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ALTER-GLOBAL PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT

Benefits, barriers and best practices for full
involvement in university sustainability initiatives

ALTER-GLOBALIZATION: An approach to living in our globalized world, emphasizing sustainable, democratic community rather than consumerist, hypercompetitive corporations and individuals.

PLEYERS (2010) DEFINES PRINCIPLES OF THE ALTER-GLOBAL MOVEMENT AS:

- structures that are intergenerational, international and diverse
- distributed leadership model
- embracing diffuse, experimental, playful experiential solutions
- performative and artistic
- honouring knowledge, expertise, facts within/across disciplines
- radically democratic and collaborative
- offering human-scale, life-giving, communitarian experiences counter to isolating narratives of neo-liberalism
- breaking down barriers through inclusive, participatory practices
- living a blend of actual & virtual worlds as online and face-to-face networks flow seamlessly into one another.



BENEFITS: Many UBC sustainability initiatives benefit by following alter-global principles:

- SEEDS program, City Studio, Landed Learning on the Farm, Roots on the Roof, UBC Orchard Garden, Cultivating Learning Network...
- Undergrad & graduate students, staff, alumni, faculty & broader community interact in creative and playful ways, with intellectual engagement and a respect for expertise & knowledge
- Infrastructure gains in energy conservation, waste reduction and reduced pollution
- Maximum engagement and a sense of hope, delight and the possibilities of 'other worlds' that allow life to flourish and be sustained within the structures of the university

BARRIERS: • split of university into academic & real estate property development arms with divergent missions

- persistence of rigidly hierarchical management and governance structures
- neo-liberal approaches that prioritize profitability and conformism

SHARED FUTURES: At present, the knowledge and wisdom of the 'property' group and the 'academic' group live in separate silos, and take separate (often incommensurable) trajectories. How much more could be achieved if there were a radically democratic, respectful dialogue between these groups for a sustainable campus?