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Sustainability Semester to Premier this Summer at Morris

Summary: Students will learn how to build sustainable communities in the new Sustainability Semester.

(April 24, 2013)-The University of Minnesota, Morris will premier a new course offering in sustainability this summer. Students taking part in this innovative [“Sustainability Semester”](#) will make connections between food, renewable energy, history, and culture while networking with peers interested in sustainability and making change. Participants may choose from two complementary courses—Culture, Food and Agriculture and Experiencing Sustainability—or enroll in both.

“Sustainability is about relationships—with those here in the present, with those to come after us, and with the environment,” says Troy Goodnough, sustainability coordinator and an instructor of Experiencing Sustainability. “These courses will get students to consider relationships.”

In Culture, Food and Agriculture, taught by Associate Professor of Anthropology Donna Chollett, students will explore community-supported agriculture, revitalization of Native American sustainable gardening techniques, and organic production as solutions to society’s food system challenges. According to Chollett, a food systems expert, this class “challenges the forces that created our broken industrialized food system.” She believes that this course, combined with Experiencing Sustainability, will enable students to “revitalize the knowledge and practices that maintained nutritional health, environmental sustainability, and social equity for so many years.”

Experiencing Sustainability, a hybrid experiential course taught cooperatively by nine Morris staff and faculty members, offers students the chance to select from modules on topics like solar power, biomass power, wind energy and policy. Students will learn about efforts to build a sustainable community on the northern plains by visiting farms, American Indian communities, renewable energy installations, and more. Goodnough believes that the course’s ability to “illustrate the interconnectedness of sustainability” is what makes it so unique.

He adds that, by offering Sustainability Semester, Morris is demonstrating its role in defining sustainability for west central Minnesota. Believing there is no universal model for “a sustainable community,” Goodnough espouses the importance of place when discussing this topic, “because a sustainable community looks different in different areas.”

“Morris is at the intersection of past, present, and future,” says Chancellor Jacqueline Johnson. “This place is innovative, distinctive, and forward-looking. This course highlights these qualities. It reflects the experimental nature of our campus—we really are a living and learning community.”

Sustainability Semester will be offered during Summer Session I: May 20-June 21. [Registration](#) for these courses and others is now open. Additional information is available [online](#) or by phone at 320-589-6459.

This activity is supported, in part, by the University of Minnesota Institute on the Environment.

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.