

M E M O R A N D U M

JCCC

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DATE: October, 2011
TO: Kim Criner
FROM: Gina Brewer
SUBJECT: STUDENT SURVEY OF SUSTAINABILITY—FALL 2011

The Office of Institutional Research was recently asked to survey JCCC students to gain insight into their perceptions of and interest in sustainability. The survey was administered electronically via email to 4,666 current credit students; two follow-up emails were sent as reminders to those who had not responded. In total, 798 surveys were submitted, resulting in a response rate of 17%.

Survey respondents were 36% male and 64% female. Respondents' ages ranged from 17 to 71 years old with an average age of 29, although most respondents were between the ages of 18 and 24 (47%). Nearly three-fourths (73%) of those responding were Caucasian.

Results are highlighted in the following bulleted points and detailed tables.

- Twenty-four percent of respondents indicated they understand the term 'sustainability' very well; 41% indicated they understand it well.
- Two-thirds of respondents associated the following words with the term 'sustainability': recycling, efficiency, and renewable.
- Nearly half of those responding indicated they are very interested in the topics of Health & the Environment (46%) and Renewable Energy (45%).
- Seventy-two percent either agreed or strongly agreed that studying topics related to sustainability will make them a more responsible citizen; 67% agreed/strongly agreed that studying topics related to sustainability will improve their quality of life.

Table 1
How Well Do You Believe You Understand the Meaning of the Term “Sustainability”?

	Frequency	Percent
Very Well	193	24.4%
Well	322	40.8
Average	231	29.2
Poorly	34	4.3
Very Poorly	10	1.3
Total Respondents	790	100%

Table 2
Which of the Following Words Do You Associate with the Term ‘Sustainability’?

	Frequency	Percentage
Recycling	535	67.0%
Efficiency	534	66.9
Renewable	528	66.2
Future Generations	519	65.0
Responsibility	515	64.5
Ecosystems	490	61.4
Daily Habits	464	58.1
Nature	444	55.6
Green	429	53.8
Important	416	52.1
Farming	406	50.9
Population Growth	378	47.4
Economics	375	47.0
Pollution	362	45.4
Public Health	348	43.6
Waste	342	42.9
Globalization	317	39.7
Fossil Fuels	306	38.3
Urban Planning	301	37.7
Climate Change	297	37.2
Water Rights	250	31.3
Politics	218	27.3
Social Justice	191	23.9
Poverty	194	24.3
Profitable	164	20.6
Extinction	159	19.9
Expensive	92	11.5
Over-regulation	86	10.8
Externalities	57	7.1
Hippies	49	6.1
Fad	42	5.3
Other	53	6.6
Total Respondents	798	

Note: Multiple responses allowed; therefore, percents total more than 100%.

Table 3

Please Indicate Your Level of Interest in Each of the Following Topics and Whether or Not Each Topic Has Been Discussed in Coursework.

	Level of Agreement							Coursework Discussion		
	Very Interested	Somewhat Interested	Neutral	Not Very Interested	Not at All Interested	Mean	N	Yes	No	N
Alternative transportation	27.8%	35.0%	22.8%	9.0%	5.4%	3.71	780	21.3%	78.7%	568
Climate change	28.6	34.2	24.6	7.9	4.8	3.74	777	33.6	66.4	568
Environmental regulations	27.0	37.5	26.2	6.3	3.0	3.79	778	31.1	68.9	570
Food systems	31.8	35.6	23.9	6.1	2.6	3.88	783	29.2	70.8	569
Health & the environment	46.1	35.8	13.7	2.4	1.9	4.22	779	45.4	54.6	570
Natural history	25.6	34.0	27.4	9.1	3.7	3.69	776	31.5	68.5	565
Renewable energy	45.1	32.7	15.7	4.5	2.0	4.14	783	30.5	69.5	567
Social justice	29.5	30.3	26.6	8.7	4.9	3.71	779	32.9	67.1	563
Sustainable business practices	29.6	33.1	24.0	8.3	5.0	3.74	780	28.4	71.6	566
Water conservation	38.9	38.2	16.1	4.4	2.3	4.07	769	21.7	78.3	553
Other	18.4	7.6	46.5	8.1	19.5	2.97	185	8.1	91.9	197

Note: Multiple responses allowed; therefore, percents total more than 100%.

Table 4
Please Indicate Your Level of Agreement with Each of the Following Statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	N
Studying topics related to sustainability will make me a more responsible citizen.	30.5%	41.9%	20.3%	4.4%	2.8%	3.93	787
Studying topics related to sustainability is important because it will play a part in my future career.	20.9	35.0	31.3	9.9	2.9	3.61	786
Studying topics related to sustainability will improve my quality of life.	28.1	39.0	25.9	4.5	2.6	3.86	783
It is not as important for me to focus on sustainability since there are others more capable of addressing it.	2.4	7.1	26.5	43.0	21.0	2.27	786
I am not interested in studying topics related to sustainability as it does not relate to the career I am working toward.	3.9	10.3	28.1	36.2	21.6	2.39	779
I have never really thought about the topic of sustainability; therefore, I can't say whether or not I am interested in it.	5.0	15.2	20.8	33.4	25.6	2.41	782
I am aware of sustainability, but I do not perceive it to be a problem.	1.8	8.3	26.8	35.4	27.7	2.21	783