

Geneseo's Environmental Task Force

Year- End Report
2008

Task Force Members

Kirk Spangler, Chairperson

Assistant Director, Facilities Services

Andrew Baker, Assistant Director, Residence Life

Steve Benchik, Associate Director, Facilities Services

Kevin Callan, Maintenance Supervisor, Facilities Services

Susan Chichester, Director, Computing & Info Technology

Katelyn Conway, Student

Caitlin Domagal, Student

Dori Farthing, Assistant Professor, Geological Sciences

Gregg Hartvigsen, Associate Professor, Biology

Tony Hoppa, Assistant Vice President, Communications &
Publications

Enrico Johnson, Assistant Provost

Jeff Kaplan, Director, Facilities Planning & Construction

Jordan Kleiman, Assistant Professor, History

Alicia Kowsky, Student

Bill McDevitt, Assistant Director, Grounds and Landscaping

Michael Mooney, Associate Director, Intercollegiate Athletics

Leigh O'Brien, Associate Professor, School of Education

Kathleen Rauli, Student

Craig Ross, Network Analyst, CIT

Mark Scott, Executive Director, Campus Auxiliary Services

Ryan Quinn - Student

Task Force Activity

- Website Subcommittee
- President's Climate Commitment Subcommittee
- Immediate Impact Subcommittee
- Academics: Changing the Curriculum Subcommittee

Subcommittee for Compliance with the President's Climate Commitment

Craig M. Ross, Chair

- The main task of the PCC subcommittee this year was to satisfy the first requirement of PCC which is listed below:
 - *Within one year of signing this document, complete a comprehensive inventory of all greenhouse gas emissions (including emissions from electricity, heating, commuting, and air travel) and update the inventory every other year thereafter.*
- As you know, President Dahl signed the PCC on June 26, 2007. Since the carbon footprint audit is calculated by fiscal year, this date corresponds nicely with SUNY's fiscal year.
- I'm pleased to say that the carbon footprint audit is nearly complete, minus data from the end of this fiscal year. I will be meeting with a few individuals in June to complete the audit for FY07/08.
- Unfortunately, at this time we have not begun an audit of previous years. This audit will be a major summer project undertaken by Alicia Kowsky and anyone else that will be willing to help. Once we begin collecting data, we will be able to assess the difficulty of this project and determine how far back we should go. For example, I have been told that older travel data is stored on microfiche in the basement of Erwin. Gathering this data may be an insurmountable task with little benefit to the college.
- For FY08/09 I will be automating the gathering of data whenever possible. An email will be sent to the individuals who possess the data which in turn will redirect them to a webpage where they can input the information. For example, at the end of each month an email will be sent to Jane Towne requiring her to input the airline miles.
- Serving on the Environmental Impact and Sustainability Task Force for the past year has been very challenging and rewarding, and I look forward to leading the PCC subcommittee in fulfilling its future requirements.

Subcommittee for Task Force Web Presence

Susie Hume, Chair

2007-2008 Geneseo's Sustainability web page was created.

A logo for our team and the web site was created but there was a problem with it, so at present we are back to the drawing board.

- The President's signed climate commitment was posted.
- Campus Initiatives provided by other team members was added.
- The site links to GEO for student green initiatives.
- The site links to the Geneseo Food Project.
- Green Tips are being displayed on the home page of the site and cycled into the Green Ideas area of the web site.
- A Green News area provides a SUNY news release and results of the Residence Hall's energy saving contest.
- Task Force information is also provided on the site.
- A place to link to other sites was added. At present Live Green is the only link.

Work to be done

- All facets of the web site need attention.
- The logo needs to be completed or rethought.
- The Presidents Climate Commitment document needs to be cleaned up. We need to get the "nice" version from _____ and tag in the signatures.
- The site needs dynamics – Blog? Ability for community to submit tips? Rotating tips? Etc.
- The Links, News, and Campus Initiatives need to be strengthened with additional content.
- We need a better method of providing content for the site.
- Need to consider adding a "Green" button to Geneseo's main page?

