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# **PRESIDENT'S SUSTAINABILITY COUNCIL**

annual report 2011-2012

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

YORK



UNIVERSITÉ  
UNIVERSITY

— *york university* —

**PRESIDENT'S SUSTAINABILITY  
COUNCIL**



— ANNUAL REPORT 2011-2012 —

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### STRIVES TO BE A LEADING POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTION

York University strives to be a leading post-secondary institution for sustainability, where our community of students, staff, and faculty demonstrate our ongoing commitment to be innovators in working to reduce our ecological impact and enhance the university experience for all community members. Through the President's Sustainability Council (PSC), the University encourages meaningful participation in the planning and implementation of York's sustainability policies, initiatives, projects and practices. The PSC serves to foster the integration of knowledge and issues about sustainability into research, education and application.

The past year has seen considerable progress in advancing sustainability at York, including the creation of two new sustainability coordinator positions, new programming such as the Sustainability Ambassadors and Green Office programs, a new sustainability website and the University's pledge to phase out the sale of disposable water bottles on campus by 2015.

This report summarizes the progress made to date on recommendations from both the 2009 and 2010 PSC Annual Reports, and also includes new recommendations made by the PSC over the course of the past year.

New recommendations include:

#### Sustainability and Organizational Structure

1. Given that the Planning, Budgets and Accountability report (PBA) is no longer printed, which had included a CSBO Sustainability Report, we recommend that future Sustainability reports be more comprehensive. The York University Sustainability report should include specific university sustainability goals with data and progress on those goals, along with a report from the President's Sustainability Council. This approach is currently being done at other Canadian Universities.

2. We recommend that the University consider adding new policies, modifying existing policies, or develop guidelines for the community to reflect best practices in the following areas of sustainability:

- Procurement
- Food
- Paper
- Water - A water policy is part of the approved motion to phase out the sale of bottled water and is expected to be in place by September 2015.

#### Sustainability in the Curriculum

In order to facilitate the enhancement of sustainability within curricular and co-curricular contexts, the Council recommends the following:

3. The Office of the Vice-Provost Academic will facilitate the enhancement of sustainability in curricular contexts through existing academic planning mechanisms (e.g. quality assurance, development of learning outcomes) and aligned university committees (Community Safety Committee).
4. The Vice-Provost Academic will undertake to discuss with the new Vice-Provost Students the creation of a Working Group, involving students, faculty and staff, with a mandate to explore and foster co-curricular intellectual interests in issues of sustainability.

#### Social Justice and Human Rights

5. Strengthen York U's messaging to showcase diversity and equity as a key York U commitment. Specifically, the messaging should be highlighted in student, faculty and staff recruitment materials and York U's external webpage.
6. Create further opportunities for campus wide discussion, especially with students, to solicit input about SJ&HR issues in a sustainability context.
7. York U communicates regularly with the neighbouring communities using plain language and various accessible means to promote opportunities to connect with the campus (for example, events, facilities, etc.).
8. Continue to explore viable mechanisms to promote and expand opportunities for community use of space on our campuses.
9. Monitor, and where possible, strengthen the social justice and human rights considerations in the implementation of the York University Secondary Plan.
10. Continue to support and monitor progress related to previous SJ&HR recommendations in past PSC reports recognizing that several of the 2011/12 recommendations are refinements of previous recommendations based on the progress and new information gathered.

#### Campus Operations and Development

11. It is recommended that the President authorize the implementation of a three-year plan developed by the Vice-President Finance and Administration to phase out the sale of bottled water at the University, with the phase-out to be complete by September 2015. This plan should address the following:
  - Assess the current state of public drinking water infrastructure;
  - Address deficiencies of existing infrastructure;

- Engage community through participation and promotion/education;
  - Improve access/way finding to public drinking water;
  - Reduce bottled water use from administrative areas;
  - Coordinate phase-out with University Food Services, York Lanes and York University Student Centre;
  - Establish access to drinking water as an element of York University's standards for new buildings;
  - Expand water bottle refill stations; and
  - Establish a University policy on sale of bottled water on our campuses.
12. It is recommended that the University create an advisory committee on responsible investing that includes student and employee members. The Committee should provide a forum to discuss and express opinions on responsible investing and, from time to time, provide advice to the University administration through the Vice-President Finance and Administration. The VPFA is responsible for formulating recommendations for decision by the Board of Governors of York University, through its Investment Committee.

