



Artwork by MFA Student
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UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
SUSTAINABILITY CHARTER COMMITTEE
2014-2015 Report



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Date: July 1, 2015

To: Interim UI President Jean Robillard, UI Provost Barry Butler, Interim Senior Vice President Rod Lehnertz, UI Staff Council President Hans Hoerschelman, UI Faculty Senate President Christina Bohannon, UI Student Government President Elizabeth Mills, UI Graduate and Professional Student Government President Josh Schoenfeld

From: UI Sustainability Charter Committee

Re: 2014-2015 Committee Report

The University of Iowa Sustainability Charter Committee was established and began meeting regularly in 2013. This report provides a summary of committee action and issues from the 2014-2015 academic year.

Charter

The committee's charter, see **Attachment A**, is to

- Recommend and advise on matters pertaining to sustainability practices and formulation of University policies;
- Advise on the integration of sustainability with existing campus programs in education, research, operations, and community outreach;
- Assist in engaging the campus in an ongoing dialogue about sustainability and instilling a culture of sustainable long-range planning and forward-thinking design through their respective constituencies; and
- Advise on the development and implementation of campus sustainability action plans.

Committee Members, Liaisons and Terms

The committee's charter sets out its membership guidelines: four representatives appointed by the Faculty Senate, four representatives appointed by the Staff Council and four student representatives (two undergraduates, one graduate student, and one student from the professional colleges) appointed by the joint nominations committee of the UI Student Government and the Graduate and Professional Student Government.

2014-2015

SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

FACULTY	<u>Term Expires</u>	<u>First Appt</u>
1. Wilfrid Nixon, Civil & Environmental Eng., 4113, SC	2016	2013
2. Elmer Bettis, Geoscience, 209 TH	2016	2013
3. Richard Priest, History, 280 SH	2016	2013
4. Christine Rutledge-Russell, Music, 3750 UCC	2016	2013

STUDENT

1. Andrew Hirst	2015	2014
2. Rachel Genova	2015	2014
3. Matthew Tarnoff	2015	2014
4. Sarah Nagengast	2015	2014

STAFF

1. Brian Thompson, Library Information Tech, 5020 LIB	2016	2013
2. Sara Maples, Centers and Institutes, C202 PBB	2016	2013
3. Ericka Raber, Library, RL1 LIB	2015	2013
4. Dawn Kluber, Executive MBA Programs, E444 PC (New)	2017	2014

Administrative Liaisons: Don Guckert, Elizabeth Christiansen

*2014-15 Staff Co-Chair: Brian Thompson, Library Information Technology, 5020 LIB
(Reappt. as Chair)*

2014-15 Faculty Co-Chair: Elmer Bettis, Geoscience, 209 TH (Reappt. as Chair)

In addition, the committee charter calls for representation from areas across the campus that are involved in and support the university sustainability efforts.

Ex-Officio Representatives for 2014-2015

Parking and Transportation – Dave Ricketts

UI Hospitals & Clinics – Marty Shafer

Residence Halls Housing and Dining – Scott Seagren

Office of the Vice President for Student Life – Belinda Marner

Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost – Deb Tiemens

Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development – Rich Hichwa

Senior Associate to the President – Mark Braun

Meetings

Meetings of the committee were held monthly beginning October 24, 2014, through May 15, 2015. [Agendas and minutes](#) of the charter committee meetings are posted on the UI Office of Sustainability [website](#).

Strategic Planning Retreat

A strategic planning retreat was held January 23, 2015 so the committee could meet at length and discuss priorities for action. See **Attachment B** for the retreat summary notes.

The charter committee identified several priorities for action, but the main area of discussion and focus revolved around the need to increase sustainability-related and focused classes, so students leave the University of Iowa knowledgeable about climate issues and sustainability. The committee called for a clear statement of commitment from campus administration and academic leaders, specifically:

- Request the UI President, Provost and incoming academic leadership formally establish sustainability as an **essential** component of modern undergraduate education at the UI, provide incentives for the expansion of sustainability-related and focused classes, and establish an undergraduate student General Education requirement.

The group also wished to see sustainability be maintained as an important component of the UI and the College of Liberal Arts strategic plans. In addition, the committee reiterated (from the 2014 retreat priorities) the need to raise the profile of the UI's sustainability activities through increased communications, especially to prospective students and visitors.

Finally, the Sustainability Charter Committee wished to send a letter of “sincere thanks to President Mason for her leadership in establishing and supporting sustainability as a leading issue on the University of Iowa campus.”

On April 3, 2015, summary of priorities was presented by the committee co-chairs to Provost, Barry Butler; Interim Senior Vice President, Rod Lehnertz; and Vice President, University Communications and Marketing, Joe Brennan.

Additional actions and highlights

- At its December 19, 2014 meeting, the committee agreed to send a letter of support for the proposed UI Bicycle Master Plan, which was presented to the committee at the November 21, 2014 meeting by Professor John Fuller. See **Attachment D**.
- At the April 24, 2015 meeting, Dr. Barbara Eckstein, representing four community environmental organizations, addressed the committee about the Climate March and the actions requested of the University of Iowa to help address the climate emergency.

