



SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION COMMUNITY FOR INTENTIONAL LIVING

The Ohio State University, School of Environment and Natural Resources
Capstone Solicitation Number: EEDS015

OSU Intentional Sustainability Community Development Study

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Start Date: January 12, 2022

End Date: April 10, 2022

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Sustainable Education Community for Intentional Living

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Executive Summary

In Autumn 2021, a capstone research group explored the idea of forming an intentional sustainability community at The Ohio State University. The vision was to help students put ideas for sustainable living and community development into practice by letting them build their own “sustainable community.” The 2021 capstone group distributed a student survey to gauge what features future community members might want, such as affordability, sustainable farming, or academic credit for the experience. This 2022 capstone group set out to analyze student needs and desires and identify possible paths to form the community. We also intended to start that process by uniting stakeholders and creating a site for them to carry the project forward.

Research Objectives:

- 1. Discover how intentional communities form as social groups and how this project can directly contribute to the community’s formation.***

Findings: Intentional communities need strong internal bonds, which form through having a common vision, shared meals/chores, and intentional efforts to grow together and deeply know one another. These unique communities attract people from different backgrounds and worldviews. The healthiest groups learn to respect differences, incorporate diversity, and commit to the community and its vision. Resilient communities will learn to deal with conflicts intentionally, intervening before they become destructive. They must also adapt to shifts in vision and desires as members join, leave, and change.

- 2. Learn about the successes/challenges of university-affiliated intentional communities.***

Findings: *Conflict and Communication:* Poorly resolved conflicts may be the leading “cause of death” for intentional communities. Long-lasting communities often have training and guidelines for dealing with conflicts.

Benefits of Connection with Nature and Others: Many people are attracted to intentional communities because they feel disconnected from the natural world and from other people. Community members were grateful for deep bonds and a sense of belonging in their communities and felt a healthier, more robust connection to nature in their living spaces.

Balancing Independence and Cooperation: Intentional communities are an alternative to the fierce individualism of our culture. However, most communities struggle to balance group living and governance with personal freedom and independence. Different individuals may also have different levels of commitment to the community.

3. Develop a clear vision for how this community could fulfill student needs and desires.

Findings:

Students desire:

Affordability through sharing	Guidance in resolving conflicts	Minimal authority structure
An urban space close to campus	Community gardening	Plant-based living

Recommendations:

1. Utilize the Carmen site to build the community, develop student vision, and form connections with other student organizations.
2. Choose whether to launch the initiative as an official part of the University or an independent student effort.
3. Create a STEP cohort to help interested students form friendships as they explore other intentional communities.

Introduction

Purpose Statement

This initiative aims to create a supportive, inclusive, innovative sustainable-living community that will improve student wellness and foster balanced lifestyles grounded in nature. The aim is to help students connect with one another and the natural world through cooperative efforts to live simply and sustainably. This project hopes to advance the University's sustainability goals by providing:

- Research and learning opportunities into practical and social aspects of sustainable living,
- Hands-on, student-led experience in community building and resource stewardship,
- A framework to lower the University's emissions from student living.

This research capstone is intended to lay the groundwork for this by uncovering how intentional communities form and what pathways the University might take to grow student vision and leadership for what we have termed the Sustainable Education Community for Intentional Living, or SECIL.

Research Goals and Objectives

The goal of this research phase aims to develop a vision for the Sustainable Education Community for Intentional Living and to bring together interested students and faculty who will help carry the project forward. Additionally, our research aimed to better understand how we could implement the SECIL at OSU through site visits and interviews with established intentional communities. The intent was to build on the 2021 survey data to better understand what students envision for this community, what other communities have found helpful or challenging, and how University stakeholders might be interested in helping launch this initiative.

Objectives:

1. Discover how intentional communities form as social groups and how this project can directly contribute to the community's formation.
2. Learn about the successes/challenges of university-affiliated intentional communities.
3. Develop a clear vision for how the SECIL could fulfill student needs and desires.

