Cultivating Sustainability Leaders [Project Proposal]

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*Plymouth State University*

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PSU Integrated Cluster (IC) Project Funding Process & Proposal Form

**Project Proposal Submittal Process:** All IC projects requesting funding will require the completion and submittal of three (3) forms:

- **Project Proposal Form – project scope & outcomes** *(included in this document)*
- **Project Guidelines Form – reflective document outlining desirable IC project attributes*
- **Project Budget Form – Excel spreadsheet to facilitate budget planning*

**Instructions for Submitting Project Proposals:**

- Download the 3 forms to your computer
- Complete the forms and save them; including the title of your project in the file name
- Forward the 3 files via email to the IC Project Manager, Ross Humer *rhumer@plymouth.edu*
- Project Proposal will be logged & forwarded to the appropriate IC Guide Team

If not reviewed in advance of the submission, it is important to discuss the Project with the IC Guides to review, refine, and rework (if necessary) to obtain funding approval.

**Project Funding Review Process:** All proposed projects will be reviewed by the Cluster Guide team. Depending on the level of funding amounts being requested, the proposal request will follow the process outlined as follows:

- **Level 1:** Any project with a proposed budget of less than or equal to $1,000 can be approved by the Cluster without additional review
- **Level 2:** Any project with a proposed budget of $1,000 but less than $5,000 can be approved by the IC Project Review Team, which is made up of representatives from each of the 7 Clusters *(see release time exception directly below)*
- **Level 3:** Any project with a proposed budget of $5,000 or greater or requires faculty release time, must be first endorsed by the IC Project Review Team and submitted to the Academic Deans for review and approval

The project funding approvals are limited to one academic year; projects which require additional funding in subsequent years will need to be resubmitted annually for review and approval.

**Deliverables:** At the conclusion of the academic year, a deliverable to the Integrated Cluster Proposal Review Team and Academic Deans is required in order for the project director/coordinaor, artist, or author and collaborator(s) to be eligible for future funding. This reporting requirement may be met by numerous means which will be identified as this process matures. It is anticipated that awardees will present their works before a wide public gathering to be scheduled during the upcoming Academic Year.
Instructions for the PSU Integrated Cluster Project Proposal Form: Please complete all of the elements of the following form in the spaces provided before saving and then submitting the document.

PSU Integrated Cluster Project Proposal Form

Title: Cultivating Sustainable Leaders

Project Leadership: (Identify Project Director/Manager or Co-Manager/s: Mary Ann McGarry and Abby Goode

Project Description:

20 first year PSU students from different majors enrolled in two courses- English Composition and Issues in Sustainability- will participate in a daylong fieldtrip to Green Mountain College, VT – a leader in sustainability initiatives, for the purposes of learning about feasible projects to implement at PSU. Participants will design, write, and present about proposed projects for PSU from ideas generated from the visit to Green Mountain College.

Why visit Green Mountain College (GMC)?

The College has a well-deserved reputation as a leader in sustainability with an exemplary, evolving legacy of achievement in sustainability studies and practices as the following accolades indicate and is close enough to visit:

- The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) ranks the College’s curriculum #1 in the nation for sustainability.
- AASHE also ranks GMC as the #1 college in the nation for sustainability.
- Benchmarked against all 568 institutions participating in the 2013 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), GMC was well above the mean for the top 10% of schools in reflective and integrated learning, student-faculty interaction and high-impact educational practices.
- GMC received a perfect “green rating” in the last four editions of Princeton Review’s Green Honor Roll. The guide ranked the top “green” schools in the country in 2015 for the first time, and GMC was rated second in the nation. In the 2017 listings, GMC was ranked third.
- In 2015 Forbes named GMC one of the top “50 College Gems With Bargain Tuitions and SAT Optional Policies.”
- In 2011, GMC became a climate neutral campus through a strategic combination of efficiency, clean energy and local carbon offsets.

http://www.greenmtn.edu/about/why-gmc/>

Project Goals and Outcomes:
1. **Project Goals** – Briefly identify and describe the objectives of this project

   The project goals are to inspire first year students to develop and pursue feasible, sustainable initiatives at PSU.

