



University of Houston
Division of Administration and Finance
University Services

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Alexandra McGuffey
University Services Communications Coordinator
832-842-5505
avmcguffey@uh.edu

NEW SUSTAINABILITY COURSE OFFERED THIS SPRING

Houston, November 2, 2009 – A new honors course this spring will engage University of Houston students in the campus sustainability movement.

HON 4397-Sustainability on Campus will explore the science of sustainability and climate change, how to integrate sustainability into a campus culture, and ask students to conduct service projects that engage the university in conversations about sustainability. Course instructors include Dr. Barry Lefer, Assistant Professor in the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences; Dr. Peter Bishop, Associate Professor in the Futures Studies Department; and Emily Messa, Assistant Vice President for University Services and head of the university's GreenUH Department.

Lefer is an active researcher in effort to understand formation of ozone in urban areas and the long range transport of atmospheric trace gases to Greenland and Antarctica. He also teaches a core science course on "Introduction to Global Climate Change".

"It is important for our students to learn how their actions and the activities of the UH university community are impacting the Earth's climate system today and understand the implications for future generations", said Lefer.

Bishop coordinates one of the country's only degree programs specifically devoted to the study of the future, a graduate degree in Futures Studies in the College of Technology. He has also taught courses in the Future of Energy and the Environment and the Science and Policy of Climate Change.

"One of the great challenges of the 21st century will be to learn to maintain the high standard of living that we enjoy without ruining our planetary habitat in the process. This course will introduce students to the science behind sustainability and give them the opportunity to start moving the University of Houston toward a more sustainable future," said Bishop.

Emily Messa, Assistant VP of University Services, has been a key promoter for changes on campus that led to UH's sustainability grade improvement this year. In one year, the University of

Houston rose from a C- to a B- in its grade, improving in six of the nine categories evaluated by one or two points.

“It’s important for the community to understand that even though we have accomplished so much as a campus, the conversation around sustainability is just beginning,” said Messa. “There is much to be accomplished and we look forward to engaging with the students in this class and continuing the conversation about sustainability.”

About the University of Houston

The University of Houston, Texas’ premier metropolitan research and teaching institution, is home to more than 40 research centers and institutes and sponsors more than 300 partnerships with corporate, civic and governmental entities. UH, the most diverse research university in the country, stands at the forefront of education, research and service with more than 35,000 students.