Developing an FW (Sustainability)

Jim Henry
Director, Mānoa Writing Program, UH Mānoa

1st Annual Hawaii Sustainability in Higher Education Summit
UH West O‘ahu
April 11-12, 2013
Background: An Ad-hoc Attempt

2007 -- Four Full-time Instructors at UHM agree to offer their FW course with a sustainability focus

- Rotation of FW assignment once every four semesters
- Initial commitment to cover two years
- No SLOs yet in place
- Hallmarks were, however, met
Publicizing & Support

Course focus listed on English Department website listing descriptions for all courses

- Laulima site established with support materials and a Discussion Board

- Website developed to announce and document courses each semester

- Parallel website developed and maintained to offer links to interested faculty
COMPOSING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability Links for Teachers and Students
Composition I Courses Focused on Sustainability at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Site Composed and Maintained by Jim Henry at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
jhenry@hawaii.edu
Composition I Sustainability Sections
at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

Instructors of Composition I at UHM design their own courses to meet the Hallmarks for Written Communication as established by General Education. Several have decided to focus on sustainability, understood broadly to include social, cultural, technological, and ecological systems as we might explore them through writing. We offer at least one section with a sustainability focus each semester, and in some cases several such sections, to enable first-year students to begin their studies at UHM with a focus on sustainability. We have established a workspace on Lau l i m a that includes syllabi and resources, and we invite collaboration.

We hope that our work with students in English 100 will prompt students to meet other students interested in sustainability in our campus community, foster an interest in the array of other courses at UHM focusing on sustainability, and engage with community organizations on O‘ahu, elsewhere in Hawai‘i, and elsewhere in the world. For more information, e-mail Jim Henry, Director of Composition & Rhetoric, at jmhenry@hawaii.edu.

Archive and Current Course Offerings

Spring 2008

English 100A (01): Composition I/Honors (TR 10:30-11:45)

Instructor: Laura Lyons
Mentor: Phil Drake

This course has been designed for students in the UHM Honors Program/Selected Studies program and has a focus on issues of sustainability. Our tasks will include drafting, revising, editing, and responding to papers in a variety of genres that you will encounter at UHM: critical reviews and reflections, argumentative and interpretative papers, and research projects. My assumption is that no draft is perfect, and the process of learning to write is ongoing. All of us can (and should!) improve our writing. Expect to spend time with other
Sustainability Links for Writing
Instructors and Students

Links on this site take viewers to other sites that can prove helpful in designing writing courses with a focus on sustainability. This site is hosted by the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa’s Department of English and is maintained by Dr. Jim Henry. The site originated when a number of instructors teaching First Year Composition at UHM decided to structure their syllabi with sustainability elements. From those origins it has grown into a site that can support writing courses at all levels.

Hawai‘i-specific sites offer local viewers the opportunity to enhance their knowledge about the environment and efforts to lead a sustainable life in Hawai‘i. This page also offers visitors to Hawai‘i an opportunity to augment their sustainability knowledge by visiting some of the places in Hawai‘i that inform sustainable practices.

Small Footprints, Big Steps offers a suite of sites that support viewers in taking everyday steps in their lives to live more sustainably.

(Inter) National Organizations links to many organizations world wide leading the struggle to raise consciousness about sustainability in an era when climate change denial persists.

News links to a number of news outlets from different kinds of news producers.
Sustainability Links for Writing Instructors and Students

Hawai‘i-Specific Sites

‘Ahahui Mālama I Ka Lōkahi
Hawaiians for the Conservation of Native Ecosystems

‘Ahahui Mālama I Ka Lōkahi is a non-profit organization first created by native Hawaiians who recognize that Hawaii’s unique native plants, animals, and ecosystems represent a vital cultural resource in danger of extinction. We believe that Hawaii’s native ecosystems provide the cultural heart of its people, the basis for traditional material culture, and constitute what makes the Hawaiian link to a land unique in the world.

http://www.ahahui.net/

21st Century Ahupua‘a

Hawaii’s original inhabitants developed a sophisticated and successful resource management system based on the ahupua‘a land division that supported a population almost as large as it is today. We must continue to learn from the wisdom of our Polynesian ancestors and renew our commitment to self-sufficiency and protecting our precious island home.—Official Web Site for the City and County of Honolulu

http://www.honolulu.gov/mayor/ahupuaa/index.htm

Environment Hawai‘i
Sustainability Links for Writing Instructors and Students

Possible Articles for Students

"A Climate of Corporate Control: How Corporations Have Influenced the U.S. Dialogue on Climate Science and Policy" - Union of Concerned Scientists

Our analysis reveals that while some American companies have taken consistent and laudable actions in support of climate science—and of consequent policy—others have worked aggressively to undermine the science and block science-based policy proposals.


