

# REPORT CARD ON ECOLOGICAL DESIGN EDUCATION

*Sponsored by the Northwest Alliance for Ecological Design Education*

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## PROJECT OVERVIEW

There is no assessment tool currently available to rank design & planning schools according to their level of resources, curriculum, and degree programs in ecological design. In response, the NW Alliance for Eco-Design Education (a coalition of student, faculty & professionals) is proposing a multi-campus assessment of universities and colleges throughout the Northwest. **This systematic assessment will evaluate design and planning schools** based on their availability of faculty, courses, degree programs, advisors, and research **in ecological design. The final output will be a “Report Card” highlighting successes, areas for improvement and overall leadership in eco-design education.** Below is a proposed outline of the project:

## PROJECT GOALS

1. Create an assessment tool for prospective students interested in eco-design professional education
2. Promote advancement and integration of eco-design into traditional design and planning programs
3. Publish & distribute Report Card to major universities nationally
4. Increase collaboration between northwest institutions and students promoting eco-design education.
5. Provide/support course credit for involved participants
6. Secure funding to sponsor annual report card production (research, publication and distribution)

## DOCUMENT OUTPUT

10-12 page, 8 1/2x11 color document with photos, case studies of key programs/projects/research, and summary tables providing a comparative ranking of institutions demonstrating excellence in eco-design education.

## PROPOSED PROJECT TIMELINE

Precedent Review and Evaluation	Jan. – Feb. 2005
Development of Report Card Draft Survey	Feb. - March 2005
Student & Faculty Outreach	March - April 2005
Report Card Workshop – HOPES Conference	Saturday, April 9, 2005
Survey Review & User Testing	April – May 2005
Web Survey Launch	May 2005
Data Collection [6 weeks]	May-June 2005
Data Synthesis & Evaluation	Summer 2005
Layout & Production	Summer/Fall 2005
Final Publication	Fall -Winter 2005
Report Card Dissemination & Promotion	Winter 2005/Spring 2006
Presentation at HOPES Eco Design Conference, U of O	April 2006

## REPORT CARD PRECEDENTS & EXAMPLES:

There is substantial precedence for assembling and disseminating a report card of this kind. However, the precise function and niche of this report card are not currently being served. Examples of that provide inspiration and guidance include:

1. ***www.beyondgreypinstripes.org*** – *evaluation and ranking of social and environmental pedagogy at business schools nationally.*
2. ***Metropolis Survey of Sustainability Education – Survey of Design Students, Faculty & Administration 2002 & 2003:***
  - ***2003 Article:*** [http://www.metropolismag.com/html/content\\_0803/sus/index.html](http://www.metropolismag.com/html/content_0803/sus/index.html) - Metropolis, Aug-Sept 2003, p 104, by Susan S. Szenasy.
  - ***2002 Survey Description:*** [http://www.metropolismag.com/html/conferences/icff\\_2002/teachinggreen\\_survey\\_2002.html](http://www.metropolismag.com/html/conferences/icff_2002/teachinggreen_survey_2002.html)

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3. **Sustainable Environmental Design Education (SEDE)** – *Calpoly survey of environmental design curriculum at Landscape & Architecture Schools in California.*
  - <http://www.calpoly.edu/~sede/pgms.html> – *List of California & Selected National Programs & Schools offering green design.*
  - <http://www.callpoly.edu/~sede/edsurvey.html> – *Educator survey of environmental design education topics and resources.*
4. **US News & Reports** – *rankings of top undergraduate and graduate programs in the US – (No environmental design school rankings)*
5. **Ecological Design and Building Schools: Green Guide to Educational Opportunities in the U.S. and Canada** offers a comprehensive resource to those seeking instruction in “green” design, building and community planning. The new guide, to be released September 2005 by New Village Press [[pdf abstract attached](#)]

## PROPOSED PARTNERS & ROLES

- **NW Alliance for Ecological Design Education** – project convener/Heather Flint, project manager
- **Good Company ([www.goodcompany.com](http://www.goodcompany.com))** – Joshua Skov, Project Advisor
- **Education For Sustainability Western Network ([www.EFSWest.org](http://www.EFSWest.org))** – Project Partner (outreach/dissemination)
- **UO Ecological Design Center** – Project partner (project assistance, dissemination through HOPES)
- **Participating Northwest Institutions** (student researchers and faculty advisors)

