

Notes: Integrating Climate Adaptation into Formal Class Curricula

Human and Biology Classes - In human and biology classes there are opportunities to incorporate climate change topics and ways to live more sustainably. One example is with diseases (Zika etc.). There has been some pushback that has focused on political blogs. Making it personal and taking a perspective of human health decreases conflict on the topic.

Broadening Awareness about other cultures - There are opportunities with research such as investigating glacial melting in the Andes to broaden awareness with students. Livelihoods that are resilient for families in the region of the Andes are good learning opportunities for students. Students are asked to investigate options that families have to make lifestyle changes weighing benefits and limitations of different options. There are more opportunities even in Minnesota with investigating how climate change is influencing lifestyles.

Ecological Justice - There are opportunities to focus on Ecofeminism/ecological injustices by reading memoirs, essays and watching documentaries to help students see perspectives from different parts of the world.

Multidiscipline collaboration - can be important to weave climate change into all health sciences. Health Students for a Healthy Climate is an example where programs such as nursing, dentistry, and other fields. This could be brought to other colleges to show how much students care about the topic. Health is an important listening point as people are concerned about the health of their families and communities. Water access, disease vectors are topics that relate to climate changes. It is about care for one another so it crosses political opinions and open discussion.

Learning Sustainable Practices - Large numbers of students are interested in sustainability and sustainability courses and learning day to day decisions that can be made and the information helps empower them. This type of course could be included as part of a required course for all students.

Generational Interviews - A three generation interview has been useful to cover climate change, grandparents, parents and peers to compare climate issues and then having the students project that topic into the future and how that relates to governing differently in the future. It opens up discussions between family members on the topic.

Community Partnerships - Sustainable Communities Partnership with cities and developing courses on the topic are helpful as cities are very interested in focusing on this topic. This helps cities as the cities may not have time to focus on the topic and the students work can help progress their work on the topic.

Experiential Learning - is important for students such as taking students abroad (Denmark, Germany) students go from being somewhat ignorant to being informed by engaging with people that are not Americans and thinking in different ways. In some areas they are expecting sea level change to have a big impact so they are building in different ways and investing significantly due to climate change

Guest Speakers - Having a city stormwater manager coming into classes to discuss added costs of infrastructure has been helpful to help students understand the impact of flooding in Duluth and the increased costs that are needed to redo stormwater drainage systems.

Local Examples - Showing Minnesota examples is beneficial to help increase interest with students.

Understanding Basic Data - The younger generation often do not have a grasp of the data on climate change and can benefit from understanding key studies but then linking it to proactive Minnesota legislation to plan for resilience such as the Minnesota Prairie Plan and the work of Ducks Unlimited.

Availability of Data - The availability of key resources/impacts is important and sometime hard to find. Having students use carbon calculators can be a useful exercise. CIRC resources have been useful information. Welcome to the Anthropocene website has a timeline that is useful information and things that people are doing to adapt. A forum post on resources would be useful.

Focusing on Positive Examples - It can be a depressing exercise to study what we have done wrong, Adventures in the Anthropocene, highlights individual in the developing world and what they are doing provides inspiring examples for students and ideas that could be replicated.

Field Trips With Kids - People on the Planet day camp along the green line with kids has been effective – stopping to visit businesses that are using green practices has been useful, also going to the Twins stadium to see sustainable practices – it was a great experience for the students.