One World Initiative strives to extend Sacramento State’s global connection

Geology Professor Lisa Hammersley and the task force she is chairing are convinced that the fledgling One World Initiative will “add value to what we are doing at Sac State to give our students the global perspective they need in an increasingly competitive world.”

Provost Joseph Sheley agrees, noting that the initiative, which will be unveiled from noon-1 p.m. Wednesday, April 18, at the University Union, Hinde Auditorium, allows the campus a “chance to integrate the expertise of an incredible number of talented faculty members who otherwise are known only as ‘area specialists.’ This is a fantastic learning opportunity for our students.”

Sheley will underscore that point in his introduction. Afterward, Hammersley will outline One World’s goal of helping to provide students with the world perspective so necessary in today’s global society. The primary goal of the initiative is to use an annual topic of discussion to bring together many aspects of the campus community and thus highlight the many courses, research projects and international activities already taking place at Sacramento State.

Hammersley says One World “was an idea that came out of the Advisory Committee on Curricular Global Engagement earlier this year, and the Provost agreed that it was worth pursuing.” Loosely modeled on the successful One Book program, One World is designed to create conversations across the campus curricula. Hammersley envisions a synergistic connection centered on an annual theme. The first of these, “Global Perspectives on Water,” will be presented through a short musical performance by Professor Dan Kennedy of the Department of Music and a discussion of the many ways in which water is important.

Hammersley sees One World operating on three levels. “We want to invite the faculty from all disciplines to address the theme,” she says. “This could result in a lecture, a class project or could be the main focus of the entire course. We also want to connect with the campus calendar of events, including events such as the STEM lecture series, college colloquiums, individual departments’ lecture/film series, music
performance or theatrical production that would engage with or be inspired by the theme. The idea is to create a comprehensive One World calendar of events spanning multiple disciplines and multiple genres."

Student participation is paramount. Student clubs across the campus will also be encouraged to develop programs and contribute to the calendar of events. The One World Initiative will extend its hands to welcome the participation of the community beyond the campus, including entities such as Capital Public Radio and the World Affairs Council.

The conversation Hammersley and the task force hope to create would draw upon many resources. For example, engineering students take part in a water-related project as part of the Engineers Without Borders program. “They could provide valuable insights to our program,” she says. And the faculty is already talking about how to incorporate the theme into their courses. The Asian Studies program is considering using the One World theme as a theme for its capstone course, and the Honors Program plans to host a conference on critical water issues around the globe.

At each school year’s end, the task force plans a closing event that would include an invited speaker and an opportunity to showcase student groups and the part they have played in the program. The task force that has been working so hard to make this dream a reality is eager for the launch. Challenging faculty and students to pool their considerable resources is the goal of this ambitious program. If it all comes together as the task force hopes, the One World Initiative will complement Sacramento State’s growing global connection.

Anyone interested in learning more about the initiative and how to participate can contact the task force at oneworld@csus.edu.

For media assistance, contact Sacramento State’s Public Affairs office at (916) 278-6156.

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