EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

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

The goal of the internship is to facilitate the planning of Themester 2010 and ensure successful implementation of events. For this reason, the College Themester Programming internship will continue in the fall semester to complete the latter part of responsibility. However, this report serves to explain the methods, main projects, and recommendations for similar internships offered by the IUOS in the future.

METHODS

Since sustainability is an inherently interdisciplinary topic, Themester 2010 events encompass several dimensions of sustainability: environmental, economic and social, which enables numerous collaborations on campus across departments and schools. Although Themester is only in its second year as a College initiative, it is broad and far-reaching, producing numerous events and promoting hundreds more. Due to the
breadth of such a program it was necessary for me to first determine the scope and responsibilities for the internship.

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

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

Area 2) Program Development sustains a significant portion of my time. This involves the initial brainstorming and idea production, drafting letters, contacting co-sponsors, budget planning, and various other logistics. I have the lead on two main programs, which I detail in the next section.

Area 3) Advertising and Public Relations will be a significant focus for late summer and during the fall semester. I will run a Themester advertising campaign for major events, maintaining a Facebook group and Twitter Account and reaching out to classrooms and student organizations.

**MAIN PROJECTS**

In this section I supply more details on the program development portion of the internship, examining two projects in particular: 1) Themester Opening Festival and 2) Themester Keynote Lecture. These two projects occupy the majority of my internship work, however I also assist in the planning of other Themester events.

**OPENING FESTIVAL:**

The purpose of the Themester Opening Festival is to create awareness for following Themester activities and produce a fun and informing event. For this project, I hold weekly meetings with student representatives and work with student groups, community groups, IU departments, local restaurants, caterers, and local musicians. This festival will encompass informational tables, engaging activities, free local organic
food, and free local music. At this point, I have contacted several student groups, bands, and restaurants to ensure participation and reserved a space in Dunn Meadow for Friday, September 10, 2010. I have also created an initial budget, that will be confirmed when food and bands become official. Throughout the summer, I will continue to seek participation for this event, and next fall I will advertise at the beginning of the semester.

**KEYNOTE LECTURE:**

The purpose of the Themester Keynote Lecture is to raise awareness on Themester initiatives, reach out to media outlets and across the IU campus, and inform the public on sustainability. The Lectures working group in conjunction with the Steering Committee chose three-time Pulitzer Prize winner and best-selling author, Thomas Friedman to lecture at the IU Auditorium. The title of his lecture is “Hot, Flat and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution and How It Can Renew America.” A great deal of work was spent prioritizing speakers, contacting agencies, securing co-sponsors, budgeting, reserving space, creating a firm offer and analyzing the official contract. In the future, there is still a great deal of logistical work to be done, including: reception and dinner logistics, creating programs, advertising before and implementing the day of the event. A lecture by Mr. Friedman is appealing to many disciplines (journalism, political science, business and economics, and more). During the intern symposium, several attendees expressed their interest in Mr. Friedman’s lecture.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The College Themester Programming internship is unique; it will not be offered again because it is particular to Themester 2010. However, there are lessons and examples from this position that can be applied to several other IUOS internships. The most challenging aspect of this internship is to balance several priorities simultaneously. This setback will not confront interns who implement research projects, but it will most likely confront an intern that plans on programming events. When working with several co-sponsors and planning groups, it is important that all parties are respected and communicated with in a clear and precise manner. Maintaining quality communication is necessary to successfully implement an event, and likewise to maintain the relationship for future collaborations. In addition, the most vital recommendation I have being an IUOS intern, is to provide internship opportunities in programming for the future. I believe programming events is necessary and significant in supporting sustainability initiatives on a university campus. Programming is the key to raising awareness, promoting dialogue, and reinforcing existing initiatives.