Subcommittee for Immediate Impact Items

Greg Hartvigsen, Chair

Dori Farthing, Kathleen Raulli, Andrew Baker,

Michael Mooney and Jeff Kaplan

- The committee provided the Task Force with a list of “ideas for immediate impact” that we gathered from across the divisions of the College. This list (attached) included a variety of activities that included actions that have been implemented, can be implemented, and are longer-term actions. The number of suggestions indicates the variety of interest in sustainability activities by Geneseo community members.
- The IIS developed an Action Plan Template for use by the Task Force, which was adopted (attached).
- The IIS brought to the Task Force the following six policies for which the Task Force passed:
 - 1. It shall be the policy of the College to prohibit the use of personal space heaters in any normally occupied work space that can be heated to 68 degrees F by the central heating system of that facility.
 - 2. It shall be the policy of the College that all food refrigerators be Energy Star rated. For on-campus students this policy will allow one unit per two-person bedroom.
 - 3. It shall be the policy of the College to require that all Purchase Requisitions for airline travel include the cost to purchase carbon offset credits for the airline flight involved.
 - 4. SUNY Geneseo recognizes the value of preserving natural areas on campus to maintain plant diversity and animal habitats. The college recognizes that these areas serve to benefit the College by offsetting carbon emissions.
- The College also strives to expand unmanaged areas as much as is feasible without detrimentally affecting the aesthetics of the campus. It is, therefore, the College’s policy to ;
 - a. maintain natural areas in excess of 10% of the campus land holdings;
 - b. avoid developing these areas unless there is a demonstrated critical need to do so.
 - c. seek opportunities to designate additional areas on campus that can be adapted to serve as natural areas.
- Natural areas currently under protection include the Roemer Arboretum and a few small areas on the west side of campus.
 - 1. It shall be the policy of the College to require that all members of the SUNY Geneseo community recycle paper, plastic, metal, industrial and technological materials in the appropriate manner. (This includes but is not limited to cardboard, bottles, cans, light bulbs, oil, batteries, printer cartridges, and used computers.)
 - 2. It shall be the policy of the College to expand its recycling program when the ability to recycle additional materials becomes available.

Subcommittee for Immediate Impact Items (continued)

- **Ideas for Immediate Impact**
- **From Faculty**
 - **Lights**
 - **Turn off all classroom/office lights (end of day, weekends for sure)**
 - **Turn off special lighting in Newton – lights on displays after hours**
 - **Eliminate incandescent bulbs**
 - **Get vending machines to turn off lights used to advertise the machine (Mayor Duffy apparently ordered this in City Hall)**
 - **Use CFLs (although find ones with minimal mercury, and also figure out a recycling program to make sure that mercury doesn't get into the environment).**
 - **Turn off computers at night/weekend**
 - **Turn off printers when not in use**
 - **Change dates of furnace on/off**
 - **Fewer plasma screens in library that do little**
 - **No more grants for air travel**
 - **Ban disposable cups in dining halls**
 - **Ban plastic drink bottles on campus**
 - **Create water stations with filtered water so students, faculty and staff don't buy bottled water**
 - **Figure out how to close windows in Sturges (that go above drop ceiling)**
 - **Ban student cars**
 - **Ban cars for first year students**
- **Parking:**
 - **Charge for parking cars, perhaps to include costs of driving (carbon exchange?)**
 - **Toll for student cars at parking entrances/exits.**
 - **Parking places for cars based on distance traveled from home – more for nearby residents**
 - **Health benefits related to walking.**
 - **Invest in better mass transportation**

Subcommittee for Immediate Impact Items (continued)

