The goals of the USCA recycling initiative are to increase awareness about the benefits of recycling and inspire action by the campus community to make conscious, positive choices to preserve the environment by increasing the amount of mixed paper, cardboard, cans, and bottles recycled campus wide. These goals are being addressed by a fully coordinated project joining operations with academic efforts to educate students about recycling so that they will choose to participate in recycling efforts.

This pilot project has been divided into six steps, of which three have been implemented.

**Step 1**: Fully incorporate a field trip to the Aiken County sorting, recycling, and landfill sites into Environmental Earth Science (AGLY 103) every semester, including summers. All professors who teach this course (Karin L. Willoughby and Dr. William Pirkle) have agreed to do this and implemented the field trip in Summer I, 2003. This 3 to 4 hour field trip is led by Bill Anderson, Director of Aiken County Recycling, and it proved very effective in getting students to realize the scope of the problem.

**Step 2**: Change the required team presentation topic used in AGLY 103 to “The Three R’s”. This was also initiated in Summer I, 2003. Karin L. Willoughby taught the four credit course. Nine teams of two to four students (for a total of 24 students) researched the “The Three R’s” and gave group presentations on their research. Emphasis was placed on both researching the need for and effectiveness of doing recycling and on presenting the information in a way that would generate interest in and willingness to participate among the general campus population. Appendix A is the initial assignment sheet used to inform students of the project goals and requirements. Christine Inman Norris (Environmental Health and Safety Manager, Department of Operations) and Dr. Pirkle both attended the presentations. Presentations emphasized games to play using recycling facts, video-taped commercials, skits and posters. Dr. Pirkle was pleased with the general quality of the reports compared to other topics that had been assigned in previous years and readily agreed to incorporate this topic in the future. Christine will use the materials that the students generated to help develop public awareness of the need for recycling in November and April. The following are comments made by students on the self-evaluation reports that were required as part of the assignment.

“Doing this assignment was a fun learning experience. From it, I learned the importance of conserving and protecting our earth and its resources so that those resources may be available in the near future.”

“In college we are learning things that we hope to remember for the rest of our lives so why not try to get us in the habit of recycling.”
“I enjoyed making the [promote recycling] commercial and everyone I showed it to has liked it also. This was not one of my easiest group projects, but I know it turned out the way I had envisioned.”

“Before our group met I was constantly trying to think of an innovative way to get people excited about recycling. Before taking this class I would not have cared less about recycling. However, the more I learned, the more I feel the need to recycle and gain the interest of others in this area. … It has been a fabulous experience…and I hope that I can raise my children to recycle as it were second nature.”

“I would first like to say that I enjoyed this group project. Most of my group are education majors and we are all on a budget. We worry all the time if we will have enough materials in our classes for our students. I thought this would be a wonderful opportunity to see if we could come up with a curriculum that is based on [re]used materials.” (Please note that the last three comments show that the assignment reaches more people than those enrolled in class.)

**Step 3:** Clay Martin, a sophomore theater major and boy scout, was hired as the student recycling coordinator through competitive application and interviews. His first tasks are as follows:

A) To assess the present use of the recycling containers on campus in coordination with the Department of Operations. Once the current situation is understood about the use of recycling containers, Operations will move those containers that are not being effectively used. Clay will then develop signage to improve correct sorting of materials placed in the containers and to encourage use of the recycling containers.

B) To develop contacts with student organizations on campus to get student volunteers to help with the public awareness weeks USCA will hold in November and April to coincide with America Recycles Day and Earth Day. He will also help coordinate the activities chosen for the November and April recycling awareness weeks.

**Step 4:** Still to be implemented, is to hold the November Recycling Awareness Week. Some of the materials developed by the team presenters in AGLY 103 will be used.

**Step 5:** Next to be implemented will be the addition of a lab in AGLY 103 during Spring semester where students in the class will work with Housekeeping on recycling projects. One example of such a task will be to clean up the baseball field and stands, after a game.

**Step 6:** Finally, a public awareness week will be held in April to coordinate with Earth Week. Some of the materials developed by the team presenters in AGLY 103 will be used.

Details of the current and planned Department of Operations efforts follow:

All recycled materials have been and will continue to be picked up by the Aiken County Recycling Program. Currently only mixed paper and cardboard are being collected on campus and being sent to Aiken County for recycling. As we have begun to see an interest in recycling on campus, we have seen a small increase in the results of our efforts to recycle these materials. However, there is much
more room for improvement on campus. For instance, we anticipate starting an effective program on the campus recycling aluminum cans and plastic bottles with the help of Clay Martin. Due to this anticipated increase in recyclable materials, the university will be reducing the amount of trash sent to the landfill, therefore freeing resources that can be directed toward the recycling effort.

As stated earlier, we are introducing an educational aspect to the recycling program in conjunction with the AGLY 103 class. We hope this will help to raise the awareness of the benefits of recycling on campus as well as in people’s homes. To meet this goal, USCA will sponsor the following events:

- **USCA RAW (USCA Recycling Awareness Week)** during the week of November 10th-15th in conjunction with America Recycles Day.

- **Earth Day April 22nd** - “Clean and Green…That’s the way we like it!”

Involvement of the student body in this program is an integral part in having a successful program; therefore, student participation will be coordinated by Clay Martin working with the Student Government Association and other campus organizations to sponsor or assist with various events on campus during the recycling awareness week.

The future of the recycling program at USCA is planned to continue to grow and grow exponentially as we begin to educate our ever changing campus community. Given the large numbers of students, faculty, and staff, the possibilities for recycling are endless.

To show support for improving the program and in an effort to meet the needs of the growing program, the Department of Operations recently purchased additional containers for the campus and will continue to do so as needed when funds are available.
Appendix A  
Environmental Earth Science – AGLY 103  
Instructions for Team Presentations

The purpose of the team presentation has two parts: 1) do research on “The Three R’s” which are reduce, reuse and recycle. And 2) develop a team effort to engage the public in learning the information you have collected. Your team is to come up with a way to make it interesting or even fun to learn about what we do and what we ought to do with trash. You may include wastewater and other kinds of pollution, if you wish in the materials you develop. Your team will present its project on June 26. Plan on a presentation that takes about 8 –10 minutes per team member. That is, a team of three should take about 25 – 30 minutes to present your project. Your team may include audience participation in your project. Assume your target audience is college age people. Some of these projects may be used by other organizations on this or other campuses in future National Recycling Day (November) and Earth Day (April) celebrations.

Suggestions for projects include developing brochures or other information sheets for hand outs at a booth, posters, games, “treasure” hunts and skits. You are encouraged to be creative and come up with innovative ways to engage the public in wanting to learn more about how to clean up this planet and feeling like they actually want to do their parts in the clean up effort. Your grade will be based on 1) the teamwork you display and the quality of the project you develop. This project must be presented (explained), performed or demonstrated to the class. The project must also be written up and turned in. The written part of the project must have clear and complete instructions so that another group could use your project with just the information you provide. Is the project interesting, did the class enjoy it, did people learn from the project, can another group use your project successfully, did your team work together successfully? And 2) Individual reports on each person’s contribution to the project, including notes taken, research materials collected and a cover page that lists/describes the contribution you made to the project.