ENVIR 480: Sustainability Studio

Final Reports

Community Engagement & Collaboration in Sustainability

PROGRAM ON THE ENVIRONMENT
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
College of the Environment
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**The Energy Efficiency Message: Creating an Internal Communications Strategy for the Port of Seattle**

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**From Informing to Empowering Youth**

**Client Partner:** Victoria Santos & Neli Jasuja, Young Women Empowered (Y-WE)  
**Project Team:** Nicole Chhou, Angie Lai, Anne-Marie Le, and Maricela Santana-Walle
Introduction

Sustainability Studio seeks to develop students as change agents in the pursuit of environmental sustainability at the University of Washington and in the greater Puget Sound. Institutions of higher education, including the University of Washington, play a critical role in fostering rapid and wide-reaching responses to our collective environmental challenges. The greatest leverage in achieving institutional change occurs when faculty, administration, and students collaborate. This course provides students the opportunity to immerse themselves into the real-world practice of institutional-scale sustainability through hands-on team projects and through partnerships with University of Washington faculty, administrative/facility staff, and a diverse array of community partners.

Sustainability Studio allows students to gain experience working with clients and to improve the state of sustainability in our community, all while learning about efficient and effective project design and management. The topic of Sustainability Studio changes each quarter. The Winter 2020 quarter topic of Sustainability Studio was Community Engagement & Collaboration in Sustainability.

In order to prepare students to complete work on their client project, Sustainability Studio coursework includes discussion and exploration of the following topics: communication, teamwork dynamics, consulting, project design, project management, critical thinking, navigating ambiguity, conflict resolution, systems thinking and mapping, behavior change, and public speaking.

The following is a compilation of final reports produced by students in the Winter 2020 quarter of Sustainable Studio.
Sustainability Studio Presents:

WINTER 2020

UW Environmental Justice Conference

UW EARTH DAY

50 YEARS

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Kurt Kung, Project Coordinator, Indoor Farming Project (Project IF)
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INTRODUCTION

As one of the most innovative public research universities in the United States, the University of Washington (UW) holds high expectations in regard to sustainability operations on campus. The university should not only raise the bar for its overall ecological footprint on the environment, but also its fair treatment of all people with respect to environmental law, regulations, and policies. Our project’s primary objective is to create an Environmental Justice Conference that demonstrates how different campus organizations and students are working towards making environmental justice an integral part of the UW community.

As an official event hosted by the UW Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, our group was tasked with developing a way to capture the ongoing discussions and methods in which Environmental Justice thrives within the UW community. This featured questions such as: How do we capture the essence of the UW student voice and portray that in an effective way at the conference? How can we give our input on the conference to ensure that it is not only engaging to the Environmental Justice community, but also the average student as well? As a result, one of our main goals was to create several high-quality short videos that focus on various ongoing projects, programs, and Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) within the UW community that operate to solve environmental issues and are proactive in their sense of environmental stewardship and justice. These videos will be showcased during the Environmental Justice Conference and made available to online public viewing afterwards. In addition to creating videos, we were tasked with creating marketing deliverables such as designing workshop flyers and listing different marketing channels to help cultivate student interest for the conference. Another portion of the project was to be a part of the workshop selecting committee. We provided our unique perspectives as students in selecting the most engaging and suitable workshops for the audience at the conference.

This final report follows our methodology in accomplishing the tasks and goals required from us to successfully complete this project. The following contains a complex step by step process of how our group worked together, partnered with our client, and collaborated with other groups to accomplish our three goals in order to achieve our primary objective.
METHODS

Establishing a Project Scope

We met with our client several times outside of the designated Studio Time. During our first official meeting with our client, we learned about her goals for the conference. Then, we created and shared with her a project proposal that outlined the scope of our project. This method of creating a project proposal allowed our group to map out the goals we believed we could take on along with being full time students. In our original project proposal, we outlined 3 major goals:

1. To **create 2-3 videos** that captured UW student involvement with environmental justice,
2. To **plan a marketing strategy** to attract an audience to the conference, and
3. To **participate in the workshop selection committee** that chose which workshops will be present at the conference.

Creating Conference Videos

Creating the media content to be showcased at the conference was a process that required extensive planning, research, scheduling, and editing. During team meetings, our group brainstormed possible people, student groups, and programs whose work was relevant to Environmental Justice and that we wanted featured in our videos for the conference. Using our client’s contacts as well as our own networks, we connected with people asking if we could interview them and film footage. In order to introduce ourselves professionally, our group created an introductory blurb to send out to our possible interviewees:

Hi [name],

We are a Program on the Environment student group interested in interviewing you or a representative from your RSO to showcase diverse student voices on sustainability and environmental justice. The College of the Environment Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion wants to know what your RSO has been working on with the community, what you appreciate about the UW’s efforts on environmental justice, and what UW can do better.

If you are interested in being featured in a short video or podcast, please contact us for more details. These videos will be featured as part of the upcoming Environmental Justice Conference on April 7th.

Sincerely,

[name]

Figure 1: Format of the introduction email sent to those we hoped to collaborate with to create the video portion of our project.
After making this initial connection and receiving some responses, we were able to schedule dates and times for our interviews and gather footage. Prior to our scheduled filming dates, our group brainstormed questions to ask during the interview. We formulated questions that would keep the interview structured and concise, while also invoke information and discussions that pertained to Environmental Justice. Some of the groups we interviewed included the UW Food Pantry, the UW Farm, and the Indoor Farming Project. Our group split into pairs and visited different locations to gather footage and interview the staff or students working at the specific site. In order to legally be able to use the footage gathered, our group printed out photo release waivers that were signed by each person that appeared in the filmed footage. After collecting the footage and voice recordings for the interviews, we uploaded our content for two group members to edit and produce the final video product.

Marketing Strategies
Another role of our team was to contribute toward marketing the Environmental Justice Conference to the students of UW. Because the conference was still far in the future, it was determined that some of the strategies to reach students would be better served being employed in the future. These strategies were to contact professors in several relevant departments to provide information about the event and potentially extra credit to students who attended the event, as well as reaching out on UW related social media platforms.

What we did do, however, was place the flyers (that our client made to advertise the conference date and location) around campus. First, we brainstormed the most effective locations to post the flyers. We narrowed down to bulletin boards at HFS Dorms and the HUB and tallied the number of flyers that would be needed to be printed. This was relayed to our client, who printed them. We picked up the flyers, got them approved by HFS and the HUB, then distributed them to HFS Terry Hall (which had Residential Advisors to put up the posters across campus dorms) and posted them at the HUB ourselves.

As for the flyers to advertise the conference workshops, we created the templates based on the information our client desired to see on the flyer: keynote speaker, workshop names, official title of the event, colorful and few words. Because this conference is a University of Washington hosted event, we were required to incorporate the University of Washington’s brand through specific graphics and logos. Using this information and Canva, a graphic design platform, we created two different templates for our client to choose from.

Selection Committee
A key aspect in developing this conference was finding speakers and workshops to have featured at the event. While our client had already organized the keynote speaker, our group was tasked with updating the grading rubric used to select the workshops that would participate in the
conference. Our client sent us the rubric used for past conferences. A group member was assigned the task of manipulating the criteria so that it was relevant to this year’s conference theme. This modified criterion was then used to choose the top workshops. After analyzing content, type of presentation, and interdisciplinary perspectives of the submitted proposals, we compiled our opinions and rankings from the grading rubric and sent our client our top three workshop recommendations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Addresses goals of the conference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Relevant to the UV and greater Seattle community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Strong rationale and significance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Expresses perspectives not often heard in the environmental field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The ideas presented can add to the environmental justice &quot;toolbox&quot; of the attendees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Fosters awareness and a call to action.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Presentation:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Design/format makes sense given the content that is presented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Clear learning objective(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Planned escalation gives space for engaging discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Engaging presentation that stimulates a call to action and inspires change in behavior.</td>
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<th>Inter/transdisciplinary Perspective:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The inter or transdisciplinary perspective presented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Integrates a participatory or community-based approach.</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does it examine underrepresented perspectives in environmentalism, through focusing solely on Christianity could be perceived as narrow. Will give participants new tools - e.g. debating EU in religious context.</th>
<th>Presentation format and workshop abs unclear Media/technology needs? Objectives make sense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
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Figure 2: Example of the team pitching in their opinion and giving a score for the workshop according to the workshop rubric.

### RESULTS

From our research, field work, and interviews, we found that there is a lot happening to further the discussion on environmental justice in our local campus community. Several organizations and RSOs on campus are actively working to combat environmental issues and support environmental justice, though they often go unnoticed by community members. We were fortunate to discover a few new people and groups on campus dedicated to this mission. The collaboration with different groups and staff members was a useful personal networking opportunity that also increased the collaborative relationships between the College of the Environment and diverse community organizations. Ultimately, we were successful in creating a
series of short videos, a strategic marketing plan for the conference, and recommendations for top three workshops.

Marketing Deliverable (1): Short Videos
To showcase the work that students and organizations on campus are doing, we directed and produced short videos for our client to showcase at the event. These videos interview participants and organizers of the UW Food Pantry, Project IF, and the UW farm. These videos will be presented in between speakers and workshops at the Environmental Justice Conference to keep participants engaged during transitions. The videos successfully capture student voices regarding how the conversation on environmental justice is ongoing at UW, and especially highlight how additional support and resources would benefit each of the groups.

Marketing Deliverable (2): Conference Poster
One way to garner student interest in the conference is to advertise the keynote speaker as well as the 4 workshops that will be held throughout the event day. Our client instructed that we create a colorful poster with minimal words. Because this conference is a University of Washington hosted event, we were required to incorporate the University of Washington’s brand through specific graphics and logos. Using Canva, a graphic design platform, one group member designed and created two different templates for our client to use (Image 1, Image 2). To make the templates more accessible for future editing, we gave our client access to the files. By clearly presenting the keynote speaker as well as the title and description for each workshop on the poster, we believe this will incentivize more people to attend the conference.

Marketing Deliverable (3): Strategic Plan to Attract Audience to the Conference
We came up with a plan to target our poster advertisement to designated areas and bulletin boards on campus (HFS Dorms, the HUB) to ensure that a variety of the student population is aware of the upcoming conference. We also created a contact list, shared with our client, that includes locations, contact persons, and other information about the best locations and methods of marketing the conference. Creating this strategic marketing plan achieves our second goal, which is to plan a marketing strategy to attract an audience to the conference.