The Co-chairs of the UI Sustainability Charter Committee wish to thank its faculty, staff and student members and the administrative liaisons and ex-officio representatives for their active participation. We appreciate the time commitment needed to keep the committee vital and engaged. The accomplishments of the group this year reflect the dedication and commitment of its participants to building a more sustainable University of Iowa.

Respectfully submitted,
Art Bettis, Co-chair (outgoing)
Brian Thompson, Co-chair

ATTACHMENT A

2.8(24) Sustainability Committee Charter.

(12/12; 7/13)

a. Membership. Confirmed by the President of the University (with administrative responsibility for membership and chair appointments handled by the Senior Vice President for Finance and Operations):

- 1) Four members appointed by the governing body of the faculty, currently the Faculty Senate;
- 2) Four members appointed by the governing body of the staff, currently the Staff Council;
- 3) Four members (two undergraduates, one graduate student, and one student from the professional colleges) appointed by the governing body of the students, currently for purposes of this committee, the joint nominations committee of the UISG and ECGPS;
- 4) Administrative liaisons: Director of the Office of Sustainability and Director of Facilities Management; Ex Officio Members: Director of Parking and Transportation; one representative from UI Hospitals & Clinics; one representative from Residence Halls Housing and Dining; one representative each from the Office of the Vice President for Student Life, the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, the Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development, and the Senior Associate to the President.
- 5) Committee will be co-chaired by a faculty member and a staff member; chair selection candidates are submitted to the President of the University by the President of the Faculty Senate and President of the Staff Council.
- 6) Student candidates will have one-year appointments according to their policies and procedures.
- 7) Faculty and staff members will have two- to three-year appointments according to their policies and procedures.

b. Charge to the Committee.

- 1) The Committee shall be governed by the terms of the General Charter.
- 2) In addition, the Committee shall:
 - (a) Recommend and advise on matters pertaining to sustainability practices and formulation of University policies;
 - (b) Advise on the integration of sustainability with existing campus programs in education, research, operations, and community outreach;

(c) Assist in engaging the campus in an ongoing dialogue about sustainability and instilling a culture of sustainable long-range planning and forward-thinking design through their respective constituencies;

(d) Advise on the development and implementation of campus sustainability action plans.

ATTACHMENT B

Charter Committee on Sustainability
Planning Retreat, January 23, 2015
1:30 -4 PM, 2390 UCC

PRESENT: Art Bettis, Matthew Tarnoff, Brian Thompson, Sara Maples, Dawn Kluber, Ericka Raber, Christine Russell-Rutledge, Liz Christiansen

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION:

Maintain The University of Iowa's leadership in sustainability

- Request the UI President, Provost and incoming academic leadership formally establish sustainability as an **essential** component of modern undergraduate education at the UI, provide incentives for the expansion of sustainability-related and focused classes, and establish an undergraduate student General Education requirement.
- Request that sustainability continue as a central component of the (updated) UI strategic plan. Request that sustainability be incorporated as a central theme to the UI College of Liberal Arts and Sciences in its (updated) strategic plan.
- Request increased visibility (especially UI's recycling and composting efforts) and communications of the UI's sustainability efforts and successes. Sustainability should ***be a central message in its visitor welcoming and student recruitment and orientation activities***. Campus tours given to visitors and prospective students should include information about the university's progress in building a sustainable campus.
- Request the establishment of a team of Sustainability Ambassadors that could assist the Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities in outreach and technical assistance to build resilience and quality of life in Iowa's communities.
- Review the establishment of a sustainability institute that could bring focus to UI sustainability-related research and scholarly engagement.

Ensure UI policies and procedures support fair and sustainable practices:

- Request the establishment of an ongoing campus master planning process that emphasizes climate change adaptation, sustainability and disaster avoidance. This should be undertaken in collaboration with similar planning efforts in the City of Iowa City and surrounding municipalities.

- Request UI Catering employ only sustainable, compostable and renewable materials as a standard practice in its catering services, avoid or ban the use of Styrofoam and single-use items, and provide compost collection at all events where feasible.
- Recommend the University of Iowa, Iowa State University and University of Northern Iowa collaborate on the purchase of local and Iowa-grown foods.
- Recommend the UI increase percentage of dining services food and beverage expenditures that are local and community-based and/or third party verified for sustainability.
- Review UI Purchasing policies, guidelines and agreements to confirm they require new and existing vendors, contractors and franchisees adhere to the UI's minimum standards and practices regarding
 - environmental performance and
 - employee wages, benefits, working conditions and rights.

Effective policies are especially important in the areas of food and clothing purchasing. The Sustainability Charter Committee should collaborate with other charter committees, such as Human Rights, on the review process. The International Labor Organization (ILO) conventions can serve as guidelines.

