact the support of the RCC has had on the organization's progress

3. Increase awareness of external, like minded organizations in the D.C. area to give participants insight into local and global environmental actions.

Curriculum:

- The Sustainability RCC will participate in at least one off-campus environmental community service activity per month. Opportunities could include planting trees with *Casey Trees*, canvassing with *Weatherize DC*, and cleaning up beaches with the *Potomac Watershed Society*.
- Participants will make an effort to attend at least one off campus rally, speaker, or hearing on Capitol Hill in support of environmental causes.

Assessment:

- The Sustainability RCC will document the different events its residents participate in each month, and will review participation rates at the end of each semester.
- As it is difficult to predict each resident's academic schedules as well as the state of environmental affairs and availability for residents to attend such speeches, attendance to an off-campus rally, speaker or hearing will be optional.

Section 3: Committed Group of Participants

List of Committed Participants

See attached

Section 4: The Resident Coordinator

The Sustainability RCC has selected XXXX as the community's coordinator and XXXX as the co-coordinator. Both students are involved in Eco-Sense and have had extensive experience volunteering with environmental groups off campus, leading them to become very active in the development of this

RCC. Additionally, XXXX is the Community Service Director of Eco-Sense and an active member of the Environmental Sustainability issue group of SPA leadership, giving him more sufficient leadership ability. While these two students have been selected to carry out the formal responsibilities and planning of the RCC, all members of this community cluster will actively work together to make the program a success.

Section 5: The Faculty/Staff Advisor

The Sustainability Residential Community Cluster has asked Dr. Kiho Kim to be the faculty advisor for the RCC. Dr. Kim is the Department chair of Environmental Science, and was the professor for the Sustainable Earth University College class this past year. Therefore, members of the community cluster have had experience working with Dr. Kim. Additionally, students of next year's UC as well as other environmental courses will have Dr. Kim as their professor, and Dr. Kim can help in the spreading of awareness of the community cluster. We have participated in outside environmental activities with Dr. Kim's help, and therefore believe that he can provide valuable suggestions and contributions to our community. We are excited to have the opportunity to work with Dr. Kim once again, and look forward to continuing to learn from what he has to offer.

Section 6: Resources Needed

The Sustainability Residential Community Cluster would like to request the third floor of McDowell for the location of our community. In order for our RCC to be successful, we would need convenient access to a kitchen for our monthly dinners as well as locality to the American University Community garden located behind Katzen, where we would also most likely dispose of our compost. As McDowell Hall is the closest residence hall to the garden, this would be our preferred location. We would also like to request a small budget to help in the funding of our trips to local farmers markets for the ingredients needed for our dinners as well as for the purchasing of materials needed for our composting project.