Methods

Site Visits

To discover more about intentional communities and how they form or fail, the capstone team visited two communities: the Ohio University Ecohouse, and the EcoVillage at Ithaca (EVI).

OHIO Ecohouse

Ohio University, Athens, Ohio

The Ohio Ecohouse is an alternative living arrangement for environmentally-conscious students at Ohio University (OU) in Athens, Ohio. Students apply to live in the Ecohouse and commit to a community project each semester, which can be as simple as maintaining the house garden. The house itself embodies sustainable living with its excellent insulation, energy-efficient appliances, and solar hot water. However, the community was unable to attract any applicants this year, so there may be some major lessons to learn from it. One major issue is that the house feels disconnected from campus, as it is a few miles away and has no public transportation nearby. This makes it hard to not have a car, which may block some from joining.

EcoVillage at Ithaca

Ithaca, New York

The EcoVillage at Ithaca is one of the largest co-housing communities in the world. The community was built with the environment in mind and offers a beautiful space for people to live

in community and harmony with nature. There are three farms and several businesses within the community. The co-housing model includes shared common houses and garden plots. Each resident is expected to do 2-4 hours of work for the community each week. While there are no cars within the neighborhoods, there are carports and parking lots equipped with electric vehicle charging stations just outside of the neighborhoods. There are three common houses, one in each neighborhood. The three neighborhoods are FROG, SONG, and TREE. The common house in each neighborhood serves as a gathering place for community meetings and meals, which bring residents together multiple times per week.

Key Informant Interviews

Dr. Christopher Ratcliff

The Ohio State University

Computer Science and Engineering Faculty Lecturer

Our first interview was with Dr. Christopher Ratcliff. Dr. Ratcliff has a wide range of experience working with sustainability and intentional living. He worked to restart the Student Farm and developed the Practical Experience in Sustainable Agriculture class at Ohio State, which has become a core part of the new sustainable agriculture major. Dr. Ratcliff has also served as a leader for the Second-Year Transformational Experience Program (STEP) at Ohio State, where he leads the Regenerative Agriculture Workshop. Capstone members Jenna Dent and Emma Lynne Johnson both took part in this experience. The workshop includes a week-long stay at Wyatt Run Farm, where residents are building a sustainable food system in Appalachia.

Dr. Ratcliff also lives in a small intentional-living community. He and his friends lived together while attending Ohio State, then purchased and moved to a shared “homestead” after graduating. They are working to grow their own food, build homes, and create a tight-knit community. Chris highlighted the importance of shared work, meals, and living spaces, and helped the team see how STEP could help launch Ohio State’s own intentional community.

Mark Cohen

Wyatt Run Farm and Ecology Center

The second interview was with Mark Cohen, leader of the Wyatt Run Farm community. Wyatt Run Farm and Ecology Center is a cooperative farming community that allows people to “buy-in” to a piece of land and start their own homestead on-site with others. The community is centered around regenerative farming and forestry. People generally live on their own but have the benefits of living in community, such as shared equipment and a common house for meals and gatherings. Mark Cohen has a lot to say about community and personal health and helped the team see how an intentional regenerative community could holistically help student health.

Phebe Gustafson

Ithaca, New York

EcoVillage Ithaca Resident SONG

Phebe has been living in Ecovillage Ithaca for over 20 years. As a founding member of SONG, the second neighborhood, she and her husband designed their home. She studies climate change and is very passionate about developing the Ecovillage into an innovative living laboratory. Phebe passionately told us, “I don’t see the point of building something that doesn’t address climate change boldly and courageously. Really challenge one another. Be willing to ask the hard questions.” She is very committed to the ongoing health and growth of the community. She is retired and spends her time working on the community planning committee and organizing the neighborhood library. Phebe is a visionary member of the Ecovillage Community who reminds us to return to the vision of living in harmony with nature.

