

# Action Line

## Taking Delta's sustainability message to students

The Academic Sustainability Team's goal is to incorporate sustainability into the college curricula. This is a 2009-2010 action project.

### The Plan

- ◆ Identify and document sustainability components in existing courses.
- ◆ Encourage faculty to develop courses with sustainability components.
- ◆ Offer support for faculty including educational tools and resources.
- ◆ Offer a pilot two-credit introductory course in sustainability during winter semester 2010.

### The Goal

- ◆ Improve student awareness.
- ◆ Have an integrated, planned approach for the inclusion of sustainability in the curricula.
- ◆ Develop a series of courses that lead to certificate and degree programs.

### The Jump Start

- ◆ A Wind Energy Technician program is scheduled to begin in Fall 2009.
- ◆ A Sustainable Building Principles course is in the curriculum process and is planned for Winter 2010
- ◆ A course on Weatherization is in the planning stages.
- ◆ The Academic Sustainability Taskforce is surveying sustainability introductory courses with the intent of having an Introduction to Sustainability course ready for a Winter 2010 pilot.
- ◆ The Taskforce is investigating the possibility of coding courses with sustainable topics in the Schedule of Class and on transcripts.

### The Work Ahead

- ◆ Form an advisory board for wider and continuous input.
- ◆ Continue to educate faculty and staff through public presentations, booths and demonstrations.
- ◆ Involve all academic areas.
- ◆ Document courses with sustainability content.
- ◆ Improve sustainability content in existing courses.
- ◆ Develop additional focused courses.
- ◆ Complete a sustainability certificate of achievement program.
- ◆ Build an advanced certificate in sustainability.



### **Students already take action**

Students participated in a carpool effort they named, "I take rides with strangers."

Students donated used books to a college in Africa as part of a "Ken-ya spare a book" project.

Students conducted an awareness campaign about the recycling bins in classrooms.

Students constructed plaques for the Delta College Board of Trustees, and Peace Poles in collaboration with Global Peace Studies, by using wood reclaimed from bleachers.

Students completed a trash audit last winter semester.

Students planned and participated in Sustain-A-Ville, a demonstration of simple ways to incorporate sustainability into everyday life.

Students initiated an effort to reduce junk mail at the college.

**Sustainability begins with you. Contact Mike Finelli to get on board at 686-9021 or [mjfinell@delta.edu](mailto:mjfinell@delta.edu)**

# The Flip Side

## 2 minute AQIP Update

The AQIP Steering Committee met during spring and summer, continuing work on the nine AQIP Committee reports required by the Higher Learning Commission. The deadline for submission of the comprehensive Systems Portfolio is May 1, 2010.

Some of you have been contacted by committee members seeking data to answer the Portfolio's questions about **Processes, Results and Improvements**. Those are the three focus areas of the report and you may have heard a buzz about **Ps, Rs and Is**.

Actually the majority of questions in the AQIP Systems Portfolio (80 questions) are **Process** questions, assessing Delta by asking how certain things are determined, designed, prioritized, managed, created, developed analyzed and distributed.

There also are 39 **Results** questions that require specific measurements, performance results or evidence. It is no longer good enough to state that Delta does something well or achieves a given standard. The proof is in the data.

Finally, there are 18 **Improvement** questions. Some require an explanation of the degree to which the college is practicing continuous quality improvement in specific key systems and processes. According to AQIP, the purpose of these questions is to enable the Systems Appraisal Team to provide more focused feedback.

Sound like a lot of work? You bet.

The good news? The finish line is clearly in sight.

**Here's one from the Gipper or in this case Don Halog, the "A" Quipper** —  
*Nine months to go! On May 1, 2010 our first Systems Portfolio is born.*

## Q & A

### Mixing sustainability with academics



**MIKE FINELLI**  
Assistant Professor and  
Academic Sustainability  
Officer

#### How does Delta's focus on sustainability apply to academics?

**Finelli:** *The college's Sustainability Task Force feels strongly that the true impact that the college can have on sustainability is to bring this knowledge to the students. When students leave here they can have a significant and lasting effect on our community and beyond.*

#### What is the ultimate goal?

**Finelli:** *The ultimate goal is for EVERY Delta student to leave with an understanding of sustainability and an awareness of how their decisions can play a role. This means true integration across all divisions and programs.*

#### What should a faculty member do if they want to learn more about including sustainability in their courses?

**Finelli:** *Faculty can attend the COS sessions that focus on incorporating sustainability in individual courses. They also can contact members of the AST in their division (see membership list below) or contact me.*

#### What resources can the committee offer faculty as they plan courses with a sustainability component?

**Finelli:** *The AST will provide faculty with the mechanism we are developing to establish a current level of sustainability for a given course. The taskforce also will review information, make suggestions and provide examples of activities that could be used to increase the level of sustainability. These materials will come from the taskforce members' own work and from websites such as the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE.org).*

#### How has your approach to teaching changed to include sustainability?

**Finelli:** *It has changed significantly. I now start each course with a basic explanation of what sustainability is and how it relates to the course. I use examples to reinforce sustainability concepts and have written a new course — Sustainable Building Principles.*

#### So do you walk the walk or just talk the talk?

**Finelli:** *The most recent house I built for my family includes insulated concrete forms, concrete siding and countertops, formaldehyde-free materials, reused materials, fallen trees harvested for lumber, site orientation to maximize day lighting, low VOC paints and finishes and high efficiency heating, cooling and water heating.*

## Academic Sustainability Taskforce Members

**Stephanie Baiyasi**, Biology

**David Baker**, Chemistry

**Wendy Baker**, Biology

**Jeff Dykhuizen**, Psychology

**Matt Eyre**, Mechanical Technology

**Donna Giuliani**, Sociology

**Tari Hackborn**, Computer Aided Design

**Bernadette Harkness**, Chemistry

**Renee Hoppe**, Lifelong Wellness

**Jason Lijewski**, Management

**Carla Murphy**, Lifelong Wellness

**Natascha Rivet**, Math & Computer Science

**Crystal Starkey**, English

**Jay Vanhouten**, Biology

**Connie Watson**, Psychology

**Ryan Wilson**, English