- Review the investment management of the university endowment.
- Review the university's contract with Coca-Cola.

Ensure student success in sustainability

- Request a resolution to the location of the student garden; a long-term location should be identified and established. The UI Facilities Management and UI Dining Services should support student gardening efforts and establish expectations for garden operation and appearance. The university should provide planning and operational support by establishing (paid) student work study positions for student garden and volunteer managers.
- Recommend increasing classroom interaction with Facilities Management and UI Housing and Dining to promote the "greening" of the UI campus landscape.
- Review follow-up survey data regarding students who graduated with the Certificate in Sustainability.

Ensure shared responsibility in sustainability:

- Request an additional committee member be added to the charter to officially represent the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics (requires an amendment to the committee charter).
- Request that a staff liaison from UI Purchasing be appointed (requires an amendment to the committee charter).

Acknowledge leadership

- Finally, the Sustainability Charter Committee expresses sincere thanks to President Mason for her leadership in establishing and supporting sustainability as a leading issue on the University of Iowa campus. Her public pledges in 2008, and again in 2010, firmly grounded sustainability as a foundational commitment and a priority for action. The new president should re-affirm the university's commitment to the 2020 Vision and recommend additional priorities for action, especially in the area of academic offerings. **The committee respectfully requests representation at candidate interviews.**

ATTACHMENT C

December 29, 2014

John Fuller
Professor, UI School of Urban and Regional Planning
344 Jessup Hall
University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa 52242

Dear Professor Fuller:

The University of Iowa Charter Committee on Sustainability supports the Bicycle Master Plan you presented at our committee meeting in November, 2014.

The committee members would like to thank you and your sustainability seminar students for undertaking this planning task. Doing so helped the University of Iowa achieve a Silver Bicycle Friendly University designation from the League of American Bicyclists.

We encourage you to continue to share the plan with others across campus in order to gain support for future bicycle efforts and to communicate the importance of bicycling on campus as healthy, safe and environmentally-friendly transportation. In addition, the committee members support promoting the campus as “bicycle friendly” as a means of encouraging prospective students to come to the UI.

Implementing such strategies will help our campus achieve the UI’s 2020 Sustainability Target of “reducing the carbon impact of University-related transportation and travel.”

Sincerely,

Art Bettis and Brian Thompson, Co-chairs
University of Iowa Charter Committee on Sustainability

cc: President Sally Mason
Provost Barry Butler

ATTACHMENT D

May 15, 2015

Dr. Sally Mason
President, University of Iowa
101 Jessup Hall
University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa 52240

Dear President Mason:

The University of Iowa Sustainability Charter Committee wishes to thank you for your leadership in establishing sustainability as a major campus initiative during your tenure as President of the University of Iowa.

While your predecessors built a foundation in sustainability, your 2008 Earth Day speech galvanized the UI's commitment with these words, "Sustainability must and will become a central priority of all aspects of our university enterprise – our operations, our academic mission, and our responsibilities to the greater society." Your words gained further relevancy when our campus was dramatically impacted by the 2008 flood, the severity of which has been linked to global climate disruption.

In 2010, you strengthened the UI's commitment to sustainability by announcing the 2020 Vision, which identified specific goals for reducing the campus' carbon footprint. You signed a special sustainability agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, in which both organizations agreed to collaborate to achieve the goals. This has resulted in a strong, mutually supportive working relationship with the EPA.

Under your leadership, the UI is becoming a leader in energy reduction, renewable energy, resource management, research and new student opportunities in sustainability. Eight new LEED Gold or Platinum buildings have been added to the campus, with five more environmentally efficient buildings to be opened in the next several years. Despite this growth, our campus-wide energy use is 2% lower than it was in 2010. We are gaining new knowledge in the area of biomass for energy and will soon be using Iowa-grown perennial crops to fuel our campus. We are now diverting 40% of our waste stream to recycling and composting. The UI campus fleet has reduced its CO₂ emissions and now, hybrid and flex-fuel vehicles comprise the majority of cars and vans in its ranks. As the home of the first creative writing program in the world, the UI boasts one of the only student arts and writing programs in sustainability – the Climate Narrative Project. Research in the area of sustainability has grown, especially in the area of water resources. Finally, UI graduates with an undergraduate certificate in sustainability

are now becoming the world's new leaders, entrepreneurs and problem solvers, and are tackling the most difficult and complicated challenges our society has ever faced.

The UI has been the recipient of numerous awards that recognize its prominent role in sustainability and has attained a Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS) GOLD rating, an achievement that only 18% of U.S. colleges and universities have reached.

This amazing progress has only been possible through strong support at the very top of our administration. While we recognize that much work remains before we can truly call ourselves sustainable, we sincerely thank you for your vision and for setting us on the path.

Respectfully,

Members of the Sustainability Charter Committee

Art Betts, Co-Chair

Brian Thompson, Co-Chair

cc: Barry Butler
Rod Lehnertz
Liz Christiansen