

Date: 22 March 2007 (a day early!)  
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#### Sustainability Education Profile #4 Refining and Directing our Sustainable Focus!

Greetings and welcome to the next-to-last of the weekly Sustainability Profiles. This update will be more succinct--partly in anticipation of the next profile, which I hope will also include your feedback and input. The final profile will also incorporate comments from Dr. Kate O'Neill, including ideas we discussed during our meeting this past Monday. By way of brief preview: we agreed that Sustainability Education comprises an integral aspect of nearly all campus opportunities and academic programs at UNM-Taos, and thus should be incrementally developed in a cumulative, SUSTAINABLE way. While funding to coordinate this effort is not yet secure, I again put forward that the Cultural and Ecological Sustainability facets are critical, especially considering the unique characteristics of this place, the entire watershed, and the people who call the Upper Rio Grande Region home.

So far, Joel Whitehead has suggested adding these updates to the campus webpage under faculty development, and I have asked Anne Landgraf about preparing an article for UNM-Taos Highlights. Tony Benson and I have discussed who and how we could provide a network on land-based information, either through UNM-Taos or another structure, and Sustain Taos has expressed an interest in cosponsoring some activities. I have been in contact with most of the members of the latter organization as well, and Sharon Leach and I have met to discuss our mutually sustainable objectives.

Also, there are many opportunities to reinforce Sustainability Education that are currently not being met, since my personal funds have become too depleted to attend or participate on UNM-Taos' behalf, although I would like

to! I try anyway, and do carry that banner high. Meanwhile, beyond volunteering at national or international events, I still need some stronger endorsement to pull off another Talking Circle series (many requests), to create displays and booths with updates of many UNM-Taos developments (for the Land Use Forum, Earth Day, Bioneers, Solar Fest, or other examples, as per the previous grant period), or to otherwise seek UNM-Taos involvement on some of the more critical local sustainability issues, all from the educational/public outreach focus.

Dr. O'Neill suggested that I write up our "track record" so far and use that to obtain piecemeal funding for Sustainability initiatives connected to UNM-Taos, so that will be the subject of the next and final Sustainability Profile (#5). In the meantime, I would like to seek YOUR FEEDBACK on the following:

1. whether I should forward these profiles to UNM-Taos listserves, members of Sustain Taos, the TSI/Green Innovators folks, local land agencies, or others interested in a "Sustainability Information Node";
2. whether UNM-Taos should continue as the sponsor of future Talking Circles;
3. if there are any IN-HOUSE collaborators you might mention, since few UNM-T folks have attended these events (making me hesitant about including names or programs in our funding proposals without committed involvement; most of the community folks are asking for continuation of the Cultural-Ecological Sustainability events, by the way); and,
4. what you would like to see happen, since I cannot continue these efforts without some level of support.

As always, I appreciate your comments and ideas, and look forward to your feedback. It is always tricky to coordinate anything whose scope means so many things to so many people. I have tried to identify--particularly in previous updates--a working philosophy and some practical applications for implementing Sustainability Education at UNM-Taos. Hopefully some of this coordinates with your own objectives, but if there are significant gaps, please let me know! I could send these profiles campus-wide by email, but rarely receive feedback or input that way.. Any other ideas? One suggestion is to work up a brochure, along the lines of the Fine Arts program (mission & goals) example that Dr. O'Neill

brought to our meeting on March 19th.

So far, several area organizations--especially Sustain Taos--cover the media contacts on sustainability issues and events, mostly to great effect. Instead of serving as another mouthpiece to the same audiences, I feel UNM-Taos' efforts should be content- and community-oriented, with lots of practical action initiatives on local land issues and/or curricular opportunities and intern positions. There are many streams of knowledge integral to the Talking Circles, course activities, field visits, and public forums that meet such criteria.

In any case, I'm looking forward to the next steps of our successfully sustainable horizons at UNM-Taos!  
Sylvia