

Colleges and universities as agents of outreach and education to Minnesota communities

What are colleges doing currently with outreach and education?

Fond du Lac Community College

- Holistic view
- Gardens on campus
 - o Natives
 - o Local
 - o Pollinators
 - o Food
- Partnering with Bee Association
- Looking at how to heat greenhouse w/compost
- Food to feed students and traditional medicines
- Apiary
- Greenhouse + compost

Sustainable Ed Dept. U of MN

- Film series
- Community discussions
- Fellowship around issues

Center for Changing Landscape – U of MN

- Climate Connections
- Brown bag w/speaker and action-oriented networking
- Regular stakeholder connections and actionable ideas and items for specific topics

Minneapolis Community and Technical College

- Reduced footprint
- All students live in local communities so focus on taking actions back to the communities
- App production / logo production
- Small trash – through recycling education

Morris

- Morris Model – community resilience plan

Macalester

- Model behavior for others
- Sustainable living master plan is available on web site
- Can direct others to the link to help them to make choices like plants to use w/landscape
- Criteria for decisions

Important question – how do we help others transition from what they are doing now to what they need to do in the future?

Institute on the Environment

- GreenStep schools project like GreenStep communities project including climate changes

Model programs needed

MPCA

- Opportunities – receiving end of students through internships, jobs, capstones
- Clear and realistic in the available time for students working on the outreach project and being clear about target audiences

Opportunities – service learning like AmeriCorps/Conservation Corps

Office of Sustainability at Hamline

- Inreach of how the community teaches us
- How can we learn from local communities?
- How do we invite in local “experts” and take advantage of what is happening outside our borders?
- i.e., community gardens in Frogtown neighborhoods – connecting with the elders- and connecting across different campuses

What is not working?

- What do we do with the “live” ones?
- How do we capture these students?
- How do we not reinvent the wheel and work with others?
- How do we connect willing students with available projects?
- How do we keep track of past projects and the institutional memory?
 - o Living lab site to communicate this

What are the barriers from the point of view of students?

- Time
- Opportunities for community based research and outreach
 - o Not as “prized” in the university
- Lack of diversity in the work
 - o Students of color need to be included, unique barriers, lack of opportunities

Barriers/Challenges

- How do we have the conversations on how the weather has changed?
- We are very outcome focused instead of some more focus on relationship building

Conservation Corps

- Students are very busy
- Stigma around sustainability culturally
- Too urban centric for the rural audience
- Need to get students beyond the classroom – i.e., service learning

Let the community define the issues/let the locals start the conversation so you get the context in order to then introduce these climate adaptation projects/ideas. It takes more time.

Most significant thing learned?

- More diversity needed

- Need to make this job-based or classroom-based to increase diversity and overcome time issues and to make them team based
- Need multiple community identities represented instead of just MN
 - o Immigrants
 - o Challenges in communication across this diversity
- Projects are not just on the ground can be relationship based

Notes from flip charts

- Diverse designs for gardens – model partnerships for pollinators – Bee Assn
- Example greenhouse integrated/compost
- Cooking classes – nutrition
- Traditional methods
- Overwintering bees. Bee sheds
- Sustainability film
- Broaden the community
- Climate connection monthly series
- Try to deliver local info
- Info sharing for action
- Behavior change on campus that extends to community
- Student projects
- Morris Community Resilience
- Sustainability Master Plan web accessible
- Helping with plant choices
- Criteria for landscapes with explanation
- Developing GreenStep Schools programs
- Work with agencies, cities, schools so students can play roles
- Preparing faculty for outreach + projects
- In reach – how academia learns from community
- Reciprocal learning
- Students involved w/community gardens
- Students forming cross-college networks
- How do we avoid reinventing the wheel?
- Time as a barrier for students
- Changes how academia values the experience in the community
- Attend to the process of building relationships – conversations w/difference
- Challenge to creating a culture of sustainability
- Opportunity for service learning integrated in class
- More diversity in the conversation
- Make opportunities job-based or class-based
- Team-based projects
 - o Diverse skills, disciplines
- Diverse identities – identification with geographically different communities
- Project can be the relationship that's built