**Integrating Sustainability into the First Year Experience**

Internship Interim Report  
April 19th, 2010  
Intern: Laura Nading  
Mentors: Emilie Rex, Bill Brown

**Introduction**

Since December, I’ve collaborated with the Indiana University Office of First Year Experience (FYE) and the Indiana University Office of Sustainability (IUOS) with the goal of integrating sustainability awareness and practices into the new student experience, specifically in relation to Summer New Student Orientation. As one of the top-rated university orientation programs in the nation, the Indiana University Office of First Year Experience (FYE) helps a yearly average of 8,500 new students explore all the opportunities, expectations, and resources that will assist them in becoming successful Hoosiers.

The purpose of my internship is, ultimately, to explore and implement ways for FYE to influence first year students to act sustainably during their college IUB, beginning with their experience during New Student Orientation.

My approach is divided into two focuses: *enhancing the sustainability of the operational activities of FYE year-round and during New Student Orientation (NSO),* and “greening” the information all content of NSO as to educate and engage students in sustainability while at IUB and during NSO.

**Accomplishments**

**Research on Existing Green Orientation Programs**

In the first month of my internship, I conducted research on specific measures taken by other universities with sustainability-focused new student orientations, and compiled my research into a document. I did this through web-based research, and conversations with orientation coordinators and sustainability staff through email and phone calls. Universities involved included UC Santa Cruz, University of Arizona, University of Colorado,
American University, and Oregon State University. This research was necessary in order to assess existing projects and approaches.

**Facilitation and Establishment of an In-Office Sustainability Initiative for FYE**

FYE has established an in-office sustainability initiative which will house all of the sustainability-related projects. This initiative emerged out of discussions between FYE and IUOS, a willingness to build off of existing sustainability-based projects within FYE, and from inter-office discussion about mission and goals setting within FYE. This sustainability initiative has the potential to enhance the mission of the office, which is to facilitate the transition of undergraduate students to the university through the provision of programs and services outlining the university's academic expectations and support as well as social and developmental resources and opportunities.

The establishment of an in-office sustainability initiative has facilitated the development new sustainability features for this summer, including: a sustainability-based IUBeginnings experience, the campus sustainability-orientated annual new student common reader, reduced orientation sack lunch waste, and the transition of the NSO Resource Fair to being “paper-free”.

I am currently collaborating with Melanie Payne, Associate Director of FYE and Director of Orientation Programs, and more directly, Bob Rathbun, the project manager of the FYE sustainability-initiative. Bob and I have began a sustainability assessment of existing FYE practices, in order develop benchmarks for sustainability assessment and planning. We are also in the process of developing a name and logo for the initiative, as to “brand” the multiple projects within the initiative.

**Pre-Orientation Communication on Sustainability Information and Tips**

For the first time, FYE will include information about their sustainability efforts in their pre-orientation communication with new students and parents. This will include encouraging NSO participants to bring reusable water bottles, and to utilize indoor recycling receptacles while on campus.
Securing IUOS a spot at 2010 New Student Orientation Resource Center

For the first time, IUOS will have a booth at the NSO Resource Center from June 16th to July 23rd in the lobby of the Herman B. Wells Library. Manned by the IUOS summer interns, this opportunity will allow IUOS to connect new IUB students to sustainability-based information and social engagement opportunities. IUOS will utilize existing information and multi-media displays, along with others with information designed specifically for new student.

Current and Future Major Projects

1. New Student Orientation Video production

I am currently working on producing a video for NSO that would detail individual measures that new students should take to act sustainably, i.e. how to utilize duplex printing on campus. The video will be 4-5 minutes long, and will be played during NSO for incoming freshmen, and will be available online on FYE’s website.

Originally, I aimed to collaborate with members of the student sketch comedy group Boy in The Bubble for help with script development and with acting. While the group collectively decided against the project, a member of the group and IUOS intern Farah Abi-Akar, has volunteered her ideas for potential sketches. Now, I am in the process of finding actors and developing a script. I’ve contacted two other student sketch comedy groups, and well as the IUB Theater Department.

Task completion date: May 28th

2. Assist in the further development of the FYE Sustainability Initiatives

Perhaps the most important goal in the continuation of my internship is to further establish the sustainability initiative within FYE. This is crucial to ensuring that my efforts during the academic year and over the summer will be continued and expanded upon once I’ve
completed my internship. I am currently working in collaboration with Bob Rathbun of FYE on branding the sustainability initiative by developing and name and logo for it. A major name being considered is “FYImpact”. Branding is the first step to ensuring long-term viability of FYE’s sustainability goal, as it will enhance the visibility and clarity of the project.

Over the summer, I plan to assist FYE in creating a strategic plan for their sustainability initiative. This will include the development of a mission statement, setting specific short-term and long term goals, and setting benchmarks for assessment.

*Task completion date: August 6th, 2010*

3. Aide in the development of “Thrive-ability”, the new sustainability-based IUBeginnings Trip

I have been assisting in the development of “Thriv-ability”, the new sustainability-based IUBeginnings for incoming freshmen. I will continue to collaborate with Emilie Rex and Alex Luboff in planning the experience.

While specific different projects and responsibilities will emerge as we near the event, tasks ahead include: program development and coordination and soliciting local food businesses to donate food for the participants.

*Task completion date: August 19th, 2010*

4. Green Dorm Room Certification Program

The Green Dorm Room Certification Program would will a model and means of assessment for sustainable living in the residence halls. Brandeis University’s Green Room Certification Program will be used as a prototype for the IUB version. I will integrate energy and water conservation tips from the Campus Energy Challenge with other important sustainability tips from the categories of resource use and recycling, food, sustainable computing, and
transportation. Select IUB Living Learning Communities (LLC’s) will act as a pilot for the program, and would ideally be implemented this coming 2010 Fall Semester.

Tasks ahead include: identifying and collaborating with LLC Directors, communicating the program director from Brandeis University, compiling standards, developing benchmarks, and creating an online presence for the program.

*Task completion date: August 6th*

**Other Projects to Explore**

Outdoor recycling around campus during NSO; Outdoor recycling at Wright Quad for overnight NSO; NSO sack lunch composting; plan “Orientation to Sustainability”- a sustainability event geared towards orienting new students to campus sustainability

**Project Completion Dates for Summer 2010**

April 30th  Contact and solicit all potential local food vendors for “Thrive-ability”

May 10th  FYE sustainability initiative

May 17th  Begin filming NSO Video

May 24th  Edit and Reshoot Film

May 28th  Film to FYE for approval

June 1st  Secure LLC’s for pilot Green Dorm Certification Program (GDRCP)

    Detailed Schedule for “Thrive-ability” confirmed

June 10th  Informational sustainability signage for NSO complete

June 16th  “Orientation to Sustainability” proposal completed

June 18th  Criteria and enforcement for GDRCP in place

July 1st  “Thrive-ability” leadership curriculum fully developed
July 15th  "Orientation to Sustainability" event planned
Aug 6th  Green Dorm Room Certification Program Project Completed
          FYE Strategic Sustainability Plan and Mission Statement Completed
Aug 20th-25th  IUBeginnings Thrive-ability Experience

1. Orientation video
2. Green dorm room certification
3. Branding, name and logo
4. Eco-dorm display
5. Information signage
6. Develop long-term goals and mission for FYE