Figure 3: Rough draft of the poster designed to advertise the keynote speaker and the four chosen workshops for the event.
Marketing Deliverable (4): RSVP and Exit Surveys

Our team created an online RSVP survey for our client to send out to the community to register for the event. This will not only help our client understand the background of those interested in attending the conference, but also help our client estimate the amount/types of catering food to provide at the event. Additionally, we created an Exit survey for our client to send out post-event to understand what the organizers can do better for the future conferences in terms of conference content and general logistics. This helps achieve and affirm that our primary objective, which is to increase conversation and knowledge about environmental justice on campus, was successfully carried through.

![Figure 4: RSVP and Exit Survey](image-url)
DISCUSSION

Over the course of the quarter, the results that our group produced met all the objectives we established in our original project proposal for our client. After our initial meeting with our client we were tasked with creating a project proposal that clearly organized the main objectives our group was capable of completing over a ten-week time period. This project proposal distinguished what we as a group of students were able to accomplish, as well incorporating the expectations that our client had set for us.

Creating a project scope before up taking this project and keeping our work within this scope throughout the quarter was vital to our success as a group. By assigning specific tasks to individual group members and helping each other finish our assignments, our collective efforts contributed to the overall achievement of our main objective: to organize UW’s Environmental Justice Conference.

As stated in the results, we were able to answer our research question by investigating and documenting the variety of discussions and actions taking place on the UW campus that are central to environmental justice. Our group was successful in fulfilling the goals that feed into accomplishing our main objective: designing and advertising marketing deliverables, creating video content for the event, and choosing workshops for the conference, were the goals created and accomplished, all within our project scope.

There were limited shortcomings in our data, we worked well within our scope. Our group performed the right amount of work expected by our client and held a high standard for the quality of results that we produced. Despite our conference being pushed back to a later date, our group continues to remain in contact with our client and will continue to offer our support and help if necessary, in the future, as we are excited to see this event in action. Though we were able to create 3 videos, we had footage of a 4th interview with the professor in charge of the NUTR 303 class associated with students being involved in the UW food system. We did not have enough time or back roll footage to finish this 4th one, however, and this could be considered a shortcoming.

Because there is still some time before the conference takes place, our group formulated some recommendations that may be valuable to our client and the overall execution of the conference.

Recommendations

**Location of the After-Party:**

Our client planned to host the after-party for the conference near the waterfront at the Agua Verde restaurant. If the goal is for students to network with professionals and the community, we
recommend that our client host the after-party at Alder Hall commons, the original location where the conference was taking place. As students are generally busy and want to maximize time efficiency, students may be less likely to move to another location for a networking session. To have the intention to network is already a big step for a student, so transitioning into networking on the same site will be beneficial for students and the community groups who want to converse with UW students.

**Post-Event Tabling for Organizations:**

We recommend our client incorporate a tabling option to allow RSOs student groups and environmental organizations, including those we interviewed, to table after the event. This would be a great opportunity for these environmental justice related groups to advertise their organization and allow students to take action about environmental justice right away. Holding a function after the event would also be a good time to send out an exit survey for conference attendees to take and see if this experience was beneficial to them.

**Moving the Conference to Zoom:**

This is a precautionary action to take in case Spring Quarter at UW will be held online. Since our client already has plans to possibly move the conference online using Zoom, we recommend a specific tool our client can use for the workshops. The “Breakout Rooms” tool will allow the organizer to split the Zoom meeting into separate sessions. This will help direct attendees to the respective workshops they desire to learn more from. Learning never stops!

**NEXT STEPS**

**Continue Marketing Strategies:**

Use different social media platforms, areas on campus, and campus organizations to reach a broad range of audiences to participate in the conference. Given the special circumstances that UW is currently facing, using online platforms to advertise for the conference ahead of time will more likely reach more people. Another way to market the event is to work with UW lecturers and professors in POE, Environmental and Forest Sciences, Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, and other related departments to provide students the opportunity to earn extra credit by attending the conference. This strategy was successfully employed in our ENVIR 480 class.

**Podcast Collaboration with the Student Advisory Council (SAC)**

To continue expanding the reach and scope of the conference, we recommend a continued collaborative effort to create content based on our work and the upcoming discussions at the conference. The College of the Environment SAC already works with podcast creators, so we got their information and expressed interest in a podcast featuring one or more conference participants. This podcast cannot be accomplished within our timeline, but we recommend that our client connect these podcast creators with speakers, participants, or others involved in the conference to discuss environmental justice at UW in more detail. The goal of the suggested
podcast is to capture the outcomes of the conference in a lasting format that will further expand the conference’s reach.

CONCLUSION

To reiterate, our primary goal is to create a conference that demonstrates how different organizations and students are involved in furthering the discussion on environmental justice. We presented to our client the following things to make her life easier:

Three professional videos that feature what UW organizations are doing related to environmental justice. This features students and staff involved with those organizations to display a complete picture of what is being done. The audience of the video will be those attending the conference as well as the general community and other schools that will have access to this video online. This will potentially be a tool for UW to build its reputation and showcase its student engagement on campus, as well as promoting these different organizations to the student population at UW.

Two flyer templates were designed to feature the keynote speaker and workshops. The flyer will attract students and community members to save the date for the conference. We strategized platforms that our client would display this poster on, such as bulletin boards at the HUB, HFS dorms, and online platforms. This helps spread the word and garner interest for the conference, which is one of our objectives in this project.

Top three recommendations for the most appropriate and engaging workshops to be held at the conference were provided to our client. We finalized our recommendations into a document and provided our student perspectives based on the guiding rubric to help our client judge what would be the most beneficial learning experiences for students.

Our results successfully met the complete scope of our preliminary project proposal. This will have a great impact on the Environmental Justice Conference in expanding the audience that it reaches and engages with. The marketing to students, video showcasing organizations on campus, and our team’s input on the workshops will increase the number of students that attend the conference and improve the impact the conference has on them. Our university, community, and city will benefit from these impacts in furthering the discussion of environmental justice.
REFERENCES


A Written Report by
Madeleine Schroeder, Maria Gee, Minjin Jang, and Nicki Chan

ENVIRONMENTALISM AND INTERSECTIONALITY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

In partnership with Dr. Terryl Ross
of the University of Washington
Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
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I. Introduction

The University of Washington is renowned for being an environmentally friendly institution. As stated on the UW website; “The UW is recognized as a national leader for its deep commitment to sustainability on the campus and its communities.” Currently, there are several plans in place and actions being taken in order to continue to make the campus more sustainable. In addition, the UW has been accepting students from diverse backgrounds and provides various programs related to diversity, and there are several centers and various resources that are available to all the students. These resources are in place in order to benefit the students and thus require involvement and engagement from the student body in order to function and be useful. We wanted to hear from some current students to collect ideas and opinions about environmentalism and diversity here at UW. We wanted to answer several questions, including how much current students know about what the school has been doing to be more sustainable and diverse, as well as what it would take for more students to get involved, and what changes they would like to see being made here on campus. It is important to hear from the student body because students are highly exposed and impacted by the environment and diversity at our school. It is important to hear from voices from all across the student body in order to fully represent the variety of opinions and interests here on campus.

Our main objective in this project is to engage the current students in the conversation on sustainability and diversity and assess the general idea about DEI and sustainability at UW. Our main target is the current students because of not only the aforementioned reason but also because the accessibility is limited to the client. The client is the Assistant Dean in the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at UW’s College of the Environment. When we discussed potential projects with the client, most project concepts were fairly open-ended yet had a common emphasis on assembling and projecting the voices of current Huskies. From a faculty member’s perspective, it can be difficult to gather students who are willing to be interviewed. It is typically uncomfortable for students when having a conversation with a professor or other faculty member because they may tend to get nervous and try to answer as nicely as they can. We, as students, can be resources for the client by conducting interviews that are more like relaxed, peer-to-peer conversations that then produce more natural, honest responses from the interviewees.
By collecting ideas and opinions about sustainability and diversity, we are building up community engagement related to sustainability. It is hard to get voices from students via surveys online or on paper. Statistically, it is more biased when the participants voluntarily answer the questions because it somewhat assumes that they are already interested or have more background knowledge than people who decided not to complete the survey. Hence, we concluded that going around the campus and asking randomly would make us collect wider and more unique answers.

There are no specific hypotheses for this project because it can possibly impact the answers from the interviewees, so we went in with open minds and tried not to predict or influence the direction of each interview. Trull mentioned that planning is essential to have a clear purpose for the interviews and successful interviews. On the other hand, he states that too much preplanning and detailing can be equally harmful because it might unintentionally lead the interviewees to give answers that the interviewer is looking for. (Trull, 1964) We had a loose framework of the interview video that we knew would be our final product, and a long list of potential interview questions that evolved and clarified itself as we interviewed more people and gained experience. The project started from a blank and built up with lots of interesting ideas from the students.

II. Methodology

To collect ideas about sustainability and diversity at the UW, our team divided into two groups and looked for students to interview. We tried to go to different places and buildings where there are lots of people. In particular, we chose to go to the HUB, Red Square, the Quad, Paccar Hall, and the Ethnic Cultural Center (ECC). Our goal was to interview a diverse range of people, so we tried to choose people as randomly as possible. The very first step is to introduce our project and ourselves and ask if the student is willing to be interviewed and filmed. If a student does not want their face to be filmed, we instead filmed the scenery while audio recording their statements. We began by asking about basic information such as their name, year, and major; and then continued with our several interview questions (see below). We filmed each discussion with individuals for about two to five minutes. After the discussion, we asked each interviewee to fill out a consent form provided by the client. The consent form is to get permission from the interviewee that we can display the video or sound recording electronically.
via the internet or in a public educational setting. However, the purposes of the recordings are limited to on-line and off-line educational videos, presentations in courses, informational presentations, and conference presentations. Lastly, we ended each interview by giving out information about Earth Fest 2020 and the list of 50-for-50 pledges. People seemed to be excited when we told them that it is the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. We encouraged people to get more involved by providing a QR code that links to the list of 50-for-50 pledges on the College of the Environment website. The Figure 1 shown below is the QR code that we created.