Bruce Rosenbloom

Ithaca, New York

EcoVillage Ithaca Resident FROG

Bruce has been living at the EcoVillage for seven years. He loved the idea of living in an environmentally conscious community with a wide range of people, “as opposed to a pipeline to retirement in Florida.” He found out about the EcoVillage through a friend from his hiking club and then joined the TREE neighborhood as a founding resident. However, he has since sold his TREE apartment and moved into a home in FROG, the oldest neighborhood. Bruce has been living in cooperative housing for most of his life and especially enjoys shared meals and gatherings.

Wren Anjali

Ithaca, New York

EcoVillage Ithaca Resident, TREE Neighborhood

Wren is the Primitive Pursuits Program Coordinator at Cornell University, where they specialize in connecting people of all ages with nature. They have been part of the EcoVillage community for three years and have lived in other small intentional communities. Wren serves their neighbors by dedicating time every week to helping the village youth become more comfortable in the outdoors. Wren’s partner contributes her time as a member of the EcoVillage conflict resolution team, which was discussed at length. Wren shared with us the importance of making nature a more inviting space for those who are less experienced, whether it be asking children to bring a familiar toy or providing straw bales for adults to sit on more comfortably. This part of the interview was particularly resonant with our group and is an approach we think will be valuable in implementing the SECIL vision.

Focus Groups

Zoom Focus Group 1

This focus group was led by Conner Johnson. The group was recruited using the email list of interested students from the Autumn 2021 survey. This group of four analyzed the survey

results and visualized what this community should look like. They suggested that an urban space may be best, both to be close to campus and to explore sustainable urban living.

Zoom Focus Group 2

After the first group, we sent out invitations to hold another focus group. Unfortunately, only one participant came. After this, we planned in-person focus groups and extended personal invitations to improve the odds that those who signed up would show up.

In-Person Focus Group 1

This focus group was led by Jenna Dent, who initially invited people from the Wilderness and Spirituality club to talk about the SECIL. Due to a low level of interest from the club, individual invitations were extended to more people. There were five students who attended the group, and three members of the capstone group helped moderate the discussion. We focused on each letter in the SECIL to guide the conversation on how to support sustainability, education, community, and intentional living.

Image: Wilderness and Spirituality Focus Group

In-Person Focus Group 2

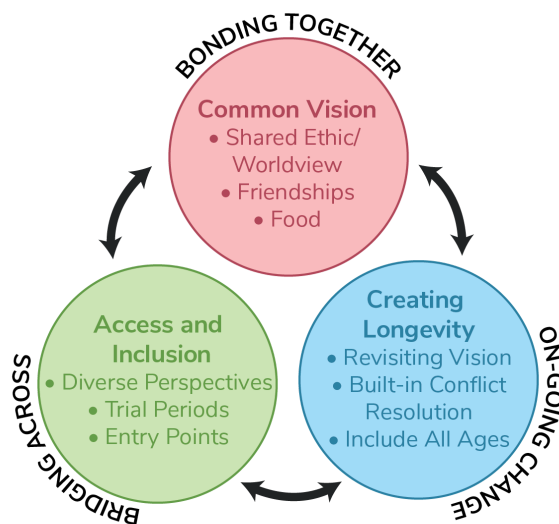
This focus group specifically brought together three survey respondents from the autumn semester capstone survey. All three were leaders of environmental clubs, and two of the three had majors in the School of Environment and Natural Resources, with the third studying Computer Science. This group discussed the survey results



from the autumn semester capstone and visioning questions used for the first focus group. They spoke more than other groups about forming a community with people of conflicting worldviews.

Social Formation of Community

Our first research objective was to understand how communities form. Specifically, we wanted to understand what social conditions were present at the beginning of the communities we researched and how these conditions affected the formation. Our findings can be understood through three main concepts: bonding together, bridging across, and ongoing change.



