

Professor Kelly Isern
English for Academic Purposes
Theme-based component- EAP Reading and Writing

Incorporate reading materials and writing topics stressing “green” practices for classroom discussion.

Take students to Oleta River State Park – Naturalist will share facts about ecosystems and economics of the park

At the end of the Oleta River Immersion, students will help the naturalist with a needed park activity such as trash removal from the beach, mangrove planting, etc.

Background Information:
Oleta River State Park Faculty Immersion/Workshop—

Our immersion workshop into Oleta River State Park revealed to me the need to raise awareness in our peer groups, students and community in general about the importance of preserving our natural resources, especially an ecosystem as diverse as Oleta River State Park. It was impressive to examine the extensive mangrove habitat, which is home to abundant marine life and bird populations. We learned from our guide and instructor, for example, what the difference is between red, black and white mangrove trees, and what their functions are in the ecosystem. Furthermore, we were taught how these mangroves are sanctuaries for the smallest of marine life which feed up the chain—shrimp, feeder fish, etc...

At this workshop we discussed the causes of depletion in our natural resources, such as land development, canal systems which originated for drainage, and pollution from water runoff (landfills and sewage), and basically, our ignorance as to the consequences of our everyday activities. These discussions opened up my thoughts to such simple steps to take on my behalf as water preservation at home, and recycling of anything from batteries to motor and cooking oil. Since my visit to Oleta, I have thought a great deal about my role in helping to save our environment for future generations, and how my position as a professor at Miami Dade College may serve as a platform to inform our students of the seriousness of this topic.

The question now is, “what can I do to encourage ecologically sound practices and create awareness among my students for the need to preserve our natural resources?” I have decided to create a theme-based component to my reading and writing EAP courses, stressing the need for “green” practices. I will incorporate reading materials and writing topics for classroom discussion. I will suggest a field trip to Oleta for my students and share my experience and what I learned walking with our group. In addition, because I noticed a fair amount of trash (plastic bags, bottles, and ther debris) along the shoreline,

I would like to work with service learning in my classes and initiate a service learning trip with my students for “clean-up at Oleta.”