![QR code](image)

Figure 1. QR code

Once we collected about 20 interviews, the next step was to film a short introduction clip and then compile the interviews into one video. We initially planned to let the interviewee choose the questions they wanted to answer from our long list of potential questions, but we learned that the conversation went much smoother if we asked them the same few questions every time. We decided to ask about general ideas about UW sustainability and diversity as well as some interesting/fun questions. Since the video is potentially made for advertisement, we wanted to make it both informative and exciting.

Questions we asked each interviewee:

1. Have you heard of DEI at the UW? If so, what is your general opinion about DEI?
2. What was your relationship with nature/exposure to it growing up?
3. In terms of UW sustainability, what is working? (In general, how do you think UW is doing at being sustainable?)
4. What has been your involvement with environmentalism and/or Earth Day?
5. What would it take for you to get more involved?
6. If you were given a magic wand and you could make any change at the UW on environmentalism (and/or diversity), what would you change?
III. Results

Overall, based on the answers from interviewees, UW students (undergraduate) do not know about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) under the College of Environment. Many students knew about Earth Day, but many did not know about the 50th anniversary or the upcoming Earth Fest at UW. To those who had never heard of DEI, we explained who they are and what they do, as well as providing information on the upcoming Earth Fest.

A lot of the interviewees actually have a desire to become more environmentally friendly and sustainable, however, when asked about their actual involvement with campus sustainability there were not many that could clearly answer why they were not involved. Some of them said they simply do not have time to get involved and others simply didn’t think that environmental groups were well advertised on campus. It wasn’t that these students did not want to get involved, rather, they weren’t aware of what kinds of things they could get involved in.

In many cases, one reason why students decided to attend the University of Washington in particular was because of the nature and greenery of its location. Because of this as well as the formative and beneficial past experiences in nature that many interviewees talked about, students had more of a desire to take action to help the environment. One interviewee said he would grow more cherry blossom trees on the campus if given a magic wand, and another said she would completely redesign campus to be a natural forest full of trees.

We observed that people based the campus’s level of sustainability largely off of what they could see. For instance, several people mentioned that UW is doing great at being sustainable by having three different trash bins for compost, landfill, and recycle. Rather than taking measurements off of different environmental certifications the university has received, the more perceivable way to measure the success of environmentalism at UW is what has been most obvious to them.

Many students on campus do have good ideas for ways that the university can be sustainable and opinions regarding the current state of sustainability on campus. Whether it be more electric campus vehicles, cutting down on single use plastic, or having a reusable container system in dining facilities, students had ideas to improve the level of sustainability at UW. These are potentially next steps UW can take in terms of sustainability.

Some students felt that of the environmental RSOs offered on campus, they all felt very exclusive. Students voiced that sometimes getting committed to these RSOs was difficult
because these groups had a certain “vibe” that made people feel excluded if you didn’t fit their prescribed personality type. Thus, these students wanted to see more collaboration across campus to combat this feeling of exclusiveness and bring more sustainability to other RSOs across campus as well. An exchange student mentioned that he was able to see diverse clubs, but collaboration would be much better to broaden each community.

IV. Discussion/Recommendations

Within our limited amount of time, we were still able to hear from a diverse range of students. Our initial goal was to interview about 20 people, but we were able to get 30 students. Throughout these interviews, our group was able to answer a lot of our research questions and get a grasp towards how they felt about the environment. However, hearing from more and more students will be beneficial in continuing to work towards the objective of spreading awareness, encouraging involvement, and collecting opinions and ideas.

The shortcoming of this project was that it was quite challenging to get students fully involved in more sustainable practices such as the 50 for 50 pledge. Though we did promote the 50th anniversary of Earth Day and Earth Day Fest this year, the event was about 2 months ahead of our promotion which made it hard to stick in the minds of students to get more involved right now. People would simply show their optimism and walk away after learning about the list. Granted, we don’t truly have a way to measure whether or not they decided to participate later on, it was hard to truly gauge how committed they were to be living a more sustainable lifestyle. However, it is obviously something that we cannot force people to participate in. In addition, a few people were simply not interested in school events. After asking them different questions regarding their involvement, at the end of the day becoming more sustainable was not on their priority list. In these cases, we received a lot of short answers such as “no” or “I don’t care” which indicated that their passions may lie elsewhere other than environmentalism. Some solutions for this shortcoming are giving the students extra credit opportunities for certain courses by participating in the Earth Day Fest or giving out raffle tickets to participants. Fun opportunities such as a raffle could encourage people to join the event by grabbing people’s attention even during advertising.

The collection of ideas and compiled video can be used various ways by the client. Here are recommendations for the client:
a. Utilize the video for advertising

We would recommend using the video we have created to advertise for the upcoming Earth Day Fest. Since the video includes various students’ opinions about UW environmentalism and DEI, we think that it would grab the attention of other current students at UW. Each question can be split into shorter clips and posted on SNS such as Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter, so people can become aware of Earth Day Fest as well as the 50th anniversary. Based on answers from the interviewees, people tend to know about the Earth Day but not about the 50th anniversary or upcoming events related to it. To support this recommendation, most of the interviewees have not heard of DEI under the College of Environment. Hence, the video can definitely be used for advertisement. DEI could use informative videos that they might have, but we think hearing about how other students think can get the other students’ attention.

b. Share with your peers and coworkers

We think interviewees felt more comfortable answering to us (students) rather than professors or faculty members asking some questions. Sharing the video with your peers and coworkers will allow more people in DEI and College of Environment to hear more from the UW student body. In addition, we think our client can move forward based on some great ideas from the interviewees. The very last question we asked each interviewee was what they would change in terms of sustainability and/or diversity if given a magic wand. There are some answers (See Results for detailed answers) that can be possibly started by the UW or at least communicated to organizations on campus that can begin to take action.

V. Next Steps

Moving beyond the extent of this quarter, there are some key steps in ensuring the continuation of this project.

a. Further Develop Awareness

A key aspect towards creating an environment on campus that fosters collaboration between different groups of people is to hold events that increase the awareness of sustainability. Whether this be through a campus wide event or utilizing different platforms available to students, students can be informed of different opportunities in which they might be able to increase their own participation with environmentalism. The platform that may be most applicable to develop more awareness to students may be the most successful on social media or
a website. In this way, DEI can reach a larger audience quicker and faster than using signage or tabling across campus. By providing a platform in which students can be more involved in their own sustainable practices, a movement can be sparked to create more sustainable lifestyles.

b. Continue Interviews

The more voices raised, the more the interviews better represent the student body at UW. Given the timing of the quarter system, our group was limited to less than 10 weeks to collect and compile the video together. Because of this, another aspect to continue on this project is to conduct more interviews. Though we did cover a wide range of different majors and backgrounds of students at UW, the 30 interviews conducted can only account for a very small percentage of the student body. In addition, the continuation of more diverse interviews across campus can contribute to more than just an intersectionality video. These interviews are also great ways in which conversations can be started with students about how they can get involved with environmentalism. A large part of our own interview process heavily involved simply informing students of what DEI was and how students can be more sustainable in their daily lives. Interviews are a great platform to create an environment on campus where students can speak openly about their own opinions and feel heard.

c. Implement Ideas

As stated above, this project created a way for student voices to be heard across campus. But beyond the extent of voicing student opinions, this project can take what students have said and begin to implement/make changes. In many of the interviews we conducted, there were a lot of different ideas to help make UW a more sustainable campus. Thus, using these observations from students, DEI can begin to compile ideas and concepts presented by students to be carried out onto campus. Planning the more logistical side of costs, efficiency, and practicality are things that DEI can take into consideration as they begin to narrow down sustainable practices proposed by students.

VI. Conclusion

In conclusion, we learned that while most students are not actively involved with environmentalism on campus, the vast majority do have an awareness of what UW is doing to become more sustainable as well as an interest in learning more and becoming more involved in the future. Many students have insightful opinions and original ideas on sustainability here at
UW. An inspiring takeaway from this project is how many students want to become more involved and continue to learn about environmentalism. As one of the interviewees stated; “It’s never enough, so it doesn't hurt to do more.”
VII. References

The Energy Efficiency Message:
Creating an Internal Communications Strategy
for the Port of Seattle

Gert-Jan van Doorn, Kyle Crane and Mattijs Holler, Cara Payne, Hanna Rush

In collaboration with Amira Chowyuk & The Port of Seattle
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Introduction

Our primary objective for this project is to generate a report on how other entities educate their employees on new energy efficiency programs. The Port of Seattle faces the unique challenge of having to communicate these ideas across more than 80 properties, with some run directly by the Port, while others are rented out to independent owners. We need to figure out the best techniques to communicate these goals to a diverse crowd, adapting strategies that other companies have used and deciding which would be most effective when it comes to the Port of Seattle educating their employees and renters on their new energy efficiency program. While we do want to complete as much research and analysis as possible, our primary goal is to attain the most useful information (quality over quantity). It is important to gain relevant research because this would allow us to create a more specific plan for Amira. This plan would outline the steps that the Port should take in order to use the best techniques when it comes to educating all the Port of Seattle employees on the new energy efficiency programs and goals. When meeting with our client, she outlined the following goals for the project:

- To identify a list of pathways, platforms and strategies the Port may be able to deploy to launch an internal communications strategy on:
  - Educating employees on programs and goals
  - Reducing CO2 emissions
  - Utilizing and implementing alternative energy
  - Involving public organizations (universities, cities, ports, nonprofits, government agencies, public entities) in communications within the port
- To align pathways, platforms and strategies for effective internal communications with Port of Seattle building energy-related goals and initiatives
- To identify a list of pathways, platforms and strategies the port may be able to deploy to launch an internal building energy communications strategy
- To identify common key performance indicators (KPIs) used in communicating energy related content to a broad audience
To identify storytelling and engagement strategies and opportunities that connect people to the energy they consume

From this list of criteria, we decided to focus on finding the most effective ways of internal communication. With such a wide variety of people working in and around the Port, having several viable strategies to communicate with them would be most useful to the client. We needed a way to engage port workers in the guidelines that were being set, so that this transition would feel less like the Port putting new restrictions on the workers and tenants, and more like the entire Port community was working together toward a common goal. From these challenges, we drafted an initial research question:

What are the most effective internal communications strategies to use to spread information on building energy efficiency?