- Lower heat temp and raise summer temps (down to 68)
- CAS buy food only from a 100 mile radius, except bananas
- Only accept students from 100 mile radius, trips home only during semester breaks
- Limit paper use for assignments – move to electronic assignments, MyCourses
- Initiate paper-trading credits across departments
- Weather strip doors (e.g., Brodie).
- Ban use of incense and candles to improve indoor air quality (Sch. Of Ed.?)
- Eliminate personal heaters
- Eliminate auto idling, introduce fines
- Mowing lawns when unnecessary (e.g., around tennis courts several times/week during drought)
- Reduce mowed area on campus by 20%. Saves fuel, time, and sequesters carbon for free. Consider wild areas as Arboretum extension zones.
- Get rid of paper versions of Senate Bulletin
- Reconsider the academic calendar - perhaps a longer break in winter would reduce energy use.
- CAS should look into sourcing its food (or whatever portion is feasible) from local and/or sustainable sources.
- Install grid-tied photovoltaic arrays on as many buildings as possible. Create a retrofit priority list, placing high-energy-using buildings like the ice arena at the top.
- Investigate the gradual replacement of the College's motorpool with super-efficient vehicles.
- Investigate the possibility of using wind and geothermal energy and hydrogen fuel cells.
- Windmills
- Switch to Abitibi Paper for recycling
- **From Staff**
 - Provide incentives for carpooling and/or riding the LATS bus for employees living in Dansville.
 - Compact fluorescent bulbs in lamps
 - Automatic lights in bathrooms
 - Windmills because of all the wind.
 - Real recycling bins that don't look like garbage cans.
 - Close the ice arena during the summer months and not use the lighting in the area.
 - Close the Schrader Gym during the summer months except for one week of camp.
 - Leave the lights off in the Kuhl Gym until someone is using the facility. Safety lights would be left on. (four vs. forty +)
 - Remind staff and users of the facility to turn off lights when leaving, turn off computers when gone for the day.
 - Look into possibility of sensors that would turn off lights in areas when no one is using the area.
 - Look into possibility of replacement of doors in Merritt; present doors to the outside do not always shut. As well as limit of access to facility to certain doors for energy heat loss reasons.
 - Fix heat in Blake D so that they don't have to run air conditioners during the winter.

Subcommittee for Immediate Impact Items (continued)

- **From Students/residence halls:**

- 1. participation in residence hall energy savings contest (with G.E.O.).
- 2. recycling empty inkjet cartridges in each residence hall (with G.E.O.).

- **IN STEUBEN:**

- 1. recycling on all floors; bins (i.e., trash cans) clearly labeled to facilitate recycling for all students.
- 2. a member of our Hall Council, Lindsey Wiltse, accepted requests for energy-saving lightbulbs, purchased them in her hometown, then distributed the lightbulbs to residents of Steuben who had ordered them.

- **OTHER IDEAS for residence halls:**

- 1. purchase more sightly recycling bins for each residence hall, not just the newly remodeled halls. Recycling is not more important in Erie or Genesee than it is in Jones, Livingston, or Onondaga.
- 2. encourage paperless advertising when possible. Every week, we receive dozens of flyers in our mailboxes. In my opinion, students in our halls are overwhelmed by paper postings and often don't read them. We're therefore wasting paper.
- 3. designated posting areas on each floor of our buildings; we can reduce the number of paper postings that we receive by asking each R.A. (or pair of R.A.s) to designate wall space on their floor(s) for these advertisements. That way, we wouldn't necessarily need the typical "1 flyer per R.A." for all buildings.
- 4. ride boards in each residence hall so as to encourage students to carpool whenever possible/convenient. (Eileen Munsch, an R.A. in Livingston, has created a ride board which students use. There is also a ride board in Steuben which is available for students to use but which has not yet been advertised formally). We could even establish an online rideboard on the Res. Life web page.

- **EASIEST TO IMPLEMENT**

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Lowering thermostats in the winter, especially overnight- Sean Soper
CFL Exchange- Dr. Ken Levison
Re-evaluate locations of recycling bins- Alicia Kowsky
Host speakers and forums on environmental issues- Yolanda Gonzalez
Have MJ switch to reusable cups- Genesee Environmental Organization

Subcommittee for Immediate Impact Items (continued)

- Set computer backgrounds to black- Sean Soper
Turn off all computers in library/labs when facility is closed- Geneseo Environmental Organization
- Add a program about environmental things to Orientation- Sean Soper
- Place caps on the number of personal refrigerators in residence halls and college departments- Dr. Ken Levison
- Add a small charge for using a disposable cup at a dining facility- Stephanie Aquilina and Yolanda Gonzalez
- Have students bring their garbage & recycling directly to dumpsters outside their buildings- Jennifer Wolfe
- Environmental Code of Conduct- Adam Kroopnick
Install light dimmers and motion sensors for lights- Daniel Achstatter
Replace paper towels with automatic air hand dryers- Chad Salitan

- HARDEST TO IMPLEMENT

- NEW

- Allow secretaries to take off a month during the summer to avoid having to have buildings open.
Also, could offer secretaries the choice of working 11 months.

