

A Higher Education Academy ESD Resource

Title: How to Make Your Teaching More Sustainable
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Timing: August 2006 – May 2008
Funding: £900

Keywords: biosciences, lectures, tutorials, practicals, field trips

AUDIENCE

This information will be of interest to anyone wishing to make their field trips, lectures, office, practicals, and tutorials more sustainable.

SUMMARY

This project developed a series of “How to Make Your Teaching More Sustainable” sheets. The planned outcome from this project is to develop a series of “How to Make Your Teaching More Sustainable” sheets. Intended as guidelines, they will provide information on how to make some aspects of teaching in the biosciences more sustainable and demonstrate how these changes in practice can then be raised as discussion points among students within the lecture, tutorial or lab group.

RATIONALE

In a survey of higher education bioscience teaching staff conducted by the Centre for Bioscience in many said they would find it difficult to include or integrate SD into the curriculum due to a lack of teaching time. These sheets go towards remedying this situation.

THE APPROACH

The sheets were authored by Alzena Wilmot, an information sheet designer who works with the Centre for Alternative Technology in Wales .

THE OUTCOMES

The sheets consist of:

- *How to... make your field trips more sustainable*: Field trips can be one of the most valuable and memorable learning experiences for undergraduates. They can also have a high environmental impact. The information in this sheet aims to give ideas and pointers towards making your field trips more sustainable. The importance of sustainability education and awareness raising should not be underestimated and some resources for incorporating sustainability into the subject of your field trip are included.
- *How to... make your lectures more sustainable*: Lectures tend to have a relatively small environmental impact, however there are always opportunities to improve sustainability. The information in this sheet is not exhaustive but aims to give you some ideas and pointers towards making your lectures more sustainable. The importance of sustainability education and awareness raising should not be underestimated and resources for incorporating sustainability into the subject of your lectures are included in this sheet.
- *How to... make your office more sustainable*: This sheet has been put together to provide information and inspiration to green your office. Every workplace has different inputs and wastes: the information in this sheet aims to give you some practical ideas and pointers on the road towards sustainability.
- *How to... make your practicals more sustainable*: Each practical class is different – from ecology to molecular biology – and will use different resources and create particular wastes. The information provided here is certainly not exhaustive but aims to give you some ideas and pointers towards making your practicals more sustainable. There are currently few resources dedicated to sustainability in practical bioscience teaching but general sustainability principles can be applied.
- *How to... make your tutorials more sustainable*: Tutorials tend to have a relatively small environmental impact; however there are always opportunities to improve sustainability. The information in this sheet is not exhaustive but aims to give you some ideas and pointers towards making your tutorials more sustainable. The importance of sustainability education and awareness raising should not be underestimated. Resources for incorporating sustainability into the subject of your tutorials are included in this sheet.

TAKING IT FURTHER: LESSONS AND SUGGESTIONS

One of the other aspects of ESD raised by the Bioscience community, and still raised by many, is the difficulty of seeing where aspects of sustainability could be raised within their own discipline. For example, a number of neuroscientists have said that they see little connection between ESD and their own subject and find it difficult to introduce sustainability concepts when there are few links. This may give scope for a sixth “How to” sheet, which brings together topic ideas for

teaching sustainability within the various disciplines covered by the Centre for Bioscience, giving suggestions of topic areas where aspects of sustainability could be focused on. In pharmacology, for example, this could explore the metabolic end products of drugs and their impact on the environment.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- The 2005 Centre for Bioscience report on ESD is available at: <http://www.bioscience.heacademy.ac.uk/ftp/esd/esdreport.pdf> (2005 PDF 196KB).
- The “How to Make Your Teaching More Sustainable” sheets are available from: <http://www.bioscience.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/esd/howto.aspx>