While the question is a bit broad in scope, we were hoping to start large-scale with our research, collecting a variety of methods for communication, then later narrow it down to more specific solutions that would best apply to our client and the Port communities.
Methods

Our group decided that the best initial approach would be to collect research on other entities and to understand what worked well for them and didn’t (both in educating their own employees and the general public on new energy programs). Reaching out to a variety of people and understanding what worked well for them would help us to narrow in on what strategies work, then custom tailor them for our client’s project. We planned to reach out and email as many companies as possible, but were anticipating that some may not reply or may not have the information we are looking for. So, in addition to directly talking to others, we planned to research what strategies were implemented in past reports, using their write-ups on internal communications to inform our decisions. Our original goal was to talk with at least five companies on their environmental communications programs, and read the reports of at least three other entities with past successes in communications. With that goal in mind, we created the following outline of what data we were looking for:

1. **What types of questions will you ask?**
   1. What is the name of the company/organization?
   2. What type of company/organization is this?
   3. Where is it located?
   4. Do you have an energy efficiency plan?
   5. How have you communicated your plan within the company?
   6. Has this internal communication plan been effective? Can you think of any ways you could improve it?

2. **How are you choosing your sample population to interview?**
   We will be looking for other ports that have implemented energy efficiency strategies and that would potentially have a communications strategy for their energy efforts. We will also be looking at other organizations such as Microsoft or the City of Seattle that have energy efficiency plans for their sites and who could possibly be useful to interview.
iii. **What are the objectives of your research?**

Our project focuses on internal communications within the Port of Seattle, finding effective ways to communicate energy efficiency goals and strategies to those who work at the port. In addition, we will be researching other companies (local and abroad) who have a history of strong communications in efficiency and know how to isolate key indicators of performance, so that we can report back with ideas on what strategies and key indicators that the Port should invest in moving forward.

iv. **How will you collect your research?**

We plan to look into strategies used in past successful energy programs, specifically by interviewing and emailing ports and businesses that are known for their sustainable energy.

v. **Does your study include cost projections?**

No, the current scope of our project does not include cost. We have been asked to identify the key pathways that the Port can consider, the Port itself will later do cost analysis to decide on its strategy moving forward.

vi. **Are you studying comparison locations?**

Yes, we will be looking to compare similar projects to our own to see what strategies will be effective for the Port of Seattle. We plan to interview other ports in the world, as well as smaller businesses, who are known for their prowess in energy efficiency.

We originally aimed to have most of our data come from the companies that we interview, with the research done as a supplemental to back up their claims or give our own take on the info they provided. However, due to lack of responses to the initial survey, the research ended up having a larger impact on our recommendations than the survey did. To supplement the lack of responses from professionals, we decided to reach out to Port employees instead via survey on communications, to get their thoughts on what forms of communication they thought worked well or liked to receive. Seeing as they were the audience for the report that would eventually be sent out, and that they had experience receiving internal communications memos,
Port employees provided helpful information on how to draft effective memos. Our research would help shape what information we would include, and the employee responses would help shape how we present it, giving us a holistic view of how the information changes hands, start to finish.

In terms of what is feasible for the final product, we are aiming to have a general step by step plan that outlines the best communication strategy for education within the Port of Seattle. These different steps would outline the goal, the audience, what messages we want to send/what information we want to convey, and then a final step that demonstrates how exactly the information needs to be presented to the audience to achieve the greatest effect. With a variety of people we need to reach out to within the Port, our recommendations will have to include some flexibility within it, allowing us to adjust the methods and the message to best connect with our target audience. The end product we created is a few multi-step suggestions for activities and steps the port can take to engage their workers and the community, and a survey from the Port of Seattle employees that shows their preferences for how to be contacted about environmental updates to their workplace.
Results

In this section we will present our research results which we conducted over the last couple of weeks. First, we have the results of the survey. The survey gave us the most valuable information. Next up are the results from the emails we sent out to different companies and organizations. Sadly, we did not get any results from this method. Lastly, we have the research section. For this we used a couple of peer-reviewed articles.

Our Findings

From survey:

- Seven responses
- Departments reached: 2 people from maritime environment & sustainability, 2 people from the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (OEDI), one from corporate, one from engineering, and one from Pier 69 facilities management
- Two people were unaware of the Port’s energy efficiency goals/strategies, 5 were aware; though everyone wanted to learn more
- When asked about building sustainability of the Port and how they’d like to learn more: 3 wanted a workshop, two people chose to learn the info from an email, while two others wanted posters around the workplace.
- There was a variety in the responses on what type of information they’d like to learn about including: detailed information on the plans, facts relevant to specific departments, simple things that can be done to save energy/money on a personal level, short/fun facts
- Everyone showed interest in a workshop when specifically asked about it
  - 6 people wanted a workshop that was a couple times a year to update employees on new strategies, one person wanted monthly workshops
- Additional interest was shown in short informational videos, a newsletter, competition “biggest loser” style for GHG

Survey Results (Graphics)
Q: Are you aware of the Port’s new energy efficiency goals / strategies?

Q: What’s your preferred way of receiving sustainability info about the Port?

Q: What type of information would you like to learn about?
From emails:

- We were not able to get any responses to our email survey that we sent out to organizations who we thought would have useful information for us or experience in creating internal communications strategies (ex: other Port organizations, environmental consulting firms, and people within the City of Seattle government)

From research:

- Suggestions for effective communication included (Djordjevic & Cotton, 2011):
  - Use captivating information, know your audience, use a credible source, make your message memorable, focus on action, emphasize personal contact (provide opportunities for people to talk to one another), provide feedback (show effectiveness of new behavior)

- Study by UK professors in 2011 found these opinions of their employees regarding sustainability communication (Djordjevic & Cotton, 2011):
  - Many people thought that there was a lack of commitment from the top, and that there was low priority given to sustainability by the senior managers
  - Important to show employees why they should care about sustainability now for future generations’ sake
  - Need to have targeted information for each of the different sectors of the company
  - Liked having brief, very accessible documents
  - Also important to have face to face interactions in combination with electronic communication channels

- Suggestions for effective internal communication on sustainability (Kataria et al., 2013):
  - Conduct a sustainability communication study within a company in order to determine what employees want to hear and what they care about
o Segment employees into structural levels of demographics instead of one large group in order to target communication (ex: what do engineers want to hear about building sustainability vs. finance people)

o Face to face communication allows for immediate response from the listener

o Focus on straight and simple messages rather than long paragraphs/presentations

o Emphasize the facts that motivate people professionally

The most relevant information we got through the survey, which we conducted in the Port of Seattle and through peer-reviewed articles and papers. The survey helped us the most and gave us information on what the employees would like to know about, and which communication designs they liked the most. The workers showed the most interest in the workshop which could be held a couple of times a year and would update them with new strategies. During our literature research we found more general knowledge which included the idea of the survey to find out what the workers like. It also gave us ideas which helped us develop our Newsletters. During the quarter we reached out to a large amount of companies and asked them to fill out a short survey. Sadly, we did not receive any responses. All in all, we got a lot of very good responses and results which really helped us with our project for the Port of Seattle.
Our Recommendations

Proposal 1: Stated below is our first proposal. What sets this proposal aside from others is that it revolves around what the employees of the Port want based on the survey that was issued to them. This proposal is reflective of a combination of the employee’s preferences and research on other studies from academic papers involving internal communications strategies. Therefore, through using suggestions from previous research, this proposal builds off of previously researched ideas on how to best communicate sustainability ideas within a company. A limitation of this approach is that there were only seven responses from the survey, so it is hard to say that it is going to be a plan representative of all the employees' opinions, though we strongly believe that these communication methods will be most effective for the Port employees.

STEP 1: Have a conference/workshop outlining the basics of the energy efficiency plans and the goals of the port in the future years. Having a workshop to explain these technical details would be most beneficial so people could answer questions because the survey told us that people were interested in hearing detailed information about the Port’s energy efficiency plans.

- What has already been done at the Port to increase energy efficiency (Port of Seattle Website)
  - 2019 Environmental Scorecard
  - Solar panels at Fisherman’s Terminal and Pier 69
  - Pier 69 Energy Star recognized → focus on optimizing existing systems
    - “Electrical usage was reduced by 50 percent from the original usage level. That reduction equals more than 2.38 million KW hours of annual savings. At current electricity rates, the KWh saved is equal to $160,000 in annual savings”
    - Equipment wear and tear has been significantly reduced, and indoor air quality complaints have been reduced by 80 percent
  - 2030 target 50% reduction from baseline for:
- Building electricity: POS use & tenant use
- Building natural gas: POS use
- Fleet vehicles and equipment
- Employee commuting
- Solid waste

o 2050 target reduction from baseline:

- Building electricity: POS use 100%
- Building electricity: tenant use 80%
- Building natural gas: POS use 100%
- Fleet vehicles and equipment 100%
- Employee commuting 80%
- Solid waste 80%

o Go over what these goals mean and how they’ll be achieved

- Reduce building/facility energy use
- Phase out natural gas
- Increase use of renewable energy
- Improve lighting efficiency, HVAC efficiency, building/facility data collection and management, building systems and controls
- Apply high performance lease terms
- Enhance energy conservation communication and education

o Go over climate change mitigation plan (CCMP)

- Sustainable fleet plan
- Maritime solid waste management plan
- MEC energy efficiency plan
- Commute trip reduction plan

o Explain what the ISEE team is and what their objectives are
Inform people on where to find more information and who to contact for further questions, and reference the following steps so the employees are aware of what’s going on.

**STEP 2:** Make newsletters to send out, either through email or as flyers/posters around the workplace. In these newsletters they can explain any new updates on what is happening. Also, in these flyers/emails there could be an option to email/submit questions so the answers can be covered in future newsletters. Put an interactive screen in the lobby showing the Port’s energy efficiency goals, how close they are to being completed, different aspects of the building that are sustainable (cheaper option: make posters and hang them around the office).

