

IPRO 332 – How Many Earths?

Problem and Objectives:

IPRO 332 started initially with the problem of educating the general public on energy consumption and sustainability issues. Within this problem the team chose to address the specific issues of education for secondary students including elementary and high school students, and promote a greater awareness of life cycles and energy policy issues. The plans for accomplishing these objectives focused primarily on the creation and implementation of new materials, while finalizing the materials of previous semesters.

Basic Organization and Tasks

The work within the IPRO was organized among three subteams. An elementary education subteam as well as a high school subteam worked to create materials and outline their own tasks for accomplishing their goals, respectively. A marketing team worked on the website and advertising materials and events.

Accomplishments

This semester's How Many Earths? members created a number of new educational materials. The team created a Life Cycle module and teaching kits for elementary students, finalized previous semester's Ecological Footprint and Cradle-to-Cradle modules for middle and high school students, and created an Energy Policy module for high school students. In order to market the team's accomplishments members attended three community events: DuPage County Engineers Week, Irish Earth Day Festival, and the Loyola North Lakeshore Earth Day.

Critical Barriers and Obstacles

In order to test and finalize our new educational modules this semester, arranging in-class presentations with local teachers proved very difficult to coordinate due to Spring Break and state-wide testing. To accommodate this, team members found time to present after these events were done, which was late in the semester. Another obstacle was found in the cancellation of the Lincoln Park Zoo Earth Day Event. How Many Earths? members had attended this event for the past two years with great success and in order to promote the team effectively, the marketing subteam worked hard to locate and attend new and diverse events to recapture the audience lost by the cancellation. As a fundraiser, the team held a book drive sponsored by Better World Books at the end of the semester. Arranging placement of pickup boxes and coordinating with residence halls and campus buildings took more time than expected so the team made extra advertisements to make the drive successful.

Conclusion

How Many Earths? made substantial progress finalizing materials of previous semesters. The completion of many teaching kits and modules will put next semester's team in an advantageous position of deciding on new goals and creations, which may now lead ultimately to How Many Earths as a self-sustaining group outside the IPRO system.

What's Next?

Next semester's IPRO team will need to critically review all final educational materials that have been created to date from How Many Earths? teams. In order to move forward, the team can then assess the effectiveness of the materials, make modifications and work to distribute materials and teaching kits to area teachers rather than exhausting all of their efforts with in-class teaching. New modules relating to energy and sustainability needs may always be created on relevant issues such as local and organic market sustainability, while the broader goal of furthering education must remain.

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