Tyson Hall Sustainability Theme House, a.k.a. "The GreenHouse" Description and Application

Program

"Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm." -- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Everyone in the house will participate in a 1 credit independent study course with the theme house advisor, titled "Principles of Sustainability." The course will center on a NorthWest Earth Institute Discussion Course (Choices for Sustainable Living, Menu for the Future, ChangingCo2urse, or Voluntary Simplicity), and will feature application of the material learned in the course to campus life.

Theme house participants will creatively engage their learning with others. For example, participants will host activities and meetings for interested students, staff, and faculty to invite conversation about what sustainability is, how to encourage it, and will include themes such as food systems, energy use, current political movements, recycling, waste, etc. Theme house participants will be encouraged to be sustainability "ambassadors" on campus through their outreach to others.

Examples of activities include:

- Dinners introducing local foods
- Recycling or energy-use competitions
- Working with SLUG (the student led unity garden) and Ecology Club
- Eco-Movie nights (Kilowatt Hour, Who Killed the Electric Car, Flow, King Corn)
- Local area service projects (SOLV, Friends of Trees, No Ivy League)
- Discussions and fun events (recycled art projects, hikes in forest park, bike rides)
- Helping to organize campus conferences like Focus the Nation, Confluences: Water and Justice, and Food For Thought

Purpose

The Green House is a place for students to foster and celebrate their common interest in learning to live and work in a sustainable way. It would provide a space and incentives for students to use multidisciplinary theoretical and practical knowledge (such as ecology, economics, political science) in the pursuit of sustainability in personal lifestyles and campus education and action. Living in this theme house is a step toward not only decreasing the University of Portland's ecological footprint, but will help students learn how they can personally make choices to minimize environmental impact and maximize influence with others.

Place

Tyson 212 - a nice on campus apartment fitting 6 or 7 people. Residents receive incentives through ResLife, including a 400 dollar stipend for the house.

Expected Results

- Participants will obtain working knowledge of sustainable living and apply it to their everyday lives.
- The house contributes to an increasing consciousness on campus about sustainability, and helps the campus reduce energy use and waste in a unique way.
- Students in the house will learn leadership skills and will become change agents on campus, and will be able to apply these skills and experiences after they graduate.

Mission

To create a safe, open, educational living space in which there are honest dialogues about sustainability and environmental justice, and to spark and maintain fruitful sustainability collaboration between students, faculty, and staff.

Rationale

"We have lived by the assumption that what was good for us would be good for the world…….We have been wrong. We must change our lives, so that it will be possible to live by the contrary assumption that what is good for the world will be good for us. And that requires that we make the effort to know the world and to learn what is good for it. We must learn to cooperate in its processes, and to yield to its limits....." Wendell Berry

(see below for Application)

Application for Tyson Sustainability Theme House

1. Why are you interested in the Green House? What do you want from a "green house" experience?

2. Regarding "sustainability" - what are your main interests?

3. Describe your personality and the kinds of things you like to do in your free time.