*What type of information to include?*

- Short/fun facts about energy efficiency, related to the port specifically
- Things that people can do to themselves to make a difference
- What people can do to help with the opportunities they have (survey response)
- If this is an email newsletter, finding relevant energy efficiency videos that can help people

*When will we send out newsletters?*

- Monthly newsletters

**STEP 3:** Put an interactive screen in the lobby showing the Port’s energy efficiency goals, how close they are to being completed, different aspects of the building that are sustainable (cheaper option: make posters and hang them around the office).

*What information will be featured on the screen?*

- Short facts about energy efficiency at the Port
- Features of Port employees who have implemented sustainable practices into their roles at the Port
- Running count of electricity created by solar panels
- Sustainability events going on in collaboration with the Port
When will we update the screen?

- Update the screen monthly or as new pertinent news stories arise

STEP 4: Follow up workshop on progress that the Port has been done, any important updates or big changes. Address difficulties and what people can do to help achieve goals. Ensure that the Port’s sustainability website is up to date and one person or one team is designated to be updating the website with the most current information.

Proposal 2: While this proposal is less comprehensive than the first proposed idea, it would be considerably less difficult to fully implement, and if done well could be more successful in engaging the port employees in sustainability talks. This proposal could also be used along with the separate sections that make up our first proposal in order to create more direct involvement of Port employees. One of the weaknesses of this approach is that it would take significant interest and effort from the employees, but if done well could serve as a way for them to be engaged in the process.

STEP 1: Make an announcement via email or newsletter about the Port holding a competition to see who can reduce the most waste and emissions in their lives.

What sorts of things should they do?

- Use of alternative transit to and from work counts toward reduction in emissions
- Increased use of recycling and compost to reduce waste produced
- Decrease purchase and consumption of goods throughout the week
- Include a list of recommendations on the initial announcement so people know what they can do to make a change

STEP 2: Get people engaged in the idea and make a real commitment to change.

How do we get people to care?

- Keep the changes that can be made small so that people feel they really have a say in their environmental impact
• Help develop this sort of friendly competition as a community affair, build community values during this challenge
• Show that leaders in the community are willing to make a change as well

The two above mentioned proposals are slightly different in their methods, but when executed well, they can be similarly effective. The first proposal will be more costly to implement, and will need more work to get started, but does a much better job getting the Port employees involved in the process. Having workers be a part of hands-on activities and workshops will allow people to learn while being active, and we hope that a sense of camaraderie and community can be built as a result. If this approach is successful, it can be expanded beyond the Port and its employees, with similar workshops and activities being opened to the surrounding community. If the first suggestion is found to be ineffective or too difficult to implement well, the second proposal is a much easier and more cost-effective way to get similar results. The key difficulty with proposal two is that it takes more commitment from the people in charge, rather than having the entire community help design and implement it.

Both of the proposals can be very effective when executed well, but we would recommend the first proposal more than the second. We feel that getting employees and the community engaged in the Port of Seattle is the most efficient way to spread information over a long time span, and with the large scope of this project, getting people involved in recurring events is a great way to keep this project in the public eye.
Next Steps

For the next steps we would recommend going through our results and choose the method that works best for the company. The two ideas below are the most effective methods which we researched.

Workshops

We would recommend starting with our workshop outline as the first workshop, then using the results and feedback from the workers who attend the workshop to tell what changes should be done to improve the workshop. From there, you can use the feedback to develop a new outline. Keeping these workshops revolved around employee feedback will ensure that the community stays engaged with the activities and feels that they have input in the process. In addition, future surveys could also be sent out to help outline what information needs to be in future workshops. The key here is to make sure this is a community built and maintained event. Collect feedback, make changes, make the workshop an evolving concept that keeps people engaged in the Port and its goals.

Competition

The competition will motivate the workers a lot to be sustainable and help them to change their lifestyle. It will also bring the workers of a company closer together which will improve the social environment in the company as well. By using the outcoming results of the competition the management can reflect on the results and use the information to update their future flyers or if given their info screen.
Conclusion

During our research, we came across several strategies to communicate within a company but making sure that the methods used are best for the target audience is key. Communication within a company is critical, and it should be accessible for everyone. When considering the variety of people and places the Port has to reach out to, we decided that newsletters, competitions, and workshops would be the most effective way to communicate with and engage with Port of Seattle workers. Our research into successful internal communications and the survey sent out to Port employees suggest that the above methods are the most attractive and agreeable ways to communicate sustainability goals. People are willing to change their habits so that they can be more sustainable, but often do not know how. We hope that our proposed methods can provide people with this missing information, and connect them to their surrounding communities, collectively working towards a more sustainable future.

We would like to formally thank Amira and the Port of Seattle for this opportunity and the skills we gained on this project. We hope that the Port is successful in creating a community with sustainability as a central value, and wish them the best of luck in their future endeavors.


Collecting and Sharing Diverse Perspectives on Sustainability:

By Alyssa Wolfe, Ashley Corletto, Elizabeth James, Abigail Serna
In partnership with Chukundi Salisbury from Seattle Parks and Recreation
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Introduction

This quarter our group worked with Seattle Parks and Recreation on the creation of a Sustainability Summit. The goal of this event is for people to share their ideas and spread knowledge on the broad and unique definitions of sustainability. We hope to accomplish this by inviting businesses and organizations from Seattle to share their experiences and strategies relating to sustainability. Overall the Summit intends to be a space for communication, collaboration, and learning. We are creating a space for people to share their success stories, strategies, and discussion and debate. Ultimately, we want to promote education and growth around the topic of sustainability.

As the 50th anniversary of Earth day comes around it is important to appreciate how far we have come with the environmental movement. It is also important for us to recognize the ways that we could be improving. There are often groups within the community that are not heard from when it comes to making decisions, and now is our time to change this. Therefore, our first goal for this project was to reach out to as many businesses as we could within Seattle, and ask them for their perspectives. This would allow us to ask stakeholders what they personally feel is missing or wrong in the sustainability area and how they would like to see change.

This project is far-reaching and will rely on many different components. In order to tackle this, we started by developing a specific and attainable goal for our group. Our first goal was to engage the community. We did this by reaching out to businesses around Seattle and asking them how they define sustainability and how they incorporate it into their workplace and community. It was important for us to ask this because it provided us with valuable information on businesses’ unique experiences and perspectives.

In general, there are three branches of sustainability: environmental, economic and social. Through our outreach we wanted to explore how Seattle businesses prioritize and balance these branches. This information would then be used to help plan the Summit. This would allow us to highlight challenges and achievements that businesses feel are most important. After gathering this information our group worked to develop a database of these organizations and their responses. This database was used to create an infographic to share with other people, businesses, and potential attendees of the summit.

Our overall goal was to gather information about how people think, manage and define
sustainability, then to organize it into a way that is easily accessible for those who are interested. We wanted to create something that anyone can access while also promoting the attendance of the Sustainability Summit.

Methods

In order to determine how sustainability is defined within different businesses and organizations, we created a short survey using Google Forms. We asked four main questions:

1. How does your organization define sustainability?
2. How does your organization incorporate sustainability in its everyday practices and within the workplace?
3. What are some challenges your organization has encountered/is encountering in regards to sustainability?
4. Would you/your organization be willing to attend a Sustainability Summit, hosted by Seattle Parks and Recreation, within the near future?

Our goal was to reach out to a wide variety of organizations that are not considered traditionally sustainable. To accomplish this, each group member was assigned to a different business sector to research. These sectors were non-profit organizations, food establishments, retail, and transportation companies. Our aim was to research companies in these sectors that implement unique sustainable practices, and find appropriate contact information. Next, group members contacted general managers or upper management employees and included a link to the Google Form in the email.

Many businesses did not respond to our emails or follow up emails. In order to gather more data we decided to adopt an in person approach by surveying businesses in the University Village shopping center. Our new strategy was to enter businesses and ask for a manager. We introduced ourselves as students from the University of Washington working with Seattle Parks and Recreation on a project. We opened the google survey on our laptop for managers to fill out in person. Using this approach allowed us to gather enough responses to identify unique sustainable projects and find trends within the data.

Results

After counting and collecting the responses, it was determined that 44 different
businesses and organizations were contacted. However, only 33% responded to our survey. The majority of the companies that provided a response were located in the University Village shopping center.

Originally we aimed to contact four types of organizations, as mentioned in our methodology. When looking over our database, we realized we could divide the organizations into more categories beyond our original four. Out of all of the responses, 23.7% came from the food industry, 31.6% were larger corporate businesses, and 13.2% were part of the transportation sector.

Some of the businesses that we highlighted in the booklet include: Amour Vert, Postmates, and Sole Food. These businesses provided unique answers to our questions and gave information that could serve as an example for similar businesses.

After reading the responses from the survey, we noticed 3 overarching themes. Many businesses engage in external efforts to be sustainable, implement eco-friendly practices, and rely on city services. Companies that engage external sustainability efforts strive to source goods from local places, take part in ethical production, or use recycled goods to make their products. Portage Bay, a Seattle based breakfast cafe sources locally grown and ethically produced food items. This is done to support local farmers and the health of the planet. Other businesses like Fireworks seek vendors that support environmentally-friendly causes. Many organizations also encourage employees to take part in eco friendly practices, from composting to using local or
reusable items within the workplace. One of the commonalities among the survey responses is the reliance of different types of infrastructure. Some businesses outside of the transportation sector mentioned that they have difficulty traveling sustainably. Postmates mentioned that a lack of access to affordable and reliable public transit is a challenge they encounter. In addition to transportation services, organizations also rely on adequate composting and recycling bins and practical resources to practice sustainability.

![Figure 2: Page from Booklet highlighting statistics found from results](image)

**Discussion**

Through our data collection we were able to effectively answer our research question and discover some interesting commonalities between organizations and their efforts to be sustainable. Despite the wide variety of organizations we contacted, we were able to identify common themes within their responses in terms of both, successful ways businesses work on sustainability, and factors that challenge them.

The first common theme we identified is that most organizations make an effort to recycle and compost their waste. This is not completely surprising considering we reached out to businesses and organizations in Seattle, a city that is used by others as a model for sustainability. Nonetheless, 70% of respondents mentioned recycling and composting in their answers on how they work to be a sustainable entity. Some businesses expanded upon how they strive to do this
as well. For example Pasta & Co. mentioned in their answer that, “Holding everyone to the same standard and making sure people don’t get lazy,” is an important part of diligently sorting waste. This is an important point that all organizations and individuals can learn from. Recycling and composting is only as effective as the people sorting their waste are. Another interesting finding is, even though many individual businesses sort their trash, if the complex they are a part of does not provide industrial compost bins, their effort goes to waste. For example, if Chipotle in the University Village composts, but University Village as a whole does not, their compost will end up in the larger trash bin.