Bonding Together

Bonding social capital can be understood as the connections which exist between people in tight-knit close relationships, such as families and close friends (Putnam, 2000). It is important that a community develop and maintain these types of bonds. In our research, we heard that social bonds can form in many ways, but that regardless of how they form, it is essential to every community that they form and stay healthy.

In conversation, Dr. Chris Ratcliff shared with us how the community he is a part of started as a group of friends who bonded through ultimate frisbee. This shared friendship and history of working together led to a progression where they started living together as students,

and have stayed together to start families and careers. He also spoke about how affordability through sharing costs and chores was important. Their shared experiences and commitment to living sustainably helped them bond together. In other communities, other factors can also facilitate bonding, including shared beliefs or religion or a commitment to living a plant-based lifestyle. For some people, the value of community itself is enough reason to live cooperatively.

Bridging Across

Bridging social capital refers to the connections between distinct social groups (Putnam, 2000). This can be just as important for a community as bonding social capital. Bridging is how diverse perspectives and new people are connected to the community. In our research, we saw that communities that find ways to develop bridging social capital are the communities that grow. It will be important that the SECIL finds ways to develop and maintain bridging social capital to avoid stagnation and isolation. The continual inclusion of new and diverse perspectives keeps communities interesting and exciting, even for older members. Some ideas for how to facilitate bridging social capital that we heard were through having accessible and easy trial periods, maintaining partnerships with other communities and institutions, and being intentional about what type of built environment is established.

Ongoing Change

Sustainability can be understood as the ability for a community to sustain itself through time. In Ithaca Ecovillage, the longest-lasting community that we visited, we heard about how important it is to allow for the community to grow and change. At times, this change can threaten the community as new members bring in new ideas and old members' vision for the community is challenged. Because of this, communities will need to consider their own growth trajectory and strategically plan to reach their evolving visions and goals.

One element of ongoing change is the need to spend time revisiting the original vision of the community. This involves taking time to assess where we are at, how we have changed, and

how we can do better to make the community stronger. “Group thinking circles” are one way to connect with the community and address ongoing change. These can involve revisiting the goals, values, and rules of the community regularly, with a focus on how they could be changed or practiced better.

Successes and Challenges

Conflict Resolution and Communication

Conflict is inevitable. How communities deal with it, though, has the potential to either strengthen or destroy them. Dr. Christopher Ratcliff, founder of an intentional community in the Columbus, Ohio area, noted that “the downfall of all intentional communities is ... people struggling to live together.” Mark Cohen of Wyatt Run Farm and members of the Ecovillage at Ithaca addressed this, as well, based on their long experiences in intentional communities. Ithaca Ecovillage has its own mediation team to help address conflict. Mark Cohen and EVI expressed that training members in conflict resolution is useful to stop conflicts before they get too heated. Focus group participants expressed that they would be somewhat concerned about getting along and making decisions, and they, too, would appreciate some guidance in conflict and communication if they were to join.

Benefits of Connection with Nature and Others

Phebe of the Ecovillage at Ithaca notes that recently, especially since the pandemic, new members have sought out the village because “they want to feel safe in the community.” She recognizes that people are longing for close connection as they realize that, as one villager puts it: “the way Americans have been living for years – the lack of social interaction and mutual support from neighbors... – isn’t healthy for individuals or the planet” (Holleman 2011, p. 6). Based on student responses in focus groups, this feeling of disconnection and loneliness has gotten worse since the pandemic, perhaps especially for young people. Even before that,

though, the thought of living in close community with people who share daily life and a common vision was a big draw to EVI and Wyatt Run. This sentiment was echoed by Dr. Ratcliff of Ohio State in the story of how his community formed; they started as friends and joined in community partly because they did not want to drift apart from each other as they found jobs and started families. He mentioned that, while some of their parents and other friends do not understand it, they find that living together and sharing the work of cooking and childcare as a community are really bonding for the community and freeing for individuals, as they each have learned to rely on one another.

