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MENTORS: EMILIE REX, TRACY BEE

ACADEMIC YEAR 2010-2011

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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In March 2009, IU faculty and staff submitted a sustainability-themed proposal for the College of Arts and Sciences' semester-long program named *Themester*. Each fall semester a new theme is utilized for Themester projects, and as the original proposal states: "the time is ripe for a Themester on sustainability," noting in particular the rise of the local sustainability movement at IU and within the Bloomington community. Accordingly, the College Committee on Undergraduate Education approved the proposal for Themester 2010, which is now coined "SUSTAIN.ABILITY: Thriving on a Small Planet."

Although the program events take place during fall 2010, the majority of planning occurs during the previous spring semester. Most of the College Themester Steering Committee, consisting of College administrators, faculty and members of the IU Office of Sustainability (IUOS), plan Themester events in addition to their professions. To ease this burden the Themester 2010 proposal supports a student assistant to aid the planning process. In short, Themester and the IUOS Internship Program teamed together to create the College Themester Programming Internship.

The goal of the internship is to facilitate the planning of Themester 2010, ensure successful implementation of events, and to maintain and make accessible Themester 2010 ideas for years to come. For this reason, the College Themester Programming internship continued into the 2011 Academic Year Internship Program. This report serves to explain the methods, main projects, and recommendations for similar internships offered by the IUOS in the future.

## METHODS

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Since sustainability is an inherently interdisciplinary topic, Themester 2010 events encompass several dimensions of sustainability: environmental, economic and social, which enables numerous collaborations on campus across departments and schools. Although Themester is only in its second year as a College initiative, it is broad and far-

reaching, producing numerous events and promoting hundreds more. Due to the breadth of such a program it was necessary for me to first determine the scope and responsibilities for the internship.

First, I met with my original mentors: Emilie Rex from IUOS, and Jeff Weber, Themester Coordinator for Academic Year 2009-2010. In speaking with them, I found the Themester Steering Committee is further divided into working groups: Communications, Outreach, Teaching and Learning, Events and Lectures. From this discussion, we decided that I could offer the most assistance in lectures, events, and communications. In brief, we decided that I was needed most in three specific areas: 1) Coordination and Content Management, 2) Program Development, and 3) Advertising and Public Relations.

The internship role for the spring semester 2010 focused mostly in the first two areas. For area 1) *Coordination and Content Management*, I facilitated the organization of materials for the Themester Steering Committee. This included: ensuring notes from all meetings are accessible, managing content on Oncourse, and creating helpful charts and documents. I took minutes at bi-weekly Steering Committee meetings, updated the calendar with important dates, assisted in budget planning, and created organizational documents such as Contacts, Themester F.A.Q., Themester Themes, and Venue Information.

Area 2) *Program Development* also fulfilled a significant portion of my time. This concentration area involved initial brainstorming and idea production, drafting letters, contacting co-sponsors, budget planning, and various other logistics. I led the planning of the Opening Festival and Thomas Friedman Lecture, two events detailed in the latter section on Main Projects.

Area 3) *Advertising and Public Relations* was a partial focus for spring semester 2009 and a significant focus for fall semester 2010 during the implementation of events. Advertising included posting event descriptions on public calendars online, drafting press releases and creating Facebook events.

The second stage of the internship came for the 2010-2011 Academic Year Internship Program. On return from summer vacation, I met with mentor Emilie Rex again as well as the new Themester Coordinator, Tracy Bee. We discussed my role and scope as Themester 2010 intern for the fall semester 2010. It was decided that I would continue in the development and implementation of my previous projects (e.g. Opening Festival, Thomas Friedman Keynote Lecture), continue with advertising and public relations, assist in documentation of events (i.e. fill out event reports, take photos), and assist in planning the Closing Exposition (described in the next section).

The third and final stage of my internship took place this spring semester 2011 and focused on a review of Themester 2010 events. During this time I met with mentor Emilie Rex and Bill Brown, Director of Sustainability, who helped me develop a plan to design an accessible document that could serve as a resource guide for IU faculty and

Resident Assistants (RAs) integrate sustainability into their curriculum, while simultaneously securing Themester 2010 ideas to be accessible for years to come. The final product that developed from these initial meetings is a Themester 2010 Magazine, highlighting lectures, seminar series, art exhibits, community outreach and student initiatives. This final product is described more in depth in the next section.

## MAIN PROJECTS

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In this section I supply more details on the program implementation portion of the internship, examining four projects in particular: 1) Themester Opening Festival, 2) Thomas Friedman Keynote Lecture, 3) Closing Exposition and 4) Themester 2010 Magazine. These four projects occupied the majority of my internship, although I assisted on multiple projects.

