

I. Executive Summary

"Sustainability implies that the critical activities of a higher education institution are (at a minimum) ecologically sound, socially just, and economically viable, and that they will continue to be so for future generations. A truly sustainable college or university would emphasize these concepts in its curriculum and research, preparing students to contribute as working citizens to an environmentally sound and socially just society. The institution would function as a sustainable community, embodying responsible consumption of food and energy, treating its diverse members with respect, and supporting these values in the surrounding community."

Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future (www.ulsf.org)

"Education for sustainability is a lifelong learning process that leads to an informed and involved citizenry having the creative problem-solving skills, scientific and social literacy, and commitment to engage in responsible individual and cooperative actions. These actions will help ensure an environmentally sound and economically prosperous future."

The Presidents Council on Sustainable Development (www.ffof.org/pcsd)

A. RATIONALE FOR A CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

The rationale for developing a campus sustainability plan includes consideration of the current state of the world, and the role that a large institution can play in shaping the future. Environmental issues and their social impacts and causes have precipitated debates about how a healthy, prosperous and just future will be produced. Universities already play unique roles in educating society and conducting research, and large universities such as UW Oshkosh can demonstrate facilities management at a scale relevant to urban communities. Thus, UW Oshkosh can lead and help develop sustainable practices by educating and by example. The challenges imposed by a small land area, urban setting, large commuting population, importing of materials and energy, and exporting nearly all wastes, are relevant to surrounding communities and many like them around the world. Over the last five years, the institution has created campus master plans, conducted an environmental audit, and made material investments in infrastructure, staff and infrastructure. The university today is recognized as a leader in operations, teaching, and campus events related to sustainability. In addition, UW Oshkosh has institutional vision and mission statements that support the inclusion of sustainability as an institutional goal. But the university had not developed a campus sustainability plan to help coordinate and guide further transitions.

B. CHANCELLOR'S CHARGE

On October 2nd, 2006, Chancellor Wells established a Campus Sustainability Team and charged it with the responsibility of developing an integrated Campus Sustainability Plan (CSP) which would guide the University in an effort to be a leader in responsible environmental stewardship, education, outreach and research. The twenty three members of the team comprise a wide spectrum of students, faculty and staff and were selected because of their expertise and commitment to work together toward sustainability goals.

C. INTENT

The Campus Sustainability Plan is a dynamic document intended to provide a roadmap for major

steps toward sustainability over the next five years. Four functional areas (Operations, Teaching, Outreach and Research) and an Organizational Structure section have established a series of goals, objectives and recommendations. The goals of all areas are interconnected and integrated, and individual elements may be referred to in several locations throughout the document.

D. PROCESS

The Campus Sustainability Team formed four squads to generate ideas on the topics of Operations, Teaching, Research and Outreach. These squads generated a wide range of ideas that were summarized into 113 recommendations. A series of online surveys was made available to the entire team, who were asked to rank the recommendations in terms of breadth (how much the campus would be impacted) and depth (would the individuals impacted gain understanding of sustainability). The plan was drafted by a writing committee of volunteers from the team (S. Arndt, D. Barnhill, J. Feldman, M. Lizotte). The draft was circulated to the entire team and two meetings were held to gain input to this document.

E. PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

The plan is arranged in six main sections (Organization, Operations, Teaching, Research, Outreach, and Assessment), with an Introduction, Conclusion, Table of Goals and Recommendations, Glossary, and Appendices. Each of the main sections includes an introduction and long term vision, history, goals and specific recommendations. The operations and teaching sections are divided into subsections to address the large numbers of recommendations generated. Specific recommendations are categorized as either possible today (“initial consideration”), requiring more time (“within three years”), or long term (defined as 5 years or greater). Below we list all the vision and goal statements in the document. Specific recommendations are only provided for immediate organizational needs. The highlights below were selected to give the reader a sense of the magnitude and scope of campus sustainability planning. For more depth and details, readers will need to turn to specific sections of the document outlined below.

E.1. Organization

The goal and recommendations in this section of the plan were deemed crucial to launching a coordinated effort to carry out the campus sustainability plan. Success in all other areas of the plan is dependent upon sound organization and structure. The long-term vision is to have positions, offices, and resources sufficient to support initiatives for, and enhance the importance of, sustainability in all facets of campus life.

Goal: Establish an organization capable of supporting campus sustainability initiatives as soon as is feasible, but within twelve months of the adoption of this plan.

The main recommendations to support this vision and goal are:

- Create a permanent Campus Sustainability Council
- Create a permanent full time position with the title of Campus Sustainability Director.
- Establish Unit Level Sustainability Coordinators from each functional area
- Designate sustainability responsibilities for Administrators
- Establish a Campus Sustainability Fund

A budget of \$150,000 is recommended for launching this important strategic initiative.