2. **Student Learning Outcomes** – Outline the expected student learning outcomes.

   After participating in this project, students will be able to:
   - Identify feasible sustainable initiatives that have been implemented at another higher education campus;
   - Develop, present, and receive feedback on a promising proposal for a sustainable initiative appropriate for PSU;
   - Appreciate the importance of communicating inspiring sustainable initiatives to peers.
   - Articulate how sustainable initiatives must take into consideration the context and culture of unique settings/sites.

**Project Synopsis (objectives & outcomes):** 30 word maximum; capture the project objectives and most significant outcomes for the project. This synopsis should be written for potential use in our internal communications and external Marketing/PR activities.

First year students enrolled in English Composition and Issues in Sustainability will participate in a fieldtrip to Green Mountain College, VT to be inspired to design projects for PSU.

**Project Documents/Pictures/Videos On-line Archive:** post the link to on-line project resources captured in this project, especially, pictures, videos, “Quotable Quotes” and other project documents.

Please see Abby Goode’s description below and course website for pedagogical materials and samples of student work from the pilot sustainability-themed composition course of Fall 2016. The course website includes a range of rubrics, course material, and student work. The blog shows students working through the process of drafting and researching their sustainability initiatives. At the end of this course, students wrote sustainability initiative proposals and created presentation powerpoints such as [this one on “Trash to Table.”](#)

**Description of Sustainability Composition Fall 2016:** “The sustainability-themed composition course (Fall 2016) provided multiple opportunities for myself and my students to respond to a “wicked problem” and connect to the wider campus community. As the syllabus, and my forthcoming book chapter on previous iterations of this course show, I originally designed this course to expose students to the range of unfinished debates about the limitations of the concept of sustainability. At PSU, I also looked for opportunities to expose students to a range of disciplinary perspectives on the problem. For instance, I arranged a sustainability-across-the-disciplines panel in which faculty from Art (Kimberly
Richie), Biology (Len Reitsma), Sociology (Brian Eisenhauer), Tourism and Geography (Adam Keul) and Environmental Science and Planning (Amy Villamagna) described their approach to sustainability in their research and teaching.

The course culminated in a multi-faceted group project in which students collaboratively designed, presented, and wrote individual proposals for their own sustainability initiatives to be implemented at PSU. Students presented their proposals for a campus clean-up day, wellness program, cigarette disposal initiative, and composting program to a multidisciplinary audience of faculty and staff: Mary Ann McGarry, Brian Eisenhauer, Steve Whitman, Sandy Marrotte, Corinna Grogan, Noelle Ferris, Jeremiah Duncan, Donald Perrin, and Rebecca Busanich. While I was able to provide feedback on the rhetorical and theoretical underpinnings of the presentation, this audience, all of whom had direct experience with various aspects of the students’ projects, provided authentic, in-context feedback and made the projects real for the students. Many of them left these presentations energized and inspired to continue their work beyond the classroom.

On the day of their actual presentations, after videotaped dress rehearsals, presentation workshops, and drafting and researching of their proposals, the students seemed proud of their work. By including diverse voices and perspectives in the feedback process, I connected with various resources and made connections with the PSU community, while the students learned about the relevance of their reading and writing within their broader campus culture. While students were hard-scheduled into this composition section, they emerged from it passionate about issues in sustainability. They did so because they discovered sustainability’s extraordinary breadth and interdisciplinary flexibility as a result. This coming Fall of 2017, students who elected to take this course, linked with Mary Ann McGarry’s “Issues in Sustainability” section, as a cohered first-year sustainability experience, will harness the developing and existing strengths of PSU’s multi- and interdisciplinary environmental programs.”

Rationale and Impact:

Considering the questions below, please write your project rationale and impact statement.