The unmet need for connection to nature is another major draw to intentional sustainable communities. While not all intentional communities are in rural areas, many of them are focused around a community farm/homestead or have deep connections to forests and other natural spaces. Wren, a member of EVI and a career outdoor educator, spoke to their experience in getting people, especially children, into nature. While Phebe found that many join EVI mainly for community, Wren noticed that many people are drawn in because they feel disconnected from nature and want to find their way back to it. There are many people who are attracted to the idea of managing land and growing food sustainably.

Wren also teaches that people are often uncomfortable in nature because civilizations have become so far removed from it that it now feels dirty or dangerous. Wren's work has been to help ease people into the natural world using controlled experiences of nature and by taking normal activities and events and bringing them into the natural world.

Intentional communities can serve as this kind of bridge, as managed spaces between the natural and the man-made which retain a spark of wilderness. Wren and others interviewed talked a great deal about the proven benefits of being in nature: kids thrive mentally and emotionally; symptoms of depression and anxiety decrease; people are more creative, more productive, and quite often happier. As people realize this, it makes them want to come closer to

wilderness and to “green spaces,” and sustainability-focused intentional communities are positioned very well to help people get closer to nature in community.

Balancing Independence and Cooperation

“We are going to need each other, we are going to have to build containers where we can have some sanctuary, where we can still dream dreams and maintain a grounding in ourselves and with each other. We need to have each other’s backs.”

– Phebe, Ithaca Ecovillage

A great strength of intentional community is seen when people rely on one another, share the loads of life, and embrace the efficiency and connection that come when we function as a group rather than as individuals. On the other hand, every person has dreams and desires that are all their own, which must be respected and protected. Many interviews reflected that the struggle to balance collectivism and individualism is a deep challenge that runs across all intentional communities. Many ICs form out of reaction to the hard-core independence of American culture, but the influence of culture runs deep, and it is hard to live collectively when we are used to living as self-reliant individuals. At the same time, Intentional living can attract very different kinds of people, both those who want radical self-reliance (perhaps with some shared efforts) and those who want a truly communal way of sharing life and resources. This kind of tension is very clear in different interviews from the Ecovillage at Ithaca. Phebe expressed concern that the community had attracted some “libertarian” types who were “interested in moving away from society rather than moving into community,” and valued strong freedoms and individual autonomy. She expressed concern that this is neither the spirit of community nor the intention of the Ecovillage. On the other hand, an earlier interviewee expressed: “It’s like the Ecovillage developed as a movement against the extreme individualization that is present in U.S. society, but it seems like some have taken it to the other

extreme – extreme want for unity and for everyone to be the same" (quote from resident, Holleman 2011, p. 48).

How do we resolve this tension? One way is to embrace diversity of thought. While the community will need some principles and a vision that unites it, we have heard that different people can buy into the same vision of intentional community for very different reasons, and yet still be united for their common goals. For example, in Wyatt Run Farm, there are people who believe in a back-to-the-land movement, who feel that growing their own food, limiting modern machinery, and living simply in community are how they can have the healthiest, most fulfilling way of life. There are others who are driven to it because they feel the urgent need for a sustainable alternative to the American way, one that will be able to adapt to and stop contributing to climate change. These groups have strong disagreements in their worldviews, but they have learned to cooperate to build a community that can endure and sustain itself for generations to come, which is their common dream. This unity can be found in Ithaca, as well, though some disagree about whether they are remaining united around one vision, or if some have shifted far enough away that the vision is being lost. One member feels EVI "is a place where diversity is greatly respected. We all come here for different reasons and everyone fits in – like a jigsaw puzzle made up of very different individual pieces," but another felt these different values and motivations were "disrupting the vision" (Holleman 2011).