Generation Anthropocene - Stanford University

History is accelerating. As we move farther into the Anthropocene, we must ask ourselves what we want for the planet today and what will we preserve for the next generation. But how do we know where to place our conservation efforts in this new geologic age?

http://www.stanford.edu/group/anthropocene/cgi-bin/wordpress/

"Economic Impacts of Increasing Hawai‘i’s Food Self-Sufficiency" UH Mānoa Professor Pingsun Leung and alumnus Matthew Loke

Recent surges in the price of oil and food safety scares have heightened concern about energy and food self-sufficiency in Hawai‘i among the general public, business community and government leaders. This is understandable, given that Hawai‘i, located approximately 2,500 miles from the
English 100: Composing for Sustainability

This section of Composition I will focus on sustainability as part of an ACE cluster of courses that includes Ethnobotany and Hawaiian Studies. The course also includes a UH Writing Mentor who will be working with you closely during the semester to help you excel in writing and to help you compose an e-portfolio of your work in English 100 and other courses. As a sustainability course, we will use very little paper. All course materials will be stored on Laulima, and much of your writing will be posted to this site. You will be using a field journal for handwritten observations during the many out-of-classroom writing activities, and occasionally you will be sharing drafts in paper form (recycled, please, and printed in draft mode to save ink). Nearly every writing assignment will also include writing about your own writing, so that you can step back from it and appraise it, and so that you can compose a capstone reflective commentary linking together these entries in your e-portfolio at the end of the
Fall 2009 Major Assignments

Your Geo-biography Project, Including Drafts, Revisions, Meta-Commentary, and Response to Peers | 10%
---|---
Place Essay, Including Drafts, Revisions, Meta-Commentary, and Response to Peers | 10%
Mapping Our UH Places Project, including an Interview and Class Visit | 15%
Research on a Sustainability Topic | 20%
Creative Fiction or Nonfiction on Green Working Futures - OR - Report on a Field Trip | 10%
Presentation of E-portfolio at Mid-term Conference with Jim | 5%
Presentation of E-portfolio at Final Conference with Jim | 10%
Attendance and Participation (including regular postings to Laulima) | 20%

In addition to the grades you get on these assignments, you can enhance your grade significantly through other efforts. For example, given the collaborative nature of the class, if you extend extra effort to help a classmate, make a note of your work in your journal or e-portfolio. (That is, if you spend an hour coaching a classmate in setting up his or her e-portfolio, note your work.) In addition to the satisfaction you get from helping a peer, you will also get extra credit in your grade. If you schedule extra conferences with Lehua to work on a writing project, note that work. The key to good writing is perseverance, and if you nurture that frame of mind, you'll take lots of lessons from English 100 to your other courses and into your career.
What do cheap smartphones, unliveable smog levels in Beijing, unprecedented average annual land temperatures worldwide, a declining global bee population, the impending demise of several small island nations in the Pacific, record corporate profits in the carbon fuel industry, Round-up®, and a forecast rise in sea level in Hawai‘i by 39 inches over the next century all have in common? They are products of the Anthropocene Epoch, a new geological epoch in which human behavior influences world ecosystems as never before. We can deny it is happening, shrug and feel helpless, focus on other stuff, or invest ourselves in research and writing (across nearly all disciplines and majors) that engages with the challenge and anticipates jobs that must be created to rise to it. This course will help you gain expertise in such research and writing.
Web Curating/Course Conceptualization

Major assignments will focus on (1) our campus and its resources for you as a researcher-writer, (2) O‘ahu and Hawai‘i as places that can lead our thinking, and (3) sustainability as different disciplines address it. Our work will be highly collaborative: we will use software designed to enhance your abilities as a reviewer for others (a key workplace skill often ignored in writing courses), and you will work actively with classmates as you each develop your own e-portfolio—an assemblage of your writing that you can build upon in later courses at UHM and in preparation for further study or the job market. Readings will be entirely online and will include excerpts from *The Value of Hawai‘i* (Howes and Osorio, eds.) and *Composing and Sustainability* (Owens), among others. We will strive to tie the local to the global repeatedly, to help you figure out what you want to do at UH Mānoa and beyond.
Can we/should we/do we want to develop System-wide SLOs for an FW (Sustainability) that map onto SLOs already in place?

Can we/should we/do we want to develop System-wide FW (Sustainability) sections and assure that at least one section per semester were offered?

If so, what kinds of mechanisms would be needed locally, and what kinds of support?