President's Universitywide Sustainability Committee (PUSC) Minutes
Draft Minutes of February 16, 2012
Bernhard Center - President’s Dining Room

Members: Fredah Mainah, Matt Hollander, Betsy Aller, Mary Peterson, Paul Pancella, Carolyn Noack, Kate Binder, Abolaji Samson Olanipekun, Pat Holton, Jeff Spoelstra, Paul Farber, Andrew Targowski, Pete Strazdas, Meghan Walsh, Erin Kaplan, Harold Glasser, Nola Wiersma (alternate), Lu Tavares (alternate). Guests: Maia Hausler

Procedural Items

Approval of Agenda
Motion by Paul Pancella to approve the Agenda as presented; seconded by Mary Peterson; Agenda approved.

Approval of Minutes
Motion by Betsy Aller to approve the Minutes as presented; seconded by Matt Hollander; Minutes approved.

Announcements
- The first Sustainability Across Research and Teaching (StART) Luncheon will take place on February 24, 2012.
- The annual PUSC membership renewal period is open. Let Jeff know if you will commit to another year of PUSC membership.
- Meeting dates for the remainder of the calendar year are March 15, April 19, May 17, June 21, July 19, no August meeting, September 20, October 18, November 15, and no December meeting.

Membership Guidelines
PUSC members reviewed proposed membership guidelines and procedures. There was a brief discussion about whether more clarification was necessary for the term “larger colleges”. Discussants agreed that the language was “loose” enough that it did not restrict any particular college. Paul P. made a motion to approve the draft language. Mary P. seconded. The membership guidelines passed unanimously. See the back of the meeting agenda to review the Membership Guidelines.

Membership Criteria
Introduction
Jeff reviewed examples of PUSC member efforts reported in the last meeting and presented general categories of PUSC forms of contribution including: 1) Outreach; 2) Research; 3) Subcommittee leadership/project teams; 4) Asset mapping; 5) Curriculum development; 6) Professional development; 7) Grant development; and, 8) “Adopt an office”. PUSC members then discussed these and other forms of contribution.

Liaisons
Members can be liaisons with new or ongoing parallel sustainability efforts across campus. For example, WMU signed on to the Sustainable Endowments Institute (SEI) Billion Dollar Green Challenge requirements and will establish the Green Revolving Fund procedures and policies. A committee has been formed to meet the Challenge. Another example is Facilities effort to conduct energy audits. Effective liaisons would exchange information regularly at PUSC meetings and readily provide data and outcomes upon request and when available. Another example involved members who choose to adopt an office. Adopters could be considered liaisons to those offices/programs. A third example includes an
interdisciplinary Humanities Group for the study of climate change. Programs may develop out of this group in time. Finally, some offices have direct responsibilities (e.g., Environmental Safety and Emergency Management) that mesh directly with the OfS Mission and Goals.

**Student Assistance**

It would be helpful for the PUSC to serve as a campus wide clearinghouse for information about potential, sustainability-related student research projects. Other sustainability-related opportunities are easy to confuse with the Student Sustainability Grants (SSG) Program. Members can help convey this information across campus. Assisting student projects was identified as a related form of contribution.

**Specialties/Assets**

A member described her roles as advisory, facilitating collaboration, and information exchange. She reminded the committee that each of us have large individual missions in our own programs. And that care should be taken not to put aside an individual mission to take on a new PUSC (or OfS) task if it displaces efforts in one’s own program that are already difficult to get to. However we all have specialties we can bring to the table. We need not learn other specialties (e.g., curriculum development), but we should collaborate readily. Another member stated that her program already “adopts the whole campus”.

Members commented that bringing your specialty into new programs/departments has value, including conveying how your program operates and works toward sustainability. And reaching out to the academic side does occur, but often not in a formal way.

Much of the discussion was related back to identifying campus assets, including the specialties and interests of faculty and staff. Participation in an asset mapping project demonstrates a willingness to offer your sustainability knowledge and commitment while staying in your area of expertise and primary responsibility.

**Supporting Active Members**

**Office for Sustainability**

The Office for Sustainability (OfS) is the implementing arm of campus sustainability programs. A member suggested that the OfS take the lead on combining efforts and faculty/staff specialties in a sustainability asset map.