Include how this project will further the Mission and Vision of PSU with respect to 1) fostering collaboration across disciplines; 2) addressing a relevant societal issue, and 3) establishing relationships with community partners, external institutions, companies, non-profits, schools, government agencies, etc. and 4). Making an impact

How does this proposed project advance the Integrated Cluster mission and vision? How does this project facilitate high impact teaching and learning, cross disciplinary collaboration, student engagement and partnership involvement, and real world problem exploration? What are the anticipated impacts of this project?
Is this project an extension of work already in progress, or an entirely new endeavor? Does it integrate with areas that team leaders are already teaching or is it an opportunity to delve into unfamiliar content or a bit of both?

Project Rationale and Impact Statement:

The proposed project addresses the PSU Vision and Mission and most definitely the Cluster Mission of TESD: Tourism, Environment, Sustainability, and Development.

The following excerpt can be found on the PSU website:

*Plymouth State University’s efforts on sustainability are anchored in a commitment to educate students about a sustainable lifestyle, to study and care for the environment, and to promote sustainability to the campus community and the world beyond. Sustainability efforts are evident throughout campus; in a program that integrates sustainability across the curriculum, in residential life, and in dining services. For over 25 years, Common Ground, a student environmental and social justice organization, has been focusing on environmental issues through events and service projects. The University’s commitment to the environment also encompasses new courses and majors aimed at preparing graduates for careers in environmental science, stewardship, and policy; a long-standing campus-wide recycling program; and EcoHouse, a “living-learning laboratory” that shows students how even small-scale environmental design features can have important environmental implications, from [https://www.plymouth.edu/sustainability/](https://www.plymouth.edu/sustainability/).*

Fostering Collaboration Across Disciplines:

Two faculty members- one from English and one from Environmental Science and Policy- are serving as project leaders. They will accompany a group of 20 students from a variety of disciplines on a fieldtrip to Green Mountain College to observe sustainability initiatives implemented at another higher education institution. The instructors will have opportunities to meet with students during class time after the fieldtrip, proposed for the middle of October, to ensure maximum learning from the fieldtrip. PSU faculty and staff will be part of the audience invited to the students’ final presentation on their proposed sustainability initiatives for PSU. This will allow students to receive authentic feedback on their proposed initiatives.

Currently the following information about the major of the students enrolled in the two courses is available in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAJORS</th>
<th>#’S OF STUDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Undeclared</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At a minimum 6 majors are represented and maybe more once students declare a major.

Students will work in small interdisciplinary groups to design, develop, and present a sustainability project.

**Addressing a relevant societal issue:**

Promoting new, sustainable initiatives at PSU should be good for the environment and ultimately the University budget. Meeting these two criteria can be part of the rubric for evaluating the projects. Promoting sustainable models and acting locally for their campus and community will help students develop transferable skills to be effective in adopting sustainable projects in places where they eventually move, and in this way the outcomes are relevant, real world and global.

**Establishing relationships with community partners, external institutions, companies, non-profits, schools, government agencies, and more:**

Outcomes of the project at the end of the semester and beyond can be shared with others on the PSU Sustainability Minor Council and those in the TESD Cluster as well as faculty, students, and staff who host our fieldtrip at Green Mountain College. Green Mountain College then can add disseminating their model to PSU as part of their outreach efforts. Moreover, if supported and successful, this linked course experience could develop into an interdisciplinary, first-year residential academic program in future years—one that supports PSU’s vision of integrating academic and student affairs, enriching the first-year experience, and improving retention.

The Town of Plymouth passed a resolution in spring of 2017 to become an ecologically green community promoting eco-tourism. Student projects developed from this proposal which will most likely focus on the PSU campus will be shared with the external stakeholders/partners supporting the town resolution.
Making an impact

Students will develop skills, knowledge, a mindset and experience from proposing sustainable projects involving waste, food, water, energy, transportation and an integrated systems approach for their peers and a wider audience at PSU. The intent is that some of the projects will come to fruition over time. Future classes and student leaders that emerge from the class can continue to work on implementing the recommended projects in future semesters and years. In fact, students from last fall’s sustainability-themed composition voiced excitement about moving forward with their initiative at the end of the class.

This project is an extension of work already in progress.

