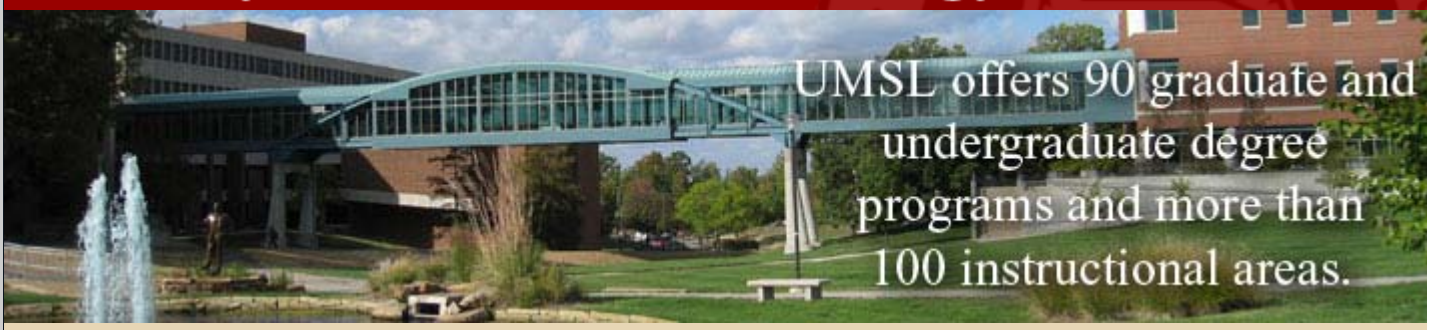
University of Missouri - St. Louis

Whitney R. Harris World Ecology Center



Mission Statement

The Whitney R. Harris World Ecology Center strives to promote and support research and education in biology and biodiversity conservation throughout the world, and to increase public awareness and interest in issues relating to global natural resource conservation and sustainable development.

Specific objectives are:

1. to promote graduate and undergraduate research and education in conservation biology, ecology, systematics, and sustainable development;
2. to promote multidisciplinary approaches to solving ecological problems;
3. to nurture partnerships with the Missouri Botanical Garden and the Saint Louis Zoo;
4. to establish active links with colleagues and institutions in countries throughout the world which will enhance scientific exchange and promote research and education;
5. to promote an awareness within the St. Louis community of the importance of biodiversity conservation and the pursuit of environmentally sustainable practices.

The mission outlined in this document is designed to direct the Whitney R. Harris World Ecology Center for the next five years (2006-2010). Our goal is to ensure that the Harris Center be recognized by our colleagues for quality research and education, especially those pertaining to ecology and biodiversity conservation. Moreover, we intend to develop programs which will allow the Center to bring together experts from a variety of disciplines to deal with complex problems in conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

Meeting Objectives of the Mission

Objective 1

To promote graduate and undergraduate research and education in conservation biology, ecology, systematics, and sustainable development.

This objective will be achieved by:

- helping with graduate and undergraduate student recruitment through publicity;
- providing graduate student fellowships;
- providing research and internship funds to graduate and undergraduate students through competitive proposal evaluation;
- providing funds to graduate students to attend scientific conferences;
- arranging internships for students enrolled in the Graduate Certificate in

Tropical Biology and Conservation and the Undergraduate Certificate in Conservation Biology;
- assisting with identifying and securing foundation and corporate funding for individual research projects;
- sponsoring speakers and visiting scholars;
- promoting interactions among the Biology Department, the Missouri Botanical Garden, the Saint Louis Zoo, other departments on campus, and other universities in St. Louis;
- providing support for long term visits by international colleagues prepared to offer short courses, workshops, or seminars.

Objective 2

To promote multidisciplinary approaches to solving ecological problems in tropical and temperate countries.

This objective will be achieved by:

- promoting collaboration between the Harris Center and other units on campus such as the Center for International Studies and the Departments of Economics, History, and Political Science;
- promoting and facilitating symposia, workshops, or exchanges which are directed towards solving a particular issue;
- providing scientific expertise to colleagues or institutions regarding issues of common interest.

Objective 3

To nurture partnerships with the Missouri Botanical Garden and the Saint Louis Zoo.

This objective will be achieved by:

- collaborating in research and education with faculty at partner institutions;
- having representation from the Missouri Botanical Garden and the Saint Louis Zoo on the Harris Center Executive Committee which sets policy and vision for the Center;
- organizing joint symposia, seminars, and workshops.

Objective 4

To establish active links with colleagues and institutions in countries throughout the world which will enhance scientific exchange and promote research and education.

This objective will be achieved by:

- sponsoring speakers and visiting scholars;
- promoting research and educational interactions between the Harris Center and colleagues at link institutions;
- facilitating a regular exchange of information between the Harris Center and link institutions;
- facilitating and strengthening the research capacity and visibility of our link institutions and international colleagues.

Objective 5

To promote an awareness within the St. Louis community of the importance of biodiversity conservation and the pursuit of environmentally sustainable practices.

This community outreach objective will be achieved by:

- organizing public symposia such as the Whitney and Anna Harris Conservation Forum and the Jane and Whitney Harris Lecture;
- publishing two newsletters annually;
- providing speakers to schools and community events;
- fostering links with members of the Whitney R. Harris World Ecology Center

Development, Scientific and Advisory Boards.

Return to top of page

Whitney R. Harris World Ecology Center • B216 Benton Hall

One University Boulevard • St. Louis, MO 63121-4400 USA • 1-314-516-6203