

Sustainability Council

Meeting Minutes

December 13, 2005

Present: Constance Adler, Karen Arabas, Joe Bowersox, Susan Chiapella, Sue Koger, Kiry Nelson, Jennifer Roney, Nathan Sivers-Boyce, Susan Smith, Nadene Steinhoff

Student Sustainability Assessment:

Following the Council Meeting at 1:30 pm in AGSM, Atkinson students Kat Eum and Carl Hillig will be presenting their findings from the Sustainability Assessment they conducted this semester. If your schedule permits, please come over and support them and hear their results.

The Council has accomplished a great deal in the last 10 months, we are working on many projects and there is a lot of buzz around campus regarding what we are doing. We have received many inquiries and requests for support.

The purpose of this meeting is for prioritizing and strategizing for the upcoming year. Joe began by discussing our current commitments (labeled as N-S on the email from Joe dated 12.12.05). Discussion was opened for those items we are already committed to:

(N) Fall 2006 Conference:

Jennifer R. will be coordinating the conference. She waited to apply for grants till we had some accomplishments under our belt that we could list on applications, which will make it easier to secure the grants. Now is the time to start applying and Jennifer will create a committee this spring to write grants, organize speakers, and plan the conference, which will most likely be a day-long conference with outside guest speakers and will tie into Campus Sustainability Day in Fall 2006.

(O) Energy & Waste Reduction Campus Initiative:

Kiry has talked to the Collegian office and they will publish a 2 page spread on the Sustainability Council in an upcoming issue. Other initiatives that are planned include publishing energy saving tips/hints to the campus community, working with Goudy/Bon Appetit to use more local food, and doing trainings with RA's and at TIUA. They have not set a budget just yet but plan to do so soon and will let the Council know. They will also move forward on the energy front.

(P) Center of Excellence Proposal:

Much research needs to be done on similar centers and on any possible competing centers at Northwest universities. The interest level of the campus community still needs to be gauged and we need to check into funding. We also need to assess what things are needed regionally and nationally to fill a niche. We need people to be actively involved in fine

tuning the proposal we submit. We will have a very short time frame to create and submit a final proposal once we return from Winter Break. Proposals are due in mid-February. It might be possible to tie the Fall Conference in with the proposal so there is consistency and continuity. The conference could help launch the Center and provide a programmatic basis for the Center.

Items (Q) and (R) have been addressed. We will meet with the Administrative Council and Executive Committee for the Board of Trustees in January and February and planning is underway for the Board of Trustees retreat.

(S) Car sharing/zip car program:

The program is moving forward and we just need to get the go-ahead.

OTHER ITEMS

Several Council members were not able to attend the Centers for Excellence Open Forums and asked for a recap. Council members present relayed their impressions of the forums and briefly went over some of the other proposals. Some proposals appear to be tightly connected to the Sustainability Council's Center proposal. There were 2 collaborative research proposals; the Council expressed some interest in reaching out to them for collaborative research outside of the sciences.

(T) Sustainability Speakers sponsored by the Law School:

The Law School will be bringing in two speakers the week of January 24th for afternoon lectures. Ben Boer from Australia will be on campus discussing Sustainability Law and an immigration economist will speak on "sustainable immigration." The Law School is also hoping that Richard Lazarus, author of "The Making of Environmental Law" and a Supreme Court scholar will be able to visit as well. The Council will help publicize these events. They promise to be very interesting and 'non-technical'.

(U) 2006 Dempsey Lecture

Robert Costanza, from the University of Vermont, will be the 2006 Dempsey Lecturer. The lecture will be on Thursday, February 16 at 8 pm in Hudson Hall. More information on the Dempsey Lecture will be disseminated soon.

(V) Sustainability Retreat - Summer 2006

The next sustainability retreat will take place in the summer 2006. Date and location have yet to be determined. During the upcoming semester we'll work on planning this event.

(W) Formal Campus Sustainability Assessment

The group thought a formal campus sustainability assessment was a good idea, but too big of an undertaking to do ourselves. It would garner more respect if it was done externally. The Good Company, Inc. has done assessments for other universities and has plenty of experience. Those campuses that have used Good Company have given them high marks and good reviews. Another reputable company is Fat Planet, they performed the assessment at Lewis and Clark. The key is outside involvement: choose the right

people, keep the interest level high, and create structure based on the assessment's recommendations. The cost was a concern as it is generally \$25,000 – \$50,000 for a thorough assessment and \$8,000 - \$10,000 for a 'bare-bones' assessment. We need to have people in place to make the changes immediately after the results of the assessment are received. It would be helpful to time the assessment with the retreat so the results could be discussed and an action plan formulated at the retreat. Key issue: The university needs to buy in to the idea for it to be successful and create change. There needs to be follow up/follow through and maintenance of the changes. We need to tie the assessment in with our aspirations as a whole, and stress that it is also a good selling point with prospective students when competing with other area schools.

The Board of Trustees should be advised of the assessment. Should we use existing funds from this year's budget (availability?) or build it into next fiscal year's budget? The Council thought it might be best to use some of the Council's funds for leverage, construct an RFP for President Pelton to review and decide on. It should be a living document that provides the framework for making changes. This point brought up our need to create/finalize a strategic plan for the Council. Should we roll the Center of Excellence proposal, strategic plan, and assessment all into one big thing? Though they are interconnected, they are not necessarily all tied together, they are interdependent. Should we have 3 groups writing 3 documents or 1 group writing all 3?

Relation of SC to Center proposal

The issue of the relation between the Council and any potential Center was raised. Is the proposed Center for Sustainable Communities and the Sustainability Council tied together or separate entities? The general consensus is that the Sustainability Council might act as an advisory board to the Center but not oversee it. The Sustainability Council should retain its momentum while the Center comes online and gets up to speed.

Things that need to be done:

1. Meet with Jeff E. regarding the assessment (Karen, Nathan, Sue K, Joe, Jennifer, Susan S.) THIS WEEK
2. Do research on Sustainability Assessments, draft an RFP, define our needs, determine costs (Nathan, Kiry) BY JANUARY 20th
3. Vet groups at the January 24th meeting and decide who to bring into the meeting.
4. Internal Assessment (SAQ)- decide who to include, how specific the questions should be, confab via email about the questions.

Internal SAQ Target date: January 26th. Ask Lee to send out email invitations to participants.

Assessment Areas:

Curriculum (Deans, Former Deans, ECOS, Law School) – Monique B.

Research and Scholarship – Gary T, Monique, Kendra, Nadene

Operations – Gary G, Jim B, Jim J

Faculty and Staff Development & Rewards – Deans

Outreach and Service – Khela, Monique, Lisa H, Jennifer H, Karen W, Bob H.

Student Opportunities – Lisa H, ECOS, Bob H

Institution, Mission, Structure & Planning – Sustainability Council, President's Office,
Board of Trustees, Bob H.

Please note: The Sustainability Council will meet on the same day/time and in the same
room next semester as they did this semester.

The next SC meeting will be on January 24, 2006 at 11:30 am in UC-Dining Room 1