- NEEDS

- Need to recycle CFLs properly.

The Presidents Climate Commitment – Action Template.

- Item description to be complete by completion date responsibility (subcommittee)
- Status: 1. Initiate the development of a comprehensive plan to achieve climate neutrality as soon as possible.
- 1a. Within two months of signing this document, create institutional structures to guide the development and implementation of the plan. 1b. Inventory all greenhouse gas emissions. 1-c. Develop an institutional action plan for becoming climate neutral. 1-c-i. Set target date for climate neutrality. 1-c-ii. Interim targets for goals and actions that will lead to climate neutrality. 1-c-iii. Actions to make climate neutrality and sustainability a part of the curriculum and other educational experience for all students. Item Description To be complete by Completion date Responsibility (subcommittee) Status 1-c-iv. Actions to expand research or other efforts necessary to achieve climate neutrality. 1-c-v. Mechanisms for tracking progress on goals and actions.
- 2. Initiate two or more of the following tangible actions to reduce greenhouse gases while the more comprehensive plan is being developed. 2a. Establish a policy that all new campus construction will be built to at least the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED Silver standard or equivalent. 2b. Adopt an energy-efficient appliance purchasing policy requiring purchase of ENERGY STAR certified products in all areas for which such ratings exist. 2c. Establish a policy of offsetting all greenhouse gas emissions generated by air travel paid for by our institution. Item Description To be complete by Completion date Responsibility (subcommittee) Status 2d. Encourage use of and provide access to public transportation for all faculty, staff, students and visitors at our institution. 2e. Within one year of signing this document, begin purchasing or producing at least 15% of our institution's electricity consumption from renewable sources. 2f. Establish a policy or a committee that supports climate and sustainability shareholder proposals at companies where our institution's endowment is invested. 2g. Participate in the Waste Minimization component of the national RecycleMania competition, and adopt 3 or more associated measures to reduce waste.
- Item description to be complete by completion date responsibility (subcommittee)
- Status: 3. Make the action plan, inventory, and periodic progress reports publicly available by providing them to the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) for posting and dissemination.

Subcommittee for Academics: Changing the Curriculum

Enrico Johnson, Chair

Charge

Specific Goals: Introducing sustainability into all academic departments to increase campus awareness.

Accomplishments

The subcommittee has received feedback to the categorizing of courses with a “1” (1 = Some portion of the course refers to sustainability) or “2” (2 = Significant portion of the course refers to sustainability) from a majority of the departmental heads.

The subcommittee has summarized the results in a worksheet called “SUNY AT GENESEO – Course Offerings That Deal With Environmental Sustainability.” (see Attachment A)

Projected Activity

- * To continue to analyze the above mentioned worksheet.
- * Some speakers have been identified. On Friday, 2/15/08, the subcommittee will forward the speaker list to the full committee.

Issues & Challenges

- * Determining the best way to introduce sustainability into specific academic departments.
- * Strategically deciding which departments to tackle first as far as encouraging them to add a sustainability course.

Subcommittee for Academics: Changing the Curriculum

Enrico Johnson, Chair

Accomplishments (Continue)

3 – At the final full committee meeting of the year, 4/23/08, the subcommittee presented proposals for possible future actions to help accomplish our stated charge/goal (For details see PowerPoint presentation from that day). Highlights: (a) Consider adding an Environmental/Sustainability dimension to Gen Ed Core; (b) Provide incentives for service learning courses oriented toward issues of Environmental/Sustainability; (c) Offer professional development around Sustainability to faculty and staff.

Issues & Challenges

1 – To refine how we categorize sustainability courses . The current categorization (i.e., “1” or “2”) isn’t precise enough. Our sense is the worksheet as currently presented makes it seem like we’re doing better in our sustainability offerings than we really are.

