

President's Sustainability Council Meeting  
January 17, 2017 10:30 am – 12:00pm  
626 Kaneff Tower

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Minutes

**In Attendance:** Martin Bunch (Chair), Nicole Arsenault, Anthony Barbisan,, Richard Francki, Mikhaela Gray, Rawan Habib, Dustin Klaudt, Nancy Sutherland for Dirk Matten, Deborah McGregor, Pamela Persaud, Andrew Plunkett, Darryl Reed, Sapna Sharma, Alexandra Williams

**Regrets:** Steve Alsop, Michael Charles, Michelle Chin-Dawe, Sheila Forshaw, Ian Garrett, Usman T. Khan, Ijade Maxwell Rodrigues, Ross McMillan, Yvette Munro for Alice Pitt, Helen Psathas, Noel Sturgeon, Laura Taylor, Carol Yorkden-Chamberlain, Jason Gerrity, Lorna Schwartzentruber, Craig Scott, Christine Till, Chris Wong

## **CHAIR'S REMARKS**

Martin Bunch welcomed those in attendance to the third President's Sustainability Council meeting for the 2016-2017 academic year. Council members were asked to introduce themselves.

## **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

Martin Bunch motioned to approve the meeting minutes of November 8, 2016. The motion was carried and the minutes were approved as presented.

## **PSC ANNUAL REPORT AND SUSTAINABILITY REPORT**

This agenda item was deferred to the March Council meeting.

## **REPORT FROM THE STUDENT SUB-COMMITTEE**

The student sub-committee chair was unable to attend the Council meeting to provide an update.

## **SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY**

The sustainability strategy working group has met several times to begin the planning process of the strategy. The working group has drafted a communications plan and is planning a workshop on February 10<sup>th</sup> to begin consultations with the community. John Robinson, former Associate Provost of Sustainability at the University of British

Columbia and the current sustainability advisor to the President at the University of Toronto, is the key-note speaker for the event. A First Nations elder will begin the workshop with a smudge ceremony. Workshops will be planned for community members to attend throughout the month of February and surveys will be sent out to collect feedback. A town hall will take place in late March or early April where a draft plan will be presented to the community for input. The plan will be sent to the President for approval in June. A website will also be created on the plan development and process.

The working group is engaged in a stakeholder mapping exercise to help identify key groups to be consulted during the process. It was noted that the Ministry of Environment and Change should be included in the list, as well as, CSBO should be broken-down into departmental levels for the mapping exercise. Andrew will send the stakeholder list to the President's Sustainability Council members for their review and feedback. Council members are asked to provide their feedback to Andrew and Martin.

At the last working group meeting, members began to create a vision of sustainability at York for the year 2050. The working group developed positive declarative statements about sustainability at York. After the meeting, Martin merged the vision statements together, along with the current sustainability policy, to create a draft vision. The vision includes large umbrella statements which will guide specific actions that will be included under broad themes within the plan. More detailed sub-plans will be created after the strategy is developed. The draft was shared with Council members for their review and feedback. Council members were also invited to add vision statements to the list. A selection of draft vision statements will be shared with the broader community at the workshop on February 10<sup>th</sup>. Mikhaela will share the vision document with Council members electronically.

Discussion followed the presentation of the draft vision. Feedback included:

- Creating an Environmental Bill of Rights and Responsibilities for York University;
- Including sustainability initiatives that York is already doing within the vision;
- Adding concrete steps and actions within the vision statement such as "Clubs will reduce paper usage" or "York intends to increase biodiversity";
- Ensuring that the statements within the vision are realistic;
- Shortening the vision to one paragraph and outlining what the University represents;
- Clearly articulating values, commitments and responsibilities within the vision;
- Including a section on vision, mission and values within the strategy;
- Making the language in the statement more accessible.

It was suggested that the plan include the University's values as they relate to sustainability. It was noted that York University has a mission statement and has already identified institutional values: <http://about.yorku.ca/our-mission/>. The working group is focused on creating a broad vision statement. Specific actions will be generated from the vision statement throughout the workshops in February.

The sustainability strategy working group which includes faculty, staff and students from across the University, produces drafts which are provided to the community for comment and revision. A concern was raised regarding the working group's approach to drafting the vision. Some Council members shared that they would prefer to see a ground-up approach to the process and have the statements generated by students. Some members expressed that the draft vision does not resonate with students and is not an inclusive representation of sustainability. It was mentioned that if the draft vision is shared with students in its current format, they will feel like the work has already been done and that there is not room for input.

The current strategy process is a hybrid-model that includes both grass-roots approaches and administrative support. The vision that was presented to the Council is not final and can be changed. It was mentioned that students will also be invited to come to the workshop to give input and make changes to the draft.

The YFS members who attended the meeting suggested that they could survey 500 students and collect positive declarative vision statements that could be used to help draft the vision statement. Dustin Klaudt, the GSA representative, will conduct a similar exercise at the YUGSA Annual General Meeting on January 25<sup>th</sup>.

It was noted that the current draft of the vision statement was helpful to generate meaningful discussion.

## **REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUP CHAIRS/ CO-CHAIRS**

The working group chairs/co-chair reports were deferred to the next Council meeting.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Pamela Persaud reported back to the Council on the Graduate Students' Association concern about printing that was raised during the November 8 meeting. Pamela will send Dustin the email she received from Dean Crow that outlines the history of printing funding over the past few years.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m.