### **OPENING FESTIVAL:**

The purpose of the Themester Opening Festival was to create awareness for following Themester activities and produce a fun and informing event. For this project, I held weekly meetings with student representatives and worked with student groups, community groups, IU departments, local restaurants, and caterers. This festival encompassed informational tables, engaging activities, free local organic food and local music. The event took place in Dunn Meadow on Friday, September 10, 2010, with several participating organizations. The press release for the event can be found at the following link: <http://newsinfo.iu.edu/news/page/normal/15436.html>

### **THOMAS FRIEDMAN KEYNOTE:**

The purpose of the Themester Keynote Lecture was to raise awareness on Themester initiatives, reach out to media outlets and across the IU campus, and inform the public on sustainability. The Lectures working group in conjunction with the Steering Committee chose three-time Pulitzer Prize winner and best-selling author, Thomas Friedman to lecture at the IU Auditorium. The title of his lecture is "Hot, Flat and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution and How It Can Renew America." A lecture by Mr. Friedman is appealing to many disciplines (journalism, political science, business and economics, and more). A great deal of work was spent prioritizing speakers, contacting agencies, securing co-sponsors, budgeting, reserving space, creating a firm offer and analyzing the official contract. Beyond the public lecture, logistical planning included a preceding dinner, a reception and book-signing after the public lecture, and a breakfast the morning after sponsored by the Wells Scholars Program. The press release for the event can be found at the following link: <http://newsinfo.iu.edu/news/page/normal/15806.html>

## **CLOSING EXPOSITION:**

The Closing Exposition finalized Themester events. I assisted mentors Emilie Rex and Tracy Bee in planning and publicizing for the event. However, my main role was hosting the Exposition throughout its three hour duration. I helped with set ups, provided a formal introduction, and guided the schedule of activities. Participants included a welcome from IU Provost Hansen, contemporary dance performances, words from Scott Russell Sanders, Themester class and student organization presentations, and a final speech from IUOS Director Bill Brown on the Future of Sustainability at IU. The press release for the event can be found at the following link: <http://newsinfo.iu.edu/news/page/normal/16574.html>

## **THEMESTER 2010 MAGAZINE:**

As described previously, the final product for the Themester 2010 Programming internship is the Themester 2010 Magazine. The first step in this process was to create an outline of highlighted events and approve the selection with the Themester Steering Committee. The second step was to gather as much media from these events as possible, including photos, press releases, news articles and videos. I implemented an email and web-search search strategy to aggregate these documents. Once I compiled sufficient media, I learned to use Adobe InDesign and created the basic layout of the document and Table of Contents. For the next few months, I designed a 24-page electronic document that overviews Themester 2010 events. The magazine is not only informative but also visually appealing, and includes links to further resources such as artist websites or news articles.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The College Themester Programming internship is unique; it will not be offered again because it is particular to Themester 2010. However, there are lessons and examples from this position that can be applied to several other IUOS internships and activities.

The most vital recommendation I have being an IUOS intern, is to provide internship opportunities in programming for the future. I believe programming events is necessary and significant in supporting sustainability initiatives on a university campus. Programming is the key to raising awareness, promoting dialogue, and reinforcing existing initiatives. The more events happening on campus the more opportunities there are for IU students to learn ideas not offered in their general curriculum, or enhance the ideas and provide a unique experience.

However, there are challenges to programming that should be considered in the future. One important challenge is raising awareness about the programs themselves, and allow

easy and accessible access to event information. There are several campus and community calendars online that highlight sustainability events in addition to others, however there is not a single website that holds this information. For fall of 2010, the official Themester calendar satisfied this need. However, there is no current website that aggregates this information in a simple and accessible fashion.

This need became apparent to me when speaking with Diane Henshel at the Intern Symposium. She expressed her frustration as a faculty member without a one-stop resource website where she could send her students after Themester 2010 completed. She suggested a similar website should be created and linked to the official IU Office of Sustainability website. I reinforce her suggestion as the most significant recommendation I can provide for the future of sustainability-related programming at IU. Presently, on-going campus events are publicized via the IUOS email list-serv. For the future, I recommend events be publicized and easily accessible in one location on the IUOS official website, and organized similarly to the Themester 2010 online calendar (e.g. lecture, seminar, art exhibit). Furthermore, linking the Themester 2010 Magazine to this site provides a means to sustaining the ideas and events from Themester 2010: sustain.ability: Thriving on a Small Planet for years to come.