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- **Web Survey** – Develop a web-based survey using free online survey programs (e.g. Survey Monkey, etc.)
- **Data Collection** – will be done with help from student/ faculty researchers responsible to at schools with a minimum # of surveys required per school.
- **Indicators** - will be developed (and refined during the workshop) to determine which key factors are most important to students when choosing graduate and undergraduate schools and programs
- **Evaluation & Assessment** - will be evaluated by project advisors, key faculty and the Alliance Board based on indicators developed at the HOPES 2005 Workshop.

## ELECTRONIC & HARD-COPY DISSEMINATION (~500-1000 Qty.)

1. Deans at major universities and colleges nation-wide
2. Presentation and distribution at national education & green building conferences
3. Online (Good Company as webhost? EFS? Other?)
4. Email – Green Clips, Grist, Northwest Environment Watch, Sustainable Industries Journal, GreenBiz.com
5. Trade Magazines, *Sustainable Industries Journal, Landscape Architecture, Natural Home, etc.*

## PROJECT ROLES

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|--------------------------------------|---|
| • Project Coordinator                | Heather Flint                             |
| • Project Advisor*                   | Joshua Skov, Good Company                 |
| • Student Researchers                | 1-2 per school                            |
| • Faculty Advisors                   | 1 per school                              |
| • Data Crunchers                     | Chris Chatto, University of Oregon/Others |
| • Outreach & Promotion Coordinator   | TBD                                       |
| • Sponsoring Organization(s) 501(c)3 | EFS, EDC or other                         |
| • Funders                            | TBD; grants, participating institutions   |
| • Survey Evaluators                  | Alliance Board, Faculty Advisors          |

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## **PARTICIPANT COURSE CREDIT**

Credit for internship or course project work may be available to students as a part of assembling the report card. These guided educational opportunities will be facilitated with help from Joshua Skov, Adjunct Faculty at the University of Oregon. Course credit opportunities will be expanded to other campuses, especially through Report Card faculty advisors). Non University of Oregon students will receive a packet of materials to take this to their campuses to facilitate the credit approval process.

## **NEXT STEPS & STATUS**

1. HOPES Workshop (see description below)
2. Draft survey development – IN PROGRESS
3. Develop a list of participating schools and contacts – DRAFT COMPLETE
4. Develop draft list of Report Card indicators – NEED SUGGESTIONS & FEEDBACK
5. Develop a funding proposal – ANY VOLUNTEERS?

## **WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION**

*Report Card on the Status of Eco-Design Education - April 9<sup>th</sup>, 3:30-5:30 pm*

*HOPES Eco-Design Conference, University of Oregon*

The Alliance will provide a facilitated workshop at HOPES (April 8-10) to focus the project's direction, schedule and participation. This interactive workshop will explore indicators and benchmarks in eco design education and will help define a process for research, evaluation and production of a regional "Report Card" to be presented at HOPES 2006. Sustainability consultant Joshua Skov of Good Company will facilitate. The workshop will address the following issues:

- Needs/gaps in general information on eco-design professional education opportunities in the region
- Existing models for regular reporting on educational institutions and programs
- Potential structure, content and format of the Report Card
- Process for information gathering, writing, editing and final production
- Outreach and dissemination strategies

## **WORKSHOP GOALS**

- Developing an action plan that envisions completion of the Report Card for release at HOPES 2006
- Allocating roles and tasks to achieve the action plan, including clear roles for the advisory board, student information-gatherers and project partners
- Reaching general consensus around the Report Card's content and structure

## **\*PROJECT ADVISOR & WORKSHOP FACILITATOR**

Joshua Skov, Good Company ([www.goodcompany.com](http://www.goodcompany.com)), is a consultant to higher education institutions on sustainability strategy, planning and assessment. He is an experienced workshop facilitator and has coordinated the creation of complex, multi-author documents. Joshua Skov is the author of the "Sustainable Pathways Toolkit: Indicators for Colleges and Universities," a report produced to support evaluation and measurement of campus sustainability over the 7-campus Oregon University system.