

College of the Siskiyous

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PRESS RELEASE

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COS EXPLORES SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH SOLUTIONS, ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Weed / COS - Are you interested in renewable energy, energy efficiency, agriculture and food systems, sustainable business and human relations? Do you want to learn about green careers, and entrepreneurial niches? Or do you simply want practical knowledge in these areas to incorporate into your own lifestyle? Then, COS's new program in Sustainable Communities could be for you.

Sustainable Communities is one of three new programs College of the Siskiyous is launching this fall. Fall courses will include: Introduction to Sustainable Communities, Sustainable Communities Skills Lab, and Greening Your World Skills Lab. Classes begin September 8th 2009.

The Sustainable Communities (ERSC) program offers a practical, integrated and interdisciplinary examination of the interactions between humans and natural ecosystems with an emphasis on solutions and entrepreneurship. In addition to the core requirements, the program offers clusters of classes in energy efficiency, agriculture and natural resources, entrepreneurship and sustainable business, outdoor recreation, and a university transfer track.

Shawn Abbott, business faculty at COS, explained that students can expect a wide-range of career options and employers. "Twenty-two different sectors of the U.S. Economy currently provide workers with green collar jobs, and the California Employment Development Department is conducting surveys to define California's green economy and green industries. Sustainable Communities students will customize their entry point into a green career pathway," she said. "I'd also like to emphasize that this program will build on existing COS business classes and partnerships, such as with JEDI, SBDC and STEP, and explore the niche business opportunities that exist in the realm of emerging 'green' industries."

In the program students will learn to clearly articulate to community members the topics and issues associated with sustainability, identify and pursue income-generating opportunities consistent with sustainable living, and demonstrate an awareness of diversity issues and different cultural perspectives on the environment.

Students who take Introduction to Sustainable Communities will come away understanding the big picture of the complexity of global environmental problems. “This course offers a broad stroke introduction to the scientific basis of climate change, deforestation, water pollution and species extinction. With an emphasis on the social, political and economic implications of these environmental issues, for various cultural groups, students will engage in critical analysis, drawing on their unique perspectives and backgrounds as they identify common interests and develop solutions.” explained instructors Meadow Barr and Dr. Rene Henery.

Barr and Henery will also instruct an accompanying Sustainable Communities Skills Lab. The lab will be an introduction to diverse areas within Sustainable Communities including field trips ranging from learning biological monitoring techniques at Castle Lake, to visiting restoration sites on the Shasta River, to preparing locally produced meals for Meals on Wheels, to attending community and governmental meetings. Labs will range from making alternative fuels (biodiesel) out of waste vegetable oil to community asset mapping, conflict resolution, and environmental decision-making. “The idea with the skills lab is to introduce students to a wide range of areas where work towards sustainability is taking place, especially those that will be covered in depth as they continue the program, and to give them practical skills and demonstrate creative and positive solutions,” said Barr. “The Sustainable Communities skills lab, as well as the Greening Your World skills lab instructed by Angelina Cook, should be of general interest to many community members,” added Henery.

To learn more about the new Environmental Resources programs and see a list of fall course offerings visit www.siskiyous.edu/cte/environmental/ or call Christy Cummings Dawson at (530) 938-5305 or send an email to cummingsc@siskiyous.edu. To register online visit www.siskiyous.edu and click “Online Services” or call (530) 938-5272 or call toll-free (888) 397-4339.