Focus group participants echoed this when they envisioned bridging diverse groups by keeping sustainability as the central, driving vision of the community. They expressed that even if they do not agree about other things, if everyone in the community is strongly committed to fighting climate change and to building a sustainable way of life, then they can learn to cooperate and rely on each other for the sake of that vision. At the same time, we have seen that neither the Ecovillage at Ithaca nor Wyatt Run Farm nor any other community we found, has been able to bring people all around the same vision of sustainability. Whatever path is

chosen, it seems there will either be some who feel railroaded into a way of life they do not desire or others who feel the community does not take sustainability far enough.

Student Needs and Desires

Key Findings

Affordability through sharing- A major student desire was affordability; this was supported by evidence in both the focus groups and original survey results. Students felt that the cost of living in the intentional community should be competitive with the cost of living off-campus in Columbus, which means it would have to cost much less than the University's campus housing. Students are optimistic about this because it seems reasonable to them that when people share housing costs, cook meals together, and make use of economies of scale through sharing, then costs for each individual will go down compared to living alone.

Urban setting close to campus- While some students we interviewed have dreams of rural, farm-based communities, every focus group concluded that the only feasible option for an Ohio State intentional community would be something urban. It was surprisingly of the utmost importance to them that the community be close to campus. Students wanted to stay close enough to remain committed to campus clubs and activities, stay connected to social circles, and to walk, bike, and take the bus to class rather than drive. In the visioning process, any option that would encourage driving was seen as relatively unsustainable, and a number of students were excited about restoring and making use of an urban space rather than taking more resources to build something totally new.

Conflict resolution- Students in the focus group expressed some concerns about getting along with people who might have very different views from their own. They appreciate diversity and inclusion, but they also recognize that it is quite difficult to form a cohesive group with people who might have very different worldviews that could set off disagreements. While some expect that the community vision of sustainability would be enough to narrow down the range of

participants and keep the community united through conflict, others expressed that they would really like some guidance in conflict resolution before joining.

Community garden- While participants generally looked toward an urban space for this effort, they also expressed a deep desire for a community garden. Some wanted it for the affordability. To them, it means having fresh, local produce without paying a premium at the supermarket, which can be hard for students. Others want a garden for the sustainability and connection to the earth that comes with managing your own plot of land regeneratively. It is unclear how this might play out in an urban space near Ohio State's campus, but it seems to be a strong desire.

Minimal authority structure- Many focus group participants were wary of a strong authority structure for the community, whether from faculty or other students. They tended to desire self-governance for the community while wanting to preserve freedoms for individuals. As well, they want to avoid restricting people with set rules or roles for how things should work, beyond basic guidelines, set together by the community.

Plant-based living- This aspect was not a top priority for everyone, but it was of the utmost importance to a significant number of participants. One leader of a sustainability-focused club pointed out that half their members are vegan or vegetarian, while many others limit their meat consumption. One participant in that conversation made it clear that the community would have to be plant-based for them to join, as they feel strongly that the climate impacts of animal products are far greater than the impacts of most individual choices. Others expressed that while it might not need to be totally plant-based, they would need to have balanced plant-based options at shared meals. Multiple people also expressed that this commitment to a plant-based lifestyle was why they rated "working with farm animals" so low in the initial survey.

Student Mental Health

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, many students report feelings of isolation and loneliness. In focus groups and interviews, students mentioned they felt joining a community of diverse but similarly motivated peers could help improve their mental health. Fellowship and community for students have been lacking over the past two years and many agree the SECIL would be beneficial to their mental health. Research backs up the positive impacts that proximity to nature and feelings of belonging can have. These core aspects of the SECIL will be important for future members to develop.

Carmen Page

The Carmen site for this project will be a repository of research from this and the previous capstone group and may become a starting point for future students who want to make this vision come to life. Interested students will be able to join ongoing conversations to form a vision for the community, receive updates, and contribute their own sources of knowledge and inspiration to the community “library.” This will ensure the project lives on beyond this capstone, and will help students form “community” even before there is a physical location for it. A link to the site can be found in the Appendix or through contacting Dr. Greg Hitzhusen.