Harold indicated that the goal of an asset map is to include all people on campus, not just people on the PUSC. He envisions a searchable database, valuable to those seeking connections in the campus community and potentially beyond. There was some discussion emphasizing that important elements of an asset map and database include: 1) who would use it?; 2) where would it be hosted?; 3) database/map platform and structure; and, 4) who would input initial data at hand as well as generate new data? Generally, these issues have yet to be determined, but discussants stressed that the interest is there from undergrads, graduate students, faculty, and researchers.

Andrew T. suggested that the OfS is trying to do too much and suggested that the PUSC revisit goals, strategy, and indicators. The OfS should summarize progress in a category such as “greening the campus”. This is an enormous task with no beginning and end, and it is difficult to achieve something measurable. He suggested that OfS monitor how we are doing with a campus sustainability management dashboard showing where we are with respect to goals & targets. He suggested that the OfS needs to direct more attention to colleges and curriculum.

Harold G. indicated that the provost supported the StART luncheons, and that these directly address the curriculum and college level points raised by Andrew T. The luncheons are a first step and based on a large faculty survey constructed from brainstorming obtained during several PUSC sessions last summer. Harold also indicated that recent efforts with the Sustainable Endowments Institute, Princeton Review, American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), and possible future work with Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) will help shape indicators. The PUSC was charged with operationalizing its 10 goals in the context of specific metrics that could be reported on in the evaluation programs mentioned. These have not yet been formalized and put out to the university community.

Andrew suggested that indicators should be developed for each relevant community including college and curriculum, faculty, students, and administration. In Andrew’s college, sustainability has been introduced into the curriculum at the
graduate and undergraduate level (policy).

**NEW MEMBERS**

How do we ensure that new members are effective and able to contribute right away? Ideas/advice includes:

- welcome packet recapping the last few years of campus sustainability efforts including Western Student Association (WSA) efforts
- student projects (senior, SSGs, 4100 class) identified in any materials
- a list or schematic detailing sustainability funding opportunities (e.g., SSG, other funding)
- an explanation of the structure of the PUSC with a visual representation
- campus sustainability timeline, entities, and major accomplishments
- any acronyms used must be explained
- include history and expectations for new committee members (e.g., youtube video)
- include a definition of “sustainability”
- a summary of what you do to adopt a department

**UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION**

The Board of Trustees approved a new university mission and updated strategic plan recently. Both items include sustainability references. Indicators from the administration can be coordinated with and complemented by indicators that the PUSC chooses to report on.

**IDEA – Review the mission of OfS**

Review the mission of OfS in light of the new mission and strategic plan for the university and see if any revisions are necessary. The OfS website does display a mission. Ten goals are displayed that were approved by this committee. The OfS has enough capacity now to recommend metrics that are tied to the university goals, for discussion at a future meeting. A subcommittee was formed to research and develop those metrics. Andrew, Pete, Paul P., Harold, Jeff, and Mary volunteered. Jeff will move this new subcommittee forward in a logical fashion considering all possible next steps for the PUSC. It was suggested that we make an effort to bring in students and grad students in.

Pete reminded the PUSC that Facilities has a number of established metrics. Several spill over into this committee. Paul and Harold suggested meeting with Pete to compare the Climate Action Plan and PUSC needs with the established metrics. Pete directed PUSC members to the Facilities website to see the metrics and a dashboard concept.

Harold pointed out that like several of the other tracking systems mentioned above, Facilities metrics don’t include teaching, research, or curriculum in a meaningful way. Prior to the existence of the new University strategic plan, PUSC metrics were in development during Summer 2011. The OfS will revisit those notes.

**ENGAGING NEW AUDİENCES**

**GRADUATE COLLEGE** - Graduate students often don’t know what they want to do. How can new graduate students connect with an organized sustainability community on campus (not just the OfS)? They need to learn about available money, potential research projects at the ready, and faculty member interests. Matt pointed out the overlap among many of the ideas and “projects in waiting” that could be a good fit for MS or PhD students. There are opportunities that could be tied to the PUSC, the OfS, or many of the other programs crucial to the larger WMU campus sustainability mission.

