

Well-Being & Sustainability at Xavier University of Louisiana: Seminar Grant Proposal

1. Basic Information

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Seminar host: Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Faculty Development

Note: If our proposal is funded, we will use grant funds to cover expenses for the seminar and travel expenses for a facilitator from an institution with an established sustainability program.

Proposed date of seminar: 23 January 2016

Amount of funds requested: \$1000

2. Proposal Narrative

Purpose of the seminar

We are proposing a one-day facilitated conversation examining the campus culture of sustainability at Xavier University of Louisiana as a prior condition necessary for faculty and staff well-being, and explicitly aiming to set institutional goals and commitments to begin a process toward an increased culture of sustainability.

Participants by campus area and rationale for their selection

Diverse campus constituencies have participated in planning this seminar, including the following:

- Mellon Faculty Community of Teaching-Scholars Fellows (These faculty are actively planning or implementing innovative sustainability themes in their courses after participating in a week-long course-revision institute on this theme. They have first-hand knowledge of the connection to well-being.)
- Xavier Contemplative Inquiry Team (These faculty and staff are working together to support each other in contemplative practice, pedagogy and research. We believe they are well-positioned to address how expanded awareness and meaningful dialog contribute to well-being and ethical action.)
- Academic Affairs (The support of this office is necessary to faculty who infuse sustainability themes in their classes.)
- Student Services (Though this conversation is being initiated by faculty and staff, we know that our students are under stress from many sources, including an increasing awareness of unsustainable practices as a critical issue facing their generation.)
- Department of Public Health Sciences (This academic department is already engaged in issues of well-being and sustainability and will bring a valuable scholarly perspective to the seminar.)

- Counseling & Wellness Center (We hope to establish partnerships with pre-existing wellness programs.)
- Campus Ministry (As Pope Francis' recent encyclical demonstrates, the Catholic Church is calling on all of humanity to honor our ethical obligations to the poor, to future generations, and to Mother Earth. Campus Ministry is uniquely situated to address how right action supports well-being.)

Facilitation process and proposed initial guiding questions

We take as a starting point the following passage from *The Universe Story* by Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry:

The well-being of the ecosystems of the planet is a prior condition for the well-being of the human.

We will begin by contemplating the deep ramifications of this truth, and investigating its implications for Xavier in the early 21st century.

Further guiding questions include:

- Although they are not formally labeled as such, some sustainable practices are underway at Xavier. What are they? Let's recognize what we are already doing right and how we might support each other.
- All of us probably recognize a number of unsustainable practices on campus as well. Let's list these opportunities for improvement.
- What are the short-term and long-term consequences of unsustainable practices?
- What is the connection between sustainability and health (both mental and physical)? How might sustainable practices enhance the overall well-being of the Xavier community?
- How does this connect to Xavier's mission and strategic plan?

Tentative agenda

1. Well-being: basic concepts. What is well-being, and what contributes to well-being of Xavier faculty, staff, administrators, students?
2. Sustainability: basic concepts. What is sustainability, and what does a sustainable campus look like?
3. The link: How do well-being and sustainability support each other?
4. Xavier's unique identity, part one: Sustainability at HBCUs. Who is at the forefront of this movement, and what are they doing?
5. Xavier's unique identity, part two: The Catholic connection. How are Catholic institutions responding to the "Radical Pope's" call to ecological wisdom?
6. Future focus: What will it take to make Xavier "Green"? How much can we realistically do in a year, in two years, in ten years? How will this impact campus well-being?

Anticipated outcomes and subsequent action steps

Though it is unrealistic to suppose that we will institute a new office or even a new hire dedicated to campus sustainability as the result of a single seminar, we hope to propose specific institutional goals at the end of the day. In all likelihood, the key goal will be to begin a formal process of investigation and inquiry, which will ultimately lead toward an increased culture of sustainability and well-being.

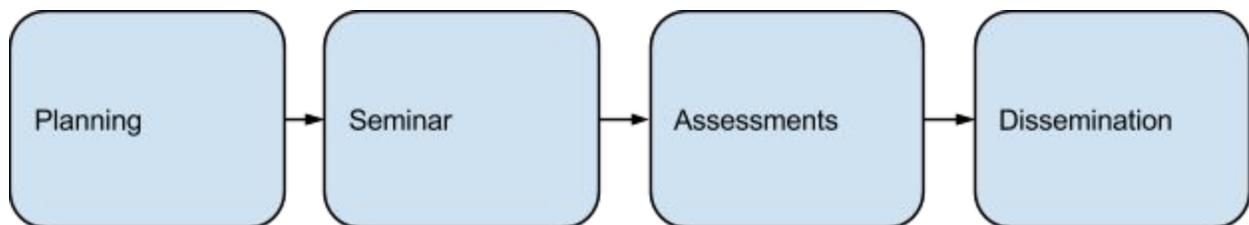
Outcome 1: A high-quality, useful seminar

Outcome 2: Participation of diverse constituencies from across campus

Outcome 3: Formulation of specific institutional goals for proposal to administration

Outcome 4: Initiation of continuing process toward culture of increased sustainability

Evaluation and reporting plans



Participants will evaluate the seminar via an evaluation survey. The staff of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Faculty Development (CAT+FD) will conduct an analysis of the seminar after the fact to determine if the anticipated outcomes were realized. The results of these efforts will be disseminated through reports to Bringing Theory to Practice and to Xavier administrators. A broader dissemination to Xavier faculty will be achieved through a faculty development workshop the following academic year, in the form of a panel discussion reporting on progress toward a more sustainable campus.

Outcome	Assessment
1. High quality useful seminar	Evaluation data from seminar participants
2. Participation of diverse constituencies from across campus	Demographic data of seminar participants
3. Formulation of specific institutional goals for proposal to administration	CAT+FD staff analysis of seminar
4. Initiation of continuing process toward increased culture of sustainability	CAT+FD will track

3. Budget

We anticipate lunch and other refreshments for approximately 20 participants at a total cost of \$250. Materials for the seminar and promotion in advance of the seminar will cost \$50. The remaining \$700 will be used to help absorb transportation costs for an expert facilitator (see "Basic information," above).