Recommendations

Collaborate with sustainability-driven student organizations

On-going student engagement will be one of the most important aspects of the SECIL. One way to achieve this is to build partnerships with sustainability-focused student organizations, including but not limited to:

Sustainability-focused student organizations and groups			
Students Advocating for Food Equity	Best Food Forward	OSU Student Farm	Simply Green

Wilderness and Spirituality	Pi Alpha Xi	Defend our Future	Mountaineers
SENR Scholars	SUSTAINS	Engineers for a Sustainable World	MANNRS

Explore cooperative living models for future SECIL participants living off or on campus.

In conversation with faculty of Ohio State, it became clear that the formation of the SECIL could take multiple paths. One key decision is whether the community will be an official part of Student Housing at OSU or if it will be a student-organized effort launched with guidance from the University. Cooperative housing models are one path towards an off-campus model of the SECIL, and on-campus communities could reside in a dorm-like model. Some considerations for both models include:

Independent off-campus housing vs. University on-campus housing	
Independent off-campus communities	On-campus communities
Affordable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low overhead • Student-governed food/housing costs 	Institutional support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty guidance and administrative assistance
Replicable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple groups, multiple communities • Many options for off-campus housing • Students retain freedom to shape and govern community 	Integrated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for credit • Official pathways into the community
Longevity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities could carry on after students graduate 	Continuity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program carries multiple generations of cohorts

Enhance the Carmen site to provide stakeholders and interested individuals with opportunities to learn and connect in an online environment.

The Carmen site evolved from a conversation about building sustainability into the SECIL through longevity, connection, and succession. As a capstone group we are limited to one semester’s worth of work on the project, but we recognize the importance of documenting

our findings. A virtual community space will allow students to connect and share their visions for the community. We chose to develop the Carmen site due to its flexibility and familiarity for students. Long term, we hope the site helps community members collaborate and share information on sustainable living practices and opportunities across the Buckeye community. The Carmen site will be maintained at first by the Exploratory Research Group, and eventually by students involved in the SECIL.

Develop a curriculum aligned with SECIL and build a STEP cohort or project around sustainable intentional communities.

STEP (Second Year Transformational Experience Program) presents an opportunity for students to experiment with sustainable and intentional living. The \$2,000 grant is awarded to all STEP participants to fund a project related to their STEP focus. This could provide them funding to adopt sustainable living practices, perform research or projects in their communities, or even to help pay for community living expenses. It may also provide an ideal incubator where interested second-year students can connect with one another as they transition to off-campus living. This could prepare students to lead their own intentional community, whether independently or as part of the University, depending on the path this effort takes.

Continue to gauge evolving student needs and interests through surveys, focus groups, and visioning exercises. Additionally, provide opportunities for students to get involved with the SECIL and other sustainability organizations and opportunities on campus.

Ohio State students are ambitious and excited to develop new models of sustainable student living. Their vision is the driving force behind this project. Developing and solidifying a vision is a key step toward establishing intentional community.

Conclusions

Two parallel conclusions emerged through our research. Ohio State students are interested in the development of more healthy and sustainable ways to live and some are willing

to take the time to be a part of that development. Additionally, there are a wealth of models and examples of intentional living that could be adapted to both meet the needs of students and move The Ohio State University towards achieving its sustainability goals. Immediate suggestions are:

1. Begin to connect interested students in a way that allows for the meaningful development of plans for an intentional community. This includes exploring ideas for more informal off-campus student-led communities, as well as ideas for university-led on-campus student housing options. The latter will require the inclusion of faculty and administration.
2. Review communities across the U.S. and the world for models to inform the development of the SECIL. This includes examples of the built environment, models of sharing and housing (co-housing v. cooperatives), and models of governance and conflict resolution. One of the most important next steps will be to explore which of these models and examples students and faculty feel will be the best for a community at Ohio State.

References

Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. Simon and Schuster.