**ALUMNI ASSOCIATION** - The Alumni Association was suggested as a new audience. There is a valuable educational component to reaching out to this audience and conveying the fact that sustainability efforts are organized. The OfS director meets periodically with Jim Thomas. Meghan volunteered to adopt the Alumni Association, which is different from the Student Alumni Association.

**DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION, HEALTH AND WELLNESS, ATHLETICS** - Discussions are ongoing about re-connecting with these entities.

**PROVOST** - The Provost has not been invited to attend a PUSC meeting. With the onset of the StART luncheons, the
PUSC should consider inviting the Provost to a future PUSC meeting to review the StART Initiative after the first three luncheons.

**Middle Masses** - To engage the masses, the PUSC should talk to the faculty Senate and WSA. These bodies turn over rapidly. The OfS will follow up with the Faculty Senate. Meghan will follow up with WSA. Samson agreed to help with similar efforts at the Graduate Student Advisory Committee (GSAC). OfS will also work with Meghan to update the WSA slideshow. The APA was also mentioned as a significant entity with its own outreach program. Finally, the Provost puts out a regular publication. In all of these cases, a brief, written “year in review” piece or in-person presentation from the PUSC could help spread the message about campus sustainability efforts.

**Strategy for Prioritizing Initiatives**

The PUSC’s role as an advisory body for the OfS and President is being refined and clarified. In that role the PUSC can be an ambassador for all campus sustainability efforts that are now beginning to be linked together at the OfS (e.g., infrastructure, curriculum, research).

Pat H. pointed out that the PUSC already worked to help identify and prioritize the initiatives that led to the formation of the OfS, and its reason for being. Priorities are listed in the Strategic Sustainability Initiatives (SSI) Report. Many of those efforts are in progress or complete. Last year, the PUSC was updated on the priorities with a green, yellow, red summary of each priority. With the StART luncheons and efforts, the remaining majority of the red lighted efforts have changed to yellow. Members agreed that it was time to revisit past priorities.

Members made suggestions about their experiences developing organizational work plans or prioritized actions. The OfS is working on an annual work plan, and will conduct a focused retreat to bring together the lines of discussion from this PUSC meeting. The OfS will present the first annual work plan to the PUSC in June.

The OfS will recruit new and at large members to the PUSC during the month of March. Some members suggested that incoming and outgoing members should overlap in the June meeting. The OfS will revisit the approved membership guidelines in light of this discussion and the development of a new workplan.

**Next Steps or Agreements**

For the next meeting, the OfS will provide information to members including:

1. Agenda
2. 2009 SSI Report link
3. 2010 Update on Prioritized SSIs
4. Links to the new university mission and strategic plan
5. Links to the OfS Mission and Goals
6. Links to online summaries of indicators mentioned during the meeting
7. An updated PUSC Member List

The OfS will continue work on:

1. PUSC Membership Criteria language
2. Advertising to fill vacant at large seats on the PUSC
3. A review of previous work on indicators; arranging a subcommittee meeting
4. An annual OfS workplan

**Student Sustainability Grant (SSG) Allocations Committee Report**

Meghan Walsh, SSG Allocations Committee Chair, described the review process and the strengths and weaknesses of all submittals. Matt offered some additional details about student groups, grant authors, and college/program affiliations. PUSC members complemented the Committee on its handling of the review process and decision making to date. A summary is available online at: [http://www.wmich.edu/sustainability/pdf/allocations-summary.pdf](http://www.wmich.edu/sustainability/pdf/allocations-summary.pdf)

**Parting Thoughts**

The 20th Electric Vehicle (EV) charging station is being installed right now. Pete reported that the first energy audits are
done on a dozen buildings with details to come soon. A total of 50 audits are expected during the first year of the program. Five buildings have been submitted for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification. WMU is hoping for 11 LEED certifications within the year. In Michigan, only Grand Valley is ahead of WMU in LEED certifications. All five Azure Ford Transit Connect EVs are in circulation and are super cool. Thanks for coming, taking the survey, and signing up for the luncheons.

Matt Hollander made a motion to adjourn. Harold Glasser seconded. The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.