Roosevelt University: a Snapshot

- Campuses: downtown Chicago, suburban Schaumburg, online
- 6 colleges
  - Professional Studies
  - Arts & Sciences
  - Performing Arts (Music / Theater)
  - Business
  - Education
  - Pharmacy
- Level II comprehensive institution, established 1945
- 7,300 students (4,200 undergrad)
- Racial and geographic diversity
- Social justice-centered mission

RU’s Wabash Building, which will be Chicago’s first LEED-certified skyscraper (expected completion 2012)
• **Fosters environmental literacy** through interdisciplinary work in the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities;
• **Engages public policy** concerns surrounding consumption, energy usage, and viable economic growth;
• **Explores social justice** issues on a range of fronts, including environmental justice, resource allocation, urban development, and social equity;
• **Educates Roosevelt students to be leaders** on issues of sustainability, one of the critical issues of the 21st century.
Greening the University: A Three-fold Process

Greening the Physical Campus

Launching Sustainability Studies

Making Community Connections
In a Sustainable Future:

Environmental resources are conserved for both future human generations as well as non-human biota.

Economic development occurs not at the expense of the natural environment, but in a way to mitigate ecological costs and impacts.

Equity – social, economic, and environmental justice – governs the process of sustainable development.
Core Courses
SUST 210   Sustainable Future
SUST 220   Water
SUST 230   Food
SUST 240   Waste

Advanced Courses
SUST 310   Energy and Climate Change
SUST 320   Sprawl, Transportation, and Planning
SUST 330   Biodiversity
SUST 340   Policy, Law, and Ethics

Special Options
SUST 350   Service Learning
SUST 390   Special Topics
SUST Curriculum

Crosscutting Themes
- Science and Environmental Literacy
- Environmental and Social Justice
- Urban and Suburban Systems

Pedagogical Highlights
- Interdisciplinary Learning
- Field Trip Experiences
- Service Learning Opportunities
- F2F, Online, and Hybrid Classes
Course Pedagogy

- The Chicago River as a modified natural ecosystem (natural sciences)
- Policies impacting water quality, river use, sewage treatment (social and natural sciences)
- Representations of the river as a cultural resource (humanities)

Program Development

- Institutional context (where is there room?)
- Faculty collaboration (which disciplines and how many?)
- Sustainability issues/themes vs. academic departments (how do you slice the pie?)
SUST field trips

Hands-on education using the urban and suburban environments as learning laboratories

Cultivation of academic-community partnerships / service-learning opportunities

Des Plaines River Wetlands Demonstration Project (spring 2009)
Exploring the waters of the Des Plaines River Wetlands Demonstration Project (fall 2010)
Testing the water quality of the Chicago River’s North Branch (May 2010)
Chicago Center for Green Technology – learning about sustainable design (Feb. 2011)
Canoe trip down Bubbly Creek, an industrialized tributary of the South Branch of the Chicago River (May 2009)
Service Learning Opportunities

Curriculum

- **SUST 230 Food** (community gardens and urban agriculture)
- **SUST 220 Water** (watershed monitoring and stream restoration)
- **SUST 330 Biodiversity** (non-native species control)
- **SUST 350 Service and Sustainability** (environmental justice and social activism)

Partnerships

- Chicago Lights Urban Farm
- Field Museum of Natural History
- Friends of the Chicago River
- Chicago Wilderness
- Local Community Colleges

(at right: RU students and faculty at the Chicago Lights Urban Farm)
The SUST Curriculum Map:

Tying learning outcomes to program assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identifying and explaining central sustainability problems</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Developing scientific, environmental, and quantitative literacy</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Applying the scientific method and quantitative literacy to natural and social ecosystems</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Recognizing social justice implications in local and global contexts</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Understanding political processes and policy actors</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Understanding the importance of ethics, leadership, and technical innovation for social and environmental change</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Applying knowledge about sustainability to areas of personal interest and/or work professions</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key to map:**

- X = learning outcome is addressed in course
- Shading = learning outcome is a core focus of course
Schaumburg campus (established 1996) is the only comprehensive college campus in Chicago’s northwest suburban region.

**Visionary Possibilities:**
- **Sustainable landscape plan:** native plants, prairie plots, walking paths, orchard, edible landscapes
- **Water conservation strategies:** bioswales, cisterns, rain gardens, pervious paving
- **Outdoor education / recreation:** experimental wetland restoration, native plant gardens, greenhouse, urban farm

**The Existing Foundation:**
- SUST undergraduate major/minor/certificate
- Strong science programs: biology, chemistry, pharmacy
- Underutilized green space
Figure 1a.
Natural Resource Inventory
Village of Schaumburg
Northeast Section

Source: Schaumburg Biodiversity Plan (2004)