E.2. Operations:

The operations section contains eleven sub-sections covering a wide range of activities. The long term vision is that UW Oshkosh will conduct all aspects of campus operations in a fashion that is ecologically sound, socially just, and economically viable. The campus will assume a leadership role in the effort to create a truly sustainable campus with the goal to have a net zero impact upon the climate and environment. The sub-sections and associated goals are:

E.2.a. Electrical Energy Management and Conservation: Become a national role model for electricity conservation through the rigorous implementation of emerging technology to increase efficiency, and the application of policy-based conservation practices to reduce waste. Our goal is to reduce overall electrical consumption 20% from 2005 levels by 2012.

E.2.b. Campus Heating: Reduce the annual consumption of fossil fuels for heating by 50% from 2000 levels by 2012.

E.2.c. Sustainable Energy: Become less dependent upon fossil fuel energy for electricity, heating and cooling.

E.2.d. Fresh Water Conservation: Reduce overall water consumption levels by 50% from 2000 levels by 2012.

E.2.e. Storm Water Management: Reduce the amount of total suspended solids coming off of the campus by 20% before 2008 and 40% before 2013 (from 2006 baseline).

E.2.f. Facilities Planning, Renovations and Construction: Utilize energy efficient and sustainable design standards on all new construction and applicable renovation projects undertaken after 2007. As of that deadline, all construction and renovations projects shall seek to meet or exceed a LEED “Silver” level of sustainability.

E.2.g. Transportation: Reduce automobile trips to campus by 20% by 2012, through incentives and improvements in sustainable alternatives.

E.2.h. Purchasing: Develop and follow sustainability-focused purchasing policies in more than 50% of spending for campus materials and equipment by 2012.

E.2.i. Solid Waste Management: Reduce production of municipal solid waste by 30% from 2000 levels by 2012.

E.2.j. Food Services: Minimize the environmental and social impacts of operations (including indirect impacts of suppliers) while continuously providing a variety of nutritious and sustainably-grown foods.

E.2.k. Grounds Maintenance: Increase biodiversity and usable green space of the campus while reducing dependence on fossil fuels, other extracted minerals, chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

E.3 Teaching

The long-term vision is to link the university's formal teaching mission and informal teaching opportunities to develop understanding, attitudes and habits that promote sustainability. This section of the plan suggests a variety of ways that UW Oshkosh can improve the way that it teaches sustainability, both inside the classroom and outside of it. The sub-sections and associated goals are:

E.3.a Curriculum: Sustainability should be a recognized, emphasized, and common theme across colleges, departments and general education initiatives. Students should have extensive and diverse opportunities to study sustainability in their coursework.

E.3.b. Extra-curricular Awareness Raising Across Campus: Raise awareness of students and staff through participation in campus sustainability activities that take place outside of the formal classroom. Doing so will increase our chances of generating a campus-wide commitment to sustainability.

E.3.c. Campus Events: Offer a large number and wide variety of well-attended events that teach and promote sustainability, and to coordinate and promote those events.

E.3.d. Internships, Service Learning, Volunteering: Expand the opportunities for students to garner hands-on experience in a wide range of sustainability initiatives by increasing the number of available internship, service learning, and volunteer experiences.

E.4. Research

The long term vision is that scholarly activities by faculty, staff and students generate and test ideas for creating a sustainable future. This section of the plan is primarily a vision of how to create future opportunities.

Goal: Develop and maintain research and scholarship that supports campus sustainability efforts, contributes to the professional development of staff, and challenges students to apply their emerging skills and knowledge.

E.5. Outreach

The long term vision is that the university is well-known throughout the region and country as a source of information and inspiration about sustainability. This part of the plan focuses on ways of sharing knowledge with the broader community.

Goal: Develop and maintain sufficient outreach efforts so that the sustainability lessons learned by UW Oshkosh are known, appreciated, understood, and used by the public.

F. ASSESSMENT

The long term vision is that UW Oshkosh acquires and uses sufficient information to guide and make understandable its sustainability efforts, planning, and decision-making.

Goal: Establish the means to assess campus sustainability and provide information to students, staff and community.

G. TOP PRIORITIES AND CONCLUSIONS

The Campus Sustainability Plan is comprehensive and ambitious, and includes many recommendations for initial consideration, within three years, and future consideration. While all of the recommendations would help make UW Oshkosh more sustainable, some are critical, especially as we begin the process of implementation. Below is a list of those crucial tasks.

1) Create Organizational Infrastructure to Support Sustainability

2) Perform Energy Independence Study and Implement Recommendations

3) Encourage the Teaching of Sustainability

4) Initiate Residence Hall Programs on Sustainability

5) Revive the Campus Environmental Audit

6) Initiate Planning Procedures in Key Operational Areas

- **Transportation**
- **Purchasing**
- **Recycling**

7) Develop Websites

8) Develop Community Gardens and Composting Site

9) Implement Modifications to Dining Contract

10) Declare UW Oshkosh a Fair Trade University

11) Adopt LEED Standards for Construction and Renovation Projects

12) Perform Assessments

The concluding section looks at these most significant recommendations from different perspectives, which may help guide decision making and investment at the highest levels of the institution. Finally, the conclusion discusses the expectations for success based on the current momentum to build a sustainable institution in a sustainable community in a sustainable world.