2 – To present and sell the proposals (as presented in the 4/23/08 PowerPoint presentation) to key stakeholders in the campus community (e.g., Provost, Dean of the College, Curriculum committee, departments, faculty, etc.).

Administrative Activity

Website:

- **Established Web Page**
- **Establishing Task Force Logo**
- **Recommend “Green Button” on main page**

P.C.C.:

- **Greenhouse inventory (carbon footprint) to be completed by June 08.**
- **Green fee survey**
- **Posted courses on green page**
- **Increase sustainability course offerings**

Immediate Impact:

- **Proposed policies/Immediate Impact/Conservation**

Academics:

- **Curriculum inventory**

CAS:

- **Student laundry rooms – water conservation**
- **Elimination of Styrofoam products**

Administrative Activity

Action Items: Adhere to the requirements of the President's Climate Challenge

- **Complete a comprehensive inventory of green house gas emissions within one year upon becoming a signatory of the President's Climate Challenge**
- **Review/update of current recycling centers based on utilization. Study done by GEO**
- **CFL exchange program/light switch stickers**
- **Community garden**
- **Testing waterless urinal**
- **Installation of electric hand dryers**
- **Another successful "Geneseo Gives Back" program**
- **To distribute CFL's to student rooms over summer with card on proper disposal.**
- **Participated in and helped sponsor "Live Green Day" – nationally known speaker (Dr. Rowe) president of the U.S. Partnership for Educating for Sustainability**

Recommendations for consideration:

- **Create student intern position**
- **Establish sustainability coordinator position**
- **Possibly join SEC (State Electronic Challenge)**
- **Research grant and green initiative funding to shorten pay back periods.**
- **Seminar/Conference attendance**
- **Smart and Sustainable Campuses conference – College Park, MD**
- **11th annual joint AWMA/NYWEA seminar (sustain in a changing climate) – R.I.T.**
- **SUNY & Sustainability – transformational opportunities – Saratoga**
- **Membership to ASHEE**
- **Member of SUNY sustainability list serve**
- **SUBOA conference – June 2008 – Niagara Falls**

Chair's Report

As with last year, a great deal of effort as well as sense of accomplishment came in steering our 24 member task force. Consistent with our submittal of the monthly task force report, the subcommittee chairs outline the activity of each of their groups. In forwarding their final reports, it was requested they highlight the main accomplishments of the subcommittee's work for this year. In filing our final report we will cite a number of these accomplishments along with offering recommendations, objectives and goals for continued work by the environmental task force.

Although a great deal of work lies ahead in reducing Geneseo's carbon footprint, the committee accomplished a significant amount of work in identifying practices and processes of sustainability. We have and continue to meet the goals & objectives of the P.C.C along with defining Geneseo's approach & commitment to sustainability. The most significant accomplishment is that of completing and filing Geneseo's greenhouse gas emissions inventory within one year of becoming a signatory of the President's Climate Challenge. Equally impressive and to the best of our knowledge, we believe we are the "first" SUNY to post our report on AASHE's national website.

Even though our work is in the initial stages of development, the committee remains energized through the sense of accomplishment this year, and we are confident the best work is yet to come in determining Geneseo's "Best Practices" of sustainability.

Our final report for 07-08 contains an in-depth amount of information, data, accomplishments and recommendations. However, "key" components for future success as identified by the committee are as follows:

- Buy in (campus wide support & participation)
- Identified funding (est. sustainability budget...to fund committee work/travel only)
- Establish a position of Sustainability Coordinator along with consideration of offering a student internship (research funding for green initiative – grants, perf. contracts, etc.) [Grant research is instrumental in off-setting initial cost and shortening payback periods]
- Course offerings/requirement in sustainable process & practice. (Engage students)
- Green button/icon on the Geneseo's home page. (promote what we do)

It is the opinion of the committee that once the degree of commitment is determined, we can then establish policy and procedure along with a comprehensive plan that is appropriate for the desired state of sustainability and climate neutrality the universe wishes to obtain.