

## Sustainability Council – Meeting Summary

Wednesday, September 9, 2008 (3:00pm-5:00pm)  
President's Conference Room (Seminar I, Annex A)

**Attendees:** Nancy Parkes, John Pumilio, Paul Smith, Ken Tabbutt

### **Purpose:**

The purpose for today's meeting was twofold:

1. to set an agenda and plan for our September 25<sup>th</sup> joint meeting with the co-chairs of the working groups.
2. to consider how the Venn Diagram (see below) model relates to the work of the Council.

**Discussion:** There was no formal record keeping of the meeting. The following is a brief synopsis recalled after the meeting:

- Julie Suchanek gave us a 10-minute legislative update. She emphasized that the legislature was particularly excited about sustainability as it relates to higher education. The legislature is planning a work session on what colleges are doing in sustainability across the state. Julie asked us to identify a handful of faculty members who are well-versed on sustainability and charismatic. Off the top of our heads we named Jean MacGregor, Nalini Nadkarni, Dylan Fischer. However, we emphasized that it is difficult to identify faculty without knowing what dimension of sustainability is the focus.
- The Office of Sustainability is: the Council, the Working Groups, the Director of Sustainability, and Student Interns and Graduate Fellows.
- Venn Diagram (below). The Council considered the model represented by the Venn Diagram as a way to maintain direction and prioritize work. Members agreed that the three areas hit the mark as to what Evergreen's focus should be as we advance sustainability. However, we questioned the wording. For example, we all felt that the word "institutionalize" conveys the wrong message. When we say "institutionalize" we are looking for sustainability in our policies, our day-to-day operations, our campus culture, and how we communicate the Evergreen story (both internally and externally). But, how do we express that? Moreover, we agreed that the word "center" should be dropped because we are not fixed on a center per se but rather we want to be of service to our community. And perhaps "Academic Planning" can be replaced by "Sustainability Across the Curriculum." We all agreed that we should have Todd and Jason look over the wording of the diagram and help us frame the right message. Finally, Evergreen's vision statement for a sustainability future should accompany the Venn Diagram.
- Agenda for September 25 Meeting:
  - Review Venn Diagram (hopefully with new wording) with co-chairs. This is the lens through which the Office of Sustainability will operate and prioritize its work.
  - Review "Working Group Criteria." In a brainstorming session, the Council identified these criteria (listed below) as key elements in planning for a sustainability future. Working groups can consider these as they carry out their work.
  - Coordinator positions for each of the Working Groups
  - Interview Team for Office of Sustainability Coordinator
  - Quarterly Reporting. Council members are expected to provide the VP's with a written progress report of our work that highlights recent advances. Near the end of each quarter the co-chairs should send a few paragraphs to the Council to incorporate into a brief progress report to the VP's.
  - Once per quarter, the Council should host a joint event or gathering with each of the working groups. This gathering could be a lunch-time pizza party or other forum where we could all get together.

### **Tasks:**

- **John** forwards Venn Diagram to Jason Wettstein and Todd Sprague to consider the wording.

- **John** drafts up memo from Council to Vice Presidents to consider Sustainability presence on college homepage.
- **Nancy** contacts Todd, Jason, and Rick to set up first Communications and Fundraising meeting.
- **Ken** emails Lee Hoemann to check on possibilities to obtain funds from the foundation for Halli Winstead for the November AASHE Conference.
- **Council** reviews and provides comments on Office of Sustainability Coordinator Position Job Description.

**Next Meeting: September 25, 2008 from 3-4pm in the Facilities Conference Room**

- **Working Group Criteria.** The Office of Sustainability will consider these criteria when planning for a sustainable future:
  - Whole systems thinking: cradle-to-grave or cradle-to-cradle analysis.
  - Financial implications/impacts: return on investment, payback periods, social inequities, fundraising opportunities, budget cycles and realities, etc.
  - Academic planning and curricular development: encouraging academic involvement is critical in meeting the college's educational mission and in advancing the practice of sustainability.
  - Social benefits: decision-making should be framed from a social justice and equity perspective.
  - Communications: storytelling and effective information sharing.
  - Employee education and curricular implications
  - College community outreach: be inclusive; invite campus-wide perspectives and feedback.
  - Greenhouse gas emissions: factor in carbon emissions during the decision-making and communication/education process.
  - Ease of implementation (low-hanging fruit): go for early successes and consider human resource and financial investments when priority setting.
  - Connect to existing infrastructure: collaborate with others working on similar agendas/initiatives (i.e. student groups, DTF's, academic programs, committees, etc.)
  - Foster community connections and partnerships.
  - Establish sustainability indicators and baseline data.