The second commonality we found was the emphasis of using eco-friendly packaging, specifically mentioned by businesses in the food industry. Many of them said that they try to use the least amount of packaging and unnecessary manufacturing waste. For instance, Portage Bay said that they purchase ingredients in bulk to minimize packaging waste, Pasta & Co switched to compostable packaging for their products, and PostMates said that they are “piloting eco-friendly packaging.” After analyzing this data, we discovered that 75% of businesses in the food industry reported using eco-friendly packing in their efforts to be more sustainable.

As far as challenges go, 62% of organizations said they are challenged by the financial costs related to making sustainable decisions for their business. This financial burden spanned all types of industries and manifested itself in different ways for different businesses. When surveyed, Second Use Building Materials said the cost of doing business in Seattle has increased significantly, which puts a strain on their ability to go further with sustainable practices. Portage Bay Cafe stated, “a lot of the things that have made restaurants easier to open and run successfully have in turn created a waste problem,” for example buying in bulk, providing heaters for outdoor seating, and serving large portion sizes that result in food waste. Amour Vert, a sustainable clothing shop, similarly said that sustainable technology in fashion does drive up manufacturing and production costs. In general, making sustainable choices often costs businesses more which makes it challenging to make those choices.

Another interesting challenge among our survey respondents was about carbon emissions related to transportation. We found that 38% of businesses that took our survey mentioned this particular challenge, which is a relatively high percentage considering we asked the question with no guidance or indication of challenges we wanted them to report. Businesses’ main concerns were over transporting employees, supplies, and products. Portage Bay Cafe said they
strive to always use local and in season ingredients for their restaurant, but are aware fossil fuels are used to transport the supplies they need for their business. BECU said to reduce the carbon emissions of employees traveling for work they implemented “increased transit accessibility through the Last Mile Lyft program”. They specified that, “BECU covers the cost of an employee’s Lyft ride within a three-mile radius between public transportation locations and the Tukwila or Kent offices.” Accenture also mentioned they struggle with decarbonization because of their business’ reliance on air travel. They are struggling to come up with solutions and ways to decrease their carbon emissions because transporting their employees around the world is a core component of their business model.

These results have allowed us to create ideas for Summit workshops that businesses will greatly benefit from. We recommend incorporating a financial workshop to provide resources and ideas for companies who encounter issues with finances and sustainability. In addition, many organizations could benefit from a transportation workshop or panel. One idea is to interview different transportation companies such as Lyft or Luum (a company that is designed to solve commuter challenges for employers) in a panel setting. This would allow organizations to explore opportunities to reduce their carbon emissions by learning about companies that strive to do this. Lastly, we recommend researching ideas that brick-and-mortar retailers can use to request compost bins for their buildings. This could look like a workshop that strategizes ways to build coalitions between businesses within shopping malls and complexes. A coalition may have a better chance of requesting the addition of compost bins from their landlord. In addition, this workshop could give examples of petitions businesses can ask their customers to sign in order to show landlords that customers would like to see this change.

We believe we were able to gather a diverse group of organizations’ perspectives on sustainability, but there are ways we could have improved our data collection. Even though we gathered enough responses to make an informative infographic, receiving even more opinions would make our research and project even more robust. We also had many store managers take our survey, but it would be interesting to have higher up corporate leaders give their input on sustainability as well. Lastly, we gathered answers from many local businesses, although asking larger corporations would make our research and data even stronger.
Next Steps
To proceed, we recommend three main steps:

1. Finish and send out the booklet
2. Create a framework for the summit;
3. Find sponsors for the summit.

First, we will be continuing this project into next quarter in order to expand upon the database and accomplish the aforementioned steps. We will begin by finishing the booklet and sending it to the organizations we contacted, as well as organizations we did not previously reach out to. This will serve as a way to update survey participants upon the product they helped create and will be used to advertise for the survey and the summit. Our hope is to collect more survey responses in order to create future versions of a booklet. In order to complete the current booklet we still need to design a front page; include author biographies and pictures; and acquire a statement from Seattle Parks and Recreation on sustainability. Additionally, the booklet may require some redesigning and reformatting since each page had been created on a horizontal 8.5 x 11 inch page, and was later changed to a 8.5 x 5.5 inch page. This change was done in order to create a deliverable that could be printed, folded in half, and assembled with ease.

The summit framework will be developed in concurrence with the booklet. We will begin by creating a job description to advertise an internship opportunity for other students. This will allow us to assemble a team of individuals who have experience with various aspects of event planning. Next, we will produce a mock schedule for the event along with ideas for workshops, panelists, and logistics. Our hope is to provide a flexible deliverable that can be used as a basis for various versions of a summit. This includes ideas for a half day, full day, or event that includes student volunteers. We will use common themes found throughout the survey to inform more workshops and panelist ideas. Furthermore, we will create a list of speakers and individuals who we will contact to help lead these workshops and additional talks.

Lastly, we will prepare a budget and business plan which will be presented to potential sponsors. The budget will include estimates for a venue, catering, activities and speaker fees. We will also create a list of companies that we will email for food donations if needed.
Conclusion

By engaging the community through the use of a sustainability survey, we were able to answer our initial research question, “How do businesses incorporate sustainable practices into the workplace?” However, in order to create a successful Sustainability Summit we recommend gathering more responses to the survey and further developing the stakeholder database. With our current set of data we have created three workshop ideas that businesses may benefit from. By gathering more responses we will be able to identify more opportunities to expand upon the definition of sustainability. Currently, our dataset lacks responses from corporate leaders. Therefore, we have limited data on how organizations stay sustainable at a larger scale. This information could be useful for businesses looking to grow, and could inform a possible workshop, panel or talk for the summit.

Overall, our data reflects businesses' unique strategies to balance the three branches of sustainability based on their organization’s objectives. Economic sustainability is required to ensure a company can practice environmental and social sustainability. These findings are highlighted in the final booklet. This booklet will serve as a stepping stone to create conversations about the different ways we can define and incorporate sustainability.
Yes Farm: The Yesler Project

Alex Lam

Cole Svec

Jayce Knerr

Maddie Rutter

Client: Ray Williams and Hannah Wilson
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Introduction and Background

At the beginning of Winter Quarter, we were divided into groups based on which project we had interest in. The project we had chosen was called Yes Farm, a project by the people who are a part of the Black Farmers Collective. The Yes Farm is an urban farm based in Pioneer Square on Yesler Terrace, where a community garden is being built and maintained. During the initial presentation of the different projects and clients, Yes Farm was introduced to us by Hannah Wilson, and we were able to gain some insight of what the urban farm was doing and what they needed some help with. Afterwards, our main project client was with Ray Williams, one of the leaders in the Black Farmers Collective. Our first visit to the farm was with Ray, as he gave us the tour and debriefed our tasks going forward. The urban farm was extremely interesting to us, and we were excited to have the opportunity to visit and assist our clients.

Main Question: How can we help make Yes Farm more appealing for the community, both in appearance and content?

Objective: To research and workshop some ideas for a welcoming entrance way for the farm, to research and propose some plants and contents within the farm, and to develop a solution to the noise and air pollution stemming from the freeway next to the farm.
Methodology

The Entrance

We began with thinking about the different materials and designs that would seem welcoming to the every-day passerby. Concrete, Wood, Plastic, Iron, Bamboo and so on all were on the table, but we didn’t want to simply choose a material based on our own personal preference or bias. Yes Farm is an urban farm that didn’t have ample funding for large projects, so being inexpensive and sustainable was key to our proposal. As such, our research began on the different types and locations of the materials.

Much research was based on exploring internet examples and other successful fencings. The idea was to garner an understanding of what the material would look like relatively and how much the materials would cost our client and Yes Farm if such a path were to be explored. The findings were all considered for the fencing’s length of 120 ft, and much of the research was informal so to speak. We looked at sites like Home Depot and other fencing companies to give a rough estimate on their costs while using Google Images to ascertain a design in mind and sketching our own.

The Plants and Freeway Wall

Much of the plants we researched stemmed from our own individual knowledge, but also using different databases available to us from the UW Libraries. With Yes Farm being an urban farm next to a large and busy freeway, the soil quality was important to think about in our research, and so we took a dive into finding the right plants that fit well in the Seattle, Washington urban environment. Using this commodity to our advantage, we were able to find different scholarly articles on the types of plants and fauna that help improve soil quality and/ or grow well within poor soil quality.

Along with finding plants and fauna to fit the soil quality, we did the same research into reducing the noise pollution. Using UW Libraries and the other databases like Web of Science, we were able to find out good suggestions and plants that could help. Not only that, but our own group member Jayce Knerr gave some insight into using arborvitae trees, a tree that his family uses for similar reasonings. Combined with that and our own research into proper and helpful plants, we began organizing our information.
Results

The Entrance

The first fencing material we did research on was bamboo. In the span of our research, we found that using bamboo would be affordable as well as long lasting. Rolls of bamboo can be purchased at local stores, such as home depot, for prices as low as $1600 for 120ft. Additionally, we found that these bamboo rolls can be easily attached to any pre-existing chain link fence using zip-ties or inexpensive wire. The bamboo itself is hardy and, if the right species is purchased, can withstand Washington's rainy climate. Some species we found that may work are Phyllostachys heteroclada f. Solida (Water Bamboo), Phyllostachys aureosulcata (Yellow Groove Bamboo), and the Phyllostachys nuda species.

This data is important in the construction of the fence facing Yesler way because bamboo has a very natural aesthetic to it, so the community will be drawn in and feel invited. The implementation of the actual bamboo fence will also determine the amount of engagement received as the fence can be tall or short. With the fence being short, we would interpret that as being more inviting to the public. However, with a tall fence, less intruders will be able to get in and overall security will be increased.