Holleman, M., & Colombijn, F. (2011). Individuality in community at the EcoVillage at Ithaca. [Master's thesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam]

Appendix

Datasets

Dataset #1:

Filename: ranking_plot.png

Source: Data from Autumn 2021 EEDS Capstone course survey data on Qualtrics.

Description: The image is a bar chart that shows the range of positive and negative interest of the 800+ students that responded to the survey. The data was normalized by the student to the average response of that student. The error bars in the chart show one standard deviation from the average response.

Dataset #2:

Filename: Focus Groups.docx

Source: Focus group facilitated on zoom 3/8/22

Description: The first section of the document is questions and polls used for the focus groups. The rest of the document contains notes taken at the time of the focus group.

Dataset #3:

Filename: Notes from interview with Chris Ratcliff.docx

Source: Zoom interview with Dr. Chris Ratcliff

Description: This document is both an outline of questions that were roughly asked and notes on Dr. Ratcliff's answers. This was a more informal interview than what the document portrays.

Dataset #4:

Filename: ratcliff_interview_transcript.docx

Source: Zoom interview with Dr. Chris Ratcliff

Description: This is the transcript from the zoom recording of the interview with Dr. Chris Ratcliff on 3/17/22.

Dataset #5:

Filename: Ithaca Photos (folder)

Source: Taken by Jordan and Jenna at Ithaca Ecovillage 3/26/22

Description: Folder contains raw .heic files as well as some converted .jpegs that were used in the project. Pictures include mostly pictures of buildings, inside the common houses, and some posters found throughout the village. The trip was attended by

Jordan, Jenna, Emma Lynne, Kennedy, and Maggie (Jordan's wife). They visited the EcoVillage on March 26, 2022 and then stayed in an off-grid cabin that evening.

Dataset #6:

Filename: Interview with Wren.docx

Source: Notes of Interview with Wren Anjali 3/26/22 at TREE, Ithaca Ecovillage

Description: Notes and some transcription of interview recording with Wren taken by Jordan.

Dataset #7:

Filename: Wren Ecovillage.mp4

Source: Interview with Wren Anjali 3/26/22 at TREE, Ithaca Ecovillage

Description: An audio recording of the interview

Dataset #8:

Filename: Interview with Phebe.docx

Source: Notes of Interview with Phebe Gustafson 3/26/22 at TREE Ithaca Ecovillage

Description: Notes and some transcription of interview recording with Wren taken by Jordan.

Dataset #9:

Filename: Phebe Ecovillage.mp4

Source: Interview with Phebe Gustafson 3/26/22 at TREE, Ithaca Ecovillage

Description: An audio recording of the interview.

Dataset #10:

Filename: wilderness and spirituality focus group.m4a

Source: Focus groups held with members of the Wilderness and Spirituality student organization on March 31, 2022.

Description: 5 members of the student organization attended. Focus group discussed what each of the 5 main topics in the name SECIL means to them. Also in attendance were Jenna, Emma Lynne, Jordan, and Roxy (Emma Lynne's pup).

Dataset #11:

Filename: IMG_6353.jpeg

Source: Picture of focus group with Wilderness and Spirituality Group

Description: Pictured left to right, Jordan, Emily, Bre, Liam, Gabe, Jenna, Louise, Roxy.

Dataset #12:

Filename: 4_1 in-person focus group notes.docx

Source: Focus group facilitated by Conner on 4/1/22

Description: Topics discussed are covered in Focus Groups Presentation.pptx (dataset #13) include vision, survey data, quotes and special concerns

Dataset #13:

Filename: Focus Groups Presentation.pptx

Source: Created by Conner Johnson and Kennedy Rabquer to facilitate focus groups

Description: Slides cover topics discussed in zoom focus group on 3/8/22 (dataset #2) and in-person focus group on 4/1/22 (dataset #12)

Link to Carmen Site

This link currently (as of April 2022) only works for Ohio State students and staff (with an Ohio State login), but this may change in the near future: <https://osu.instructure.com/courses/120829>