­­­**Charter Committee on Sustainability**

Planning Retreat, January 24 2014

1-4 PM, 2390 UCC

**PRESENT**: Ben Anderson, Brian Thompson, Art Bettis, Sara Maples, Christine Rutledge-Russell, Ty Priest, Kelsey Zlevor, Ilsa DeWald, Ericka Raber, Jeffrey Vredenburg, Liz Christiansen

**PRIORITIES FOR ACTION**

1. ***To meet the UI 2020 target of 40% renewable energy consumption*, investigations into the development of sustainable biomass fuel should continue.** A letter of support in favor of the biomass project will be drafted and sent to the President, Provost and Senior Vice President. The letter will stress the need to consider not only costs, but also externalities that include social and environmental benefits that cannot adequately be represented in a traditional business plan. These benefits could include:

* Reduced fossil fuel-related CO2 emissions
* Long-term fuel cost stability
* Long-term fuel supply stability and diversity
* Expanded research opportunities
* Improved water quality through enhanced nutrient reduction strategies
* Improved soil quality and resiliency
* Positive direct and indirect rural economic impact
* Increased Regent institutional collaborations and efficiencies
* Institutional leadership in renewable energy
* Expanded private sector advancements in biomass equipment and support services
* Enhanced student learning opportunities in renewable energy

The charter committee should receive regular updates on the progress of this and related efforts (for example, the development of the sustainability fuel index).

1. ***To build a culture of sustainability*, education and outreach should be expanded to reach and engage as many as possible in the campus community and raise the profile of the UI’s sustainability efforts.** Strategies should include a new branding and marketing effort that centers on positive values (invite the VP of Strategic Communications to a meeting to discuss). The following should also be considered:
   * Department or college green teams
   * Sustainability ambassadors
   * Outreach specific to minority and international students which may include alternative language signage and messaging
   * A student green leader program that could include incentives to participate (a “green tassel” honors program)
   * Include sustainability as a greater part of new student, faculty and staff orientation and onboarding. Sustainability should be a featured part of On Iowa.
   * Campus tours and communications to new and prospective students, faculty and staff should highlight the UI’s commitment to sustainability.
   * Sustainability progress should be charted and regularly featured on the UI’s main web site.

A coordinator position in the Office of Sustainability should be established. The committee will identify a funding mechanism and develop position goals.

1. ***To prepare students to tackle the breadth of issues in sustainability when they leave the University of Iowa*, academic offerings of sustainability-related and focused classes and learning opportunities should increase.**
   * Establish an undergraduate sustainability General Education requirement.
   * Provide incentives for increased academic offerings.
   * Expand enrollment in the undergraduate certificate in sustainability; certificate requirements should be regularly reviewed.
   * Expand sustainability-related internships.
   * Investigate the establishment of a sustainability institute to serve as a focal point for academic and research development and instructor collaboration.

Other areas of discussion:

**Waste diversion** –

* Campus recycling opportunities should continue to expand. Bring Tiny Trash data to committee.
* Continue to investigate the use of Big Belly units; investigate other opportunities to mesh recycling and waste diversion with the campus and Iowa City downtown.
* Continue waste audits and building walk-throughs to raise awareness and provide basic waste planning information.
* Expand compost collection on campus where feasible and consider using students to support these efforts.
* Investigate the use of re-usable food containers where feasible, especially at UIHC dining.

**Energy efficiency –**

* The UIHC should be an active participant in campus sustainability efforts and a UIHC position should be added to the formal committee representation. Until that can be done, an invitation to participate should be extended.
* Promote incentives for energy conservation. Ensure energy efficiency is a priority in building design and that systematic commissioning takes place. The charter committee should receive regular updates on the progress of energy conservation efforts, including the acceptance and success of energy efficiency measures.

**Food –**

* Increase local food purchases as a percentage of overall food purchases. Regent schools should leverage buying power to support local foods.

**Other –**

* Encourage telecommuting options.
* Encourage the use of internal funding opportunities to develop new work and creative efforts in sustainability: <http://research.uiowa.edu/internal-funding-initiatives-ifi>
* Seek opportunities to collaborate with Iowa State and UNI to bring sustainable solutions to Iowans.

Notes were reviewed at January 31, 2014 committee meeting.

Eac013114

Revised

Eac021214