Below are pictures and drawings that were made for the bamboo fencing idea:

Figure 1: Depicts long, uncut bamboo fence
Figure 2: Depicts angled cuts at top of fence for added security
Figure 3: Depicts every few bamboo stalks cut down to chain link fence level. Increases view into farm
The second fencing material we researched was wood. Implementing wood as a design idea for the fence facing Yesler way would be more expensive than using bamboo, however, our research showed that it may be more appealing to the public. This is because thin wire would be used to enclose a majority of the fence and so viewing the farm would be much easier to anyone walking by. Additionally, the wood itself is a classic fencing structure you would see on a farm or a neighborhood, so the design would fit the aesthetic of Yes Farm very well. The construction of the fence itself would be more time consuming than bamboo and more costly because building more materials are needed.

From this data, we have concluded that while the wood fence may be more visually appealing, the fact that it will be more expensive and less secure than the bamboo fence has led us to suggest using bamboo as a fencing material first.

Below are pictures and drawings that were made for the wood fencing idea:

![Figure 4: Depicts what wood fence would look like with only wire between posts](image)

![Figure 5: Depicts wood fence with increased wooden posts substituted for wire](image)

The last option for the fence facing Yesler road was using hard plastic material. Positive aspects of using this type of material are that it would likely be the most inexpensive and easiest to implement. This is because the plastic can be attached onto the pre-existing chain link fence, similar to the bamboo. Additionally, using plastic would prove to be an effective placeholder for artwork. Community members could decorate the plastic and thus increase overall community engagement. Also, with enough plastic sheeting, security will increase as it would be difficult for intruders to cut through it.
On the other hand, using plastic material is only a temporary fix because it will never be able to serve as a complete fence or entrance, but rather an additional layer to what is already there. That is why we determined that this fencing idea would be the last on our list for materials. Below is a drawing that was made for the plastic fencing idea:

![Drawing of plastic sheet on chain link fence with possible Yes Farm art on it]

**The Plants**

The plants we decided to research on were predominantly native plants due to the fact that they are well adapted to Washington's climate and therefore need less maintenance and less need for inputs such as fertilizer and pesticides. There are many shaded areas near the entrance and from our research we found that native plants such as the Western Sword Fern, Dull Oregon Grape, and Salal are great for those shaded areas. To increase community engagement, we also researched potential wildflowers that would attract visitors. Some of the species we found that would work were Globe Gilia, Labrador Tea, and Yarrow.

![Western Sword Fern](image1)
![Salal Bush](image2)
![Yarrow](image3)
In addition to wildflowers and native plants in general, we also thought of researching native berries that could be planted on the farm. The best option we found was the Red Raspberry. Red Raspberry is native to Washington and thus cannot become invasive, unlike blackberry’s which are more commonly planted. Raspberries can easily be grown on a trellis built from inexpensive materials such as wire and old fence posts and will boost community engagement due to their bright colors and the fact that they can be picked and harvested easily.

![Figure 10: Depicts simple red raspberry trellis using](image_url)

**Freeway Wall**

The final research we conducted for this project was aimed towards finding a solution for the pollution that the neighboring freeway produced. Due to so many cars constantly driving by, the issue of too much air and noise pollution needed to be addressed.

Arborvitae Trees were a viable option in mitigating the pollution. From our research, we found that they are extremely dense trees that will be able to act as a filter for incoming air pollution and also block out noise that the cars are making. Additionally, maintenance for arborvitaes is simple and the trees will generally grow up to 40-60 feet. However, the trees are expensive if you want to buy full grown ones. And if saplings are purchased, they will take time to grow and need to be constantly cared for until maturity.
Bamboo Planter Boxes were our second choice in reducing the pollution from the freeway. Using bamboo would provide the farm with an option that is cheaper than the arborvitaes as well as faster growing. Bamboo can grow very tall and extremely quickly, so if they were to be planted in the boxes as seedlings, only a short amount of time would be needed until they are at full maturity. However, bamboo planter boxes are our second choice due to research we found explaining how bamboo can become invasive if it gets into open ground. This is why it is very important that the bamboo be in planter boxes and constantly maintained, so that it does not stray from the box. Bamboo planter boxes also may not be as effective in blocking pollution when compared to arborvitaes just because they are not nearly as dense and so air and noise pollution can continue to filter through.
Discussion

Based on the results it is clear that our group offered multiple detailed ideas that Yes Farm can implement that’ll encourage community engagement. The goals of this project were to find ways to design an enticing fence that would draw in the community, forming a strategy to combat the noise and air pollution from the freeway, and to add anything else that would emphasize community engagement. We achieved these goals through keeping in mind that we want the designs not only to be aesthetically pleasing, but more importantly there needs to be healthy long-term additions to Yes Farm that don’t harm the surrounding environment/community. What also helped us was the weekly communication with our client. Keeping them updated with our weekly progress and in return they offered recommendations or other aspects of the farm we can help with.

Recommendations for Yes Farm:

Starting with the entrance design, it's obvious that we spent most of our time researching and thinking of bamboo fence designs for Yes Farm since we believe that would be the healthiest and most appealing option. It’s more inexpensive and natural compared to the other fence options we presented, and it can be modified in multiple ways to the benefit of Yes Farm. For example, Ray made it clear he wanted people who walk past the fence line to be able to see the farm through/over the fence so they can see the good work being done there. So, for specific pieces you can cut multiple pieces to a certain length to allow a visual of the farm. Bamboo is also the more sustainable option compared to the others. Since when harvesting you’re not killing the entire plant and you’re not buying material, like iron/steel, that is being permanently extracted from the earth.

For the aesthetic plants we would recommend using all of the ones we suggested at some point in time. Using the Dull Oregon grape and Salal bushes in the poor soil areas while placing the other plants/flowers in areas to Yes Farm’s desire. For combating the noise and air pollution we would have to recommend the more expensive option, the arborvitae. Our reasoning being, since Yes Farm is a long-term commitment it makes sense to implement the best defense against
the air and noise pollution. Also, this’ll decrease the effects of pollution on other dimensions of the farm. Creating a more peaceful and pleasing environment for the community to enjoy and a healthier space of air for the plants as well. So, we want to do our best to mitigate those negative effects. All of these recommendations are healthy inputs to Washington’s environment and won’t be difficult to attain. Not causing any damage like invasiveness.

The DIY berry trellis is an obvious addition that Yes Farm should use since, on the social level, it's great for engagement among community members and even wildlife. The materials can be obtained through secondhand stores for cheap or even free. Which is a healthy option for the environment compared to creating an over the top lavish berry plot.

**Next Steps**

* Becoming Nonprofit & Future events

Yes Farm has acknowledged they are planning events this summer to get the local community involved with the future development of the farm. We highly recommend they become a 501(c)(3), so people are also able to donate to the Farm. Currently their only revenue stream is from applying for grants through the city. It’s very critical to get as much funding as possible to ensure the longevity of the farm especially because there is a new community that’s being developed around it. If the Farm also plans to expand their connections with other organizations the first question, they will most likely be “are you a certified nonprofit?” This lets them know you have an organized infrastructure backing up your organization.

* Decisions on Entrance Design and Materials

Next, we would recommend either choosing the wood or Bamboo fence design. First impressions are so important especially when there will be so many people walking and driving past the farm. Both options are the most aesthetically pleasing design options and will also provide added security.
Essential Plants

Choosing what plants and fauna to have around the farm is another important task. It’s important to consider which plants will benefit the farm both aesthetically and add other attributes as well. Planting native plants that are already adapted to our climate is the best option because they also require less maintenance. For shaded areas the Western Sword Fern, Dull Oregon Grape, and Salal are great options and they provide soil denitrification as well. Another way to easily beautify the farm is by spreading wildflowers such as the Globe Gillia, Yarrow, and the Labrador tea which can be harvested by the community for tea adding more community engagement. In addition, adding the Arborvitae trees separating the farm from the freeway wall would stop the most particles from entering the farm, and block the most noise due to their density.

Evangelizing

On the freeway wall next to the farm would be a great spot to invite local artists to paint logos and add any other art related to the farm for further exposure. Yes Farm has already expressed an interest in this idea, however this should be brought up to the city. If allowed, we believe this could be the biggest advertisement for the farm in getting this project known to the city.

Conclusion

Yes Farm is a wonderful place that aims to provide a sense of community, food, and nature to an otherwise urban setting in Seattle, Washington. We desire the best for Yes Farm, and we are glad to have had the chance in giving some insight and ideas to the Black Farmers Collective as they continue their project. Our project team sincerely and excitedly wish for the successful launch of Yes Farm to the Yesler Terrace community area, and hope that our efforts
and research has given Ray and his colleagues some useful information and ideas that will further the development of Yes Farm.
References


From *Informing to Empowering Youth*

Nicole Chhou, Angie Lai, Anne-Marie Le, and Maricela Santana-Walle

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INTRODUCTION

Young Women Empowered (Y-WE) is an organization dedicated to serving a diverse group of women within the greater Seattle area, especially youth from low-income backgrounds, first- or second-generation immigrants, and women of color. Their mission is to cultivate empowered future leaders with a strong sense of community and belonging. It is because of this that King County reached out to Y-WE.

Young Women Empowered is working with the King County Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) to increase community involvement for an updated Clean Water Plan starting in 2022. Due to aging infrastructure, every few decades a new plan must be implemented. King County intended to ensure the update chose investments by setting foundations based on communities’ priorities expressed through their increased involvement. King County is providing resources to community-based organizations (CBOs), like Y-WE, that would best understand methods to involve their communities. Partnered with King County, the CBOs would be able to bring awareness to the Clean Water Plan as well as supply opportunities to give input.

Our main project objective was to create an informative video about King County’s updated Clean Water Plan and their community engagement efforts. We wanted to see how King County was actually partaking in community engagement, and how we could best spread that information. In our initial conversations with the WTD team, we were surprised by the abundance of efforts already in place, indicating to us that widespread awareness of King County’s Clean Water Plan and overall outreach efforts needed to increase. We needed to determine how we could effectively increase community, particularly youth, awareness around the Clean Water Plan and water quality in general.

A video aimed to inform the youth about the Clean Water Plan, the water treatment process, and how to get involved with the Clean Water Plan was the best way to ultimately meet our goals. By providing a tool to educate our audience, we could also empower the youth of all communities, especially those that are underserved.