Facilitating high impact teaching and learning:

Project activities, beginning with the proposed fieldtrip to Green Mountain College and culminating with developed proposals for the PSU community members and other invited guests, will be active, engaging, and experiential. Students will work in small groups to develop their own original and feasible project for PSU, as part of the assignment for their two courses, inspired by their trip to Green Mountain College. Building in choice for students is often a motivating factor. Also, the opportunity to engage in promoting an applied project as part of their legacy for the campus can be a positive driving force.

Furthermore having two PSU faculty from different disciplines and other invited guests to provide feedback on the students’ presentations as well as having community members from Green Mountain College share perspectives about sustainability projects means students will hear multiple voices.
## Project Team

**PSU Project Participants** *(essential core team participants including faculty and staff)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position/ Title</th>
<th>Project Role</th>
<th>Discipline/ Specialty</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abby Goode</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>Project Leader</td>
<td>English</td>
<td><a href="mailto:algoode@plymouth.edu">algoode@plymouth.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Ann McGarry</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>Project Leader</td>
<td>Environmental Science and Policy</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mmcgarry@plymouth.edu">mmcgarry@plymouth.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Eisenhauer</td>
<td>Director of the PSU Office of Sustainability</td>
<td>Advisory partner</td>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bweisenhauer@plymouth.edu">bweisenhauer@plymouth.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Non-PSU Project Participants** *(stakeholders; partners; academic institution; etc.)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Project Role</th>
<th>Discipline/ Specialty</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ryan J Ihrke, Director of Sustainability</td>
<td>Green Mountain College, VT</td>
<td>Hosts for daylong fieldtrip of PSU students</td>
<td>Sustainability Interests</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Ihrker@greenmtn.edu">Ihrker@greenmtn.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student Participant Profile** *(identify the student population/s to be engaged in the project. Identify if this has been or is planned to be incorporated into curricula)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class/ Student Organization/ Individuals</th>
<th>Role in Project</th>
<th>Academic Level (Undergraduate or Graduate)</th>
<th>Academic Discipline</th>
<th>Total Student Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abby Goode’s section of English Composition and Mary Ann McGarry’s</td>
<td>The same 20 first year students are enrolled in both courses</td>
<td>Undergraduate students</td>
<td>6 different majors, plus eight undeclared majors</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IRB (Institutional Review Board) Compliance

IRB Compliance: [http://www.plymouth.edu/office/institutional-review-board/](http://www.plymouth.edu/office/institutional-review-board/)

☐ This project DOES NOT require IRB compliance
☒ This project DOES require IRB compliance (complete below)

IRB Approval Status:

IRB Approval Date:

Any funding approvals of IRB-required projects are contingent on obtaining IRB approval.

Project Management: Timeline and Milestones

Identify the timeline for the project including start, completion, and major project milestones. A closing report will be required as a part of the project funding process.

**Project Start Date:** 8/18/2017

**Project Complete Date:** End of spring semester 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Milestone</th>
<th>Milestone Description</th>
<th>Target Completion Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course syllabi and material incorporate information about the project</td>
<td>Two syllabi include the proposed fieldtrip to GMC and associated assignments and evaluation rubrics.</td>
<td>9/5/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fieldtrip to GMC is completed</td>
<td>Students participate in fieldtrip to GMC</td>
<td>11/1/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of sustainability projects</td>
<td>Students present sustainability projects and receive feedback for final revisions.</td>
<td>12/18/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissemination of project information</td>
<td>Possible poster presentations at PSU student showcase of excellence, dissemination of</td>
<td>5/5/2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please identify any pre-project education or training for students, faculty, and staff that would be helpful for your project team to have in advance to begin work on a strong footing (e.g., skill training, concepts), and identify any training and education that you are willing to help provide during the preparatory period for the project team before team work formally begins.

Student Education/ Training Requirements:

PSU faculty members Abby Goode and Mary Ann McGarry will collaborate to align syllabi for the two courses involved. We will meet with marketing to determine their role/interest in documenting components of the project- fieldtrip to GMC and student presentations.