In the context of sustainability, youth engagement is extremely important. Among growing environmental and sustainability concerns, water conservation and justice in representation are two topics deserving more recognition. Education on the water treatment process is not a universal subject, but decisions made for it impacts everyone. Although the technicalities are not as regularly discussed, water has a meaning to everyone which influences
their concerns and priorities. Youth engagement provides young people the opportunity to be informed and active citizens, now and into adulthood. This is the first step towards creating future leaders, equipped with the knowledge and tools it takes for addressing challenges related to sustainability. Sustainability is an increasing area of concern so having younger generations educated and involved is critical in understanding sustainability issues.

METHODS

To begin our community outreach efforts, we first had to conduct research on the importance of water quality, water education, and community engagement. This was accomplished through analyzing peer reviewed literature and articles on previous projects by other communities. Through this we identified methods other societies used when developing new water treatment plans, such as the Al-Teymour Wastewater Treatment Plant which experimented eco-efficiency with general sustainability issues in mind such as energy conservation and composting (Alizadeh, 2020). Alternatively, we learned about the Hayes and Fisher investigation which surveyed non-community members, the plant’s employees, for their opinion on company actions (Hayes, 2019). While this method of investigation provided an inside perspective, it contrasted greatly with King County’s goals. By familiarizing ourselves with existing peer-reviewed literature, we could make educated conclusions about methods that would best fit the goals of our client.

Equipped with our research, we held a meeting with Y-WE and members of the King County Community Engagement team. This meeting helped to formally establish the expectations for our contribution and the goal of our video. We first evaluated previous community engagement efforts conducted by King County, explained in their Clean Water Plan 2019 Outreach Summary. The outreach summary expressed community priorities, through their opinions on how the WTD has excelled and where it can improve. In this meeting we also learned about the wastewater treatment process, which we determined to be worthwhile content to include in our video. Providing a brief educational piece relevant to further understanding the Clean Water Plan was a quick way to begin bridging the knowledge gap across our expected audience, especially because wastewater treatment is not common knowledge.

In our video making process, we incorporated the information we gathered through our research and the meetings we attended in order to outline and storyboard. We confirmed our
target audience as young women and the goal was to make an informative video for encouraging engagement in the updated Clean Water Plan. Keeping this in mind allowed us to write a script and determine what specific shots to film. We wanted to include visuals of both WTD events and familiar places so audiences could familiarize themselves with King County, evoking a sense of recognition and community. This led to us attending King County’s CBO Kick-Off, where we got to personally experience an official event aimed at educating CBOs on the Clean Water Plan and listen to community leaders voice their opinions. We also interviewed Eunice Lee, the community relations and water quality project manager, in order to ensure we properly conveyed the WTD’s intentions toward improving the Clean Water Plan. From here, we compiled our footage, recorded voice overs, and created animations to complete our final product.

We also wished to create accessibility of our product with whatever resources we had, so we included captions and translations in two languages, Spanish and Khmer. Thanks to the bilingual skills of some of our members, we created alternatives through a voice dub and subtitles. Both the English version and the dub included captions in their respective languages for the deaf and hard of hearing to access. Because a part of Y-WE’s mission highlighted their support for women of color, we wanted to ensure our product could be available to those who understand other languages. We also left captions open for community caption contribution to encourage future additional subtitles when translators of other languages are available.

RESULTS

The preliminary research about water quality, water education, and community engagement was useful in providing us context and informing our video, but the resources provided by King County WTD are what primarily contributed to our end product, the video. After conducting some literature research and reviewing the resources that King County WTD provided us, we arrived at the following results.

Wastewater Treatment Process

King County WTD treats wastewater from homes, business, and industries. Once treated, wastewater can then be reused and recycled. The treated water that cannot be reused and recycled is returned to the Puget Sound (Clean Water Plan Decision Area: Wastewater System). In figure 2 you can see a visual representation of how the wastewater treatment works in King County.
King County

King County has made significant efforts in community engagement and outreach. In reviewing their Clean Water Plan 2019 Outreach Summary and attending the CBO kick-off, it was evident that not only did King County WTD connect with several CBOs in the Seattle area, but they also aim to maintain long-lasting relationships with these CBOs. Y-WE is one of the CBOs that King County plans to support in disseminating information regarding the Clean Water Plan. Through these collaborations, King County is recording the priorities of many communities and how they could potentially be incorporated into the Clean Water Plan.

Community and Youth Engagement

As shown in the graph from the King County Community Water Plan 2019 Outreach Summary, youth engagement and education is a top priority for many communities (Figure 1). Youth engagement is encouraged in the Clean Water Plan. King County provides opportunities by informing community members on what path they can take if they are interested in knowing more about water pollution, the Clean Water Plan, and the wastewater treatment division. They also provide opportunities like internships and events that the youth can attend.
Figure 1. Top issues in response to “What are the most important issues your organization and community will focus on in the next few years?”

Figure 2. This image shows the water treatment process of where wastewater comes from and where it ends up in King County.
DISCUSSION

Based on our results, we were able to determine that King County wanted to reach out to CBOs in order to hear their priorities, inform them about the clean water plan and the wastewater treatment process, and provide opportunities for CBOs and their youth. This information allowed us to determine the main theme for our video and who our main audience would be. After speaking with Y-WE, we determined that our main audience was women of color, specifically youth from King County. We also decided to include Spanish and Khmer translations for our video, which are both common languages spoken among our intended audience. Based on the information we received from King County, Y-WE, and our research, we divided our findings into three categories. These three categories are outlined in our video.

The first category is why water is important. We include information regarding our own views, and information from an interview that we did with Eunice Lee from King County WTD, explaining how water can be spiritually important and unique for the Puget Sound. This first category encourages our audience to think about why water is important to them and connect personally to the ideas presented in the video.

The second category is the wastewater treatment process. We learned about how the wastewater treatment process works in King County, and we did some literature research about how wastewater affects wildlife in the Puget Sound. This category provides an informational foundation for our audience about how wastewater works locally.

The final category is the Clean Water Plan from King County. Eunice Lee explains that it is important to create and maintain relationships with CBOs, like Y-WE, and that it is important to receive input from CBOs so that their concerns are heard. She also explains that providing opportunities for the youth and organizations in relation to the Clean Water Plan and King County WTD is important to truly engage the community. This category allows the audience to see why the Clean Water Plan is important to their communities and provides them with resources they can use to get involved with future King County events and opportunities.

SHORTCOMINGS

Due to the limited time that we had, we did not interview or directly engage with community members ourselves. We learned about community engagement and their input through King County’s Clean Water Plan 2019 Outreach Summary and interviews with their
engagement team. Even though the King County team provided us with many resources on their current and previous works, we would benefit more by directly engaging with different communities. If the video had footage or audio from community members themselves, the audience would get a better sense of inclusivity.

The degree of inclusion in those communities is to be determined because the Clean Water Plan is still in an early phase. Their effort to gather input on communities’ concerns and engagement with communities through various outlets are only part of the first stage of the whole process. We still need to evaluate how communities feel about King County’s methods of engagement and how King County can incorporate community concerns into the Clean Water Plan. If this information is available, we may be able to create a video that is more effective in communicating our message.

NEXT STEPS

For future continuation of this project and outreach concerning the Clean Water Plan, we recommend presenting the provided video at workshops and events focused on subjects related to water sustainability. Events dedicated to encouraging engagement in political processes or reducing water pollution would also be applicable examples. As Y-WE hosts events to inform community members about King County’s Clean Water Plan, our video may be used during presentations as an introductory piece that helps engage individuals before diving deeper into the logistics of the CWP. The video was designed to be brief and capture the interest of youth so they can have easy to understand background information and would want to invest in the longer, more technical process to be involved in the CWP.

To continue widespread reach, we also recommend posting the video to social media platforms youth frequently visit- including Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter. Adapting to modern communication methods, such as social media, encourages further reach to youth who do not currently have interest in political action or subjects like water and would not actively seek resources to learn more. Social media is highly accessible to younger generations and increases the likelihood of a more diverse audience coming across it.

Our video can then be transformed into alternative media formats, using the information from our research to create an informative pamphlet which may be provided when tabling at events. By creating informational pamphlets that can be given out, people have a physical
document that they can take home and go over when they have the availability. Pamphlets allow people to invest however much time they want, and whenever they want. They also improve accessibility if translated into many more languages than we could dub for the video. The pamphlet can also have contact information and relevant information in which the user can reference in order to seek other opportunities or reach out and ask questions.

Finally, we would recommend continuing to ensure youth are provided with the resources and opportunities to possibly follow a path concerning water pollution, the Wastewater Treatment Division, or King County in general. Because Y-WE is an organization that works with young women, it is important that we provide opportunities and resources to encourage pursuing one’s interests, specifically topics that were shown in the video. The video specified the significance of water, WTD, King County, and the CWP but these topics can be broadened to greater overall concern with politics and activism. Having these resources and support from the King County partnership allows young women from Y-WE to build relationships with other organizations including the CBOs to understand different perspectives. These resources can also provide young women with the opportunity to participate in internships and events that can eventually further their careers and life experiences.

Impacts

Some of the impacts that may occur when implicating these recommendations include social, economic, and environmental impacts. When the video is distributed to a larger audience at events and other forms of media, more people will be more aware of the Clean Water Plan and how it affects their local communities and be informed about the wastewater treatment plants. This will allow organizations and local communities to get involved socially. King County provides many opportunities like internships, by providing these opportunities, the youth are able to develop skills and experiences that will help them in the workforce and their future career. These opportunities also provide economic relief and accessibility for youth and community members who wouldn't otherwise be able to afford it. Lastly, learning about how wastewater treatment affects the Puget Sound and wildlife can raise awareness about better wastewater practices that are less harmful to the environment.
CONCLUSION

Our video will provide the youth of many communities with the support and information needed to get involved with the updated Clean Water Plan. Most importantly, the video outlines a path that youth can take so they have a voice in shaping the Clean Water Plan. It is important for government bodies to stay connected with local communities and organizations as new changes are being made. From our time working on this project with Y-WE, we learned that Y-WE and many CBOs are part of a larger community within King County that will build relationships with each other, stay connected, and ultimately enact change for the better. We hope that our video will assist Y-WE in this process, from informing to empowering youth.
References


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