The scope of the Advisory Committee's work might include:

- Advice about investments where investment managers can actively engage;
- Identification of companies who may be involved in activities contrary to the University's principles and beliefs, where active engagement by York's investment managers would be warranted;
- Advice about circumstances in which stocks held by the University may cause social or environmental injury;
- Advice on proxy voting guidelines, including areas in which the University should invoke proxy voting; and
- Identification of like-minded organizations, shareholder groups or coalitions, with which the University could potentially affiliate or become a member.

## PROGRESS ON THE 2009 PSC REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations	Status	Implementation Timeline
1. Establish opportunities for broad-based discussion of this report, including opportunities for constructive feedback.		Short
<b>Sustainability and organizational structure</b>		
2. Develop a York University policy statement on sustainability.		Short
3. Include the Senior Manager, Environmental Design & Sustainability in the Sustainability Council membership		Short
4. Dedicate resources to the Sustainability Council to enable fulfillment of its objects		Short
5. Establish a formal role for the Yorkwise program in relation to the Sustainability Council.		Short
6. Establish a community of Campus Sustainability Ambassadors.		Short
7. Continue to develop and implement opportunities for student engagement in collaboration with the Student Sustainability Sub-Committee.		Short
8. Undertake and support a Sustainability Assessment Project.		Short
9. Engage a review of sustainability administration models across Canadian and international institutions of higher education, with a view to identifying the most suitable model for York.		Short for the review only
<b>Sustainability in the curriculum</b>		
10. Request that the Academic Policy, Planning and Research Committee (APPRC) and the Vice-President Academic and Provost make sustainability a major strategic feature in the White Paper and the new University Academic Plan.		Short
11. Develop a greater focus on sustainability in the York curriculum.		Medium
12. Work with the relevant faculty members/offices to design and implement a survey about sustainability within the existing York curriculum.		Medium
13. Include sustainability in more courses and academic programs throughout the University.		Medium
14. Encourage and support the development of non-degree offerings in sustainability.		Medium

As of May 1, 2012. Please visit [www.yorku.ca/sustainability](http://www.yorku.ca/sustainability) for updates and additional information.










 =Completed  =Significant progress  =Work has begun  =Not yet started

Recommendations	Status	Implementation Timeline
15. Provide students with more opportunities to do research and work on campus sustainability projects.		Medium
<b>Social justice and human rights</b>		
16. Enhance York's resource commitment to existing initiatives such as those identified in the Inventory of Community Engagement (Office of University Events and Community Relations).		Medium
17. Improve access to York facilities such as the library system, buildings, and sports complexes and laboratories. In particular, a number of days each year should be designated as "community use days" for specified facilities (with streamlined approval process and waived or significantly reduced fees for facility use).		Medium
18. Assess and develop outreach initiatives to attract qualified applicants for part-time and full-time employment from communities-in-need surrounding York.		Short
19. Through the York Foundation encourage donor programs that enhance bursaries and awards for local residents.		Medium
20. Encourage deliberate outreach efforts with local secondary schools by each Faculty and department.		Medium
21. Coordinate bridging and transitional programs and explore opportunities for ongoing budget support to these programs.		Medium
22. Support and implement the policies of the updated York University Secondary Plan, specifically as they relate to housing, community services and facilities.		Medium
23. Support the ongoing work of the President's Advisory Committee on Human Rights and help bridge this work with York's sustainability initiatives.		Short
<b>Campus operations and development</b>		
24. Develop a York-specific green standard for the development and construction of all new buildings and building renovations.		Short
25. Establish an institution-wide program that enhances "e-waste" recycling practices in all academic departments and administrative units, and locate drop boxes throughout the Keele and Glendon campuses to facilitate broader community participation.		Short
26. Identify and implement policies, plans and incentives to substantially reduce the consumption of paper at York by adopting practices of double-sided printing on all multiple-paged documents and encouraging students to print and submit double sided papers and assignments.		Short
27. Implement a clear, comprehensive and coordinated program that is aimed at increasing the level of recycling and composting.		Short
28. Provide a larger selection of products made from 100% recycled materials in the University Bookstore.		Medium










## PROGRESS ON THE 2009 PSC REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS



Recommendations	Status	Implementation Timeline
29. Establish a program to reuse office furniture, when/where feasible, and if not, items should be offered by sale/donation to the York community, community charities, and organizations.		Medium
30. Support (and if possible increase support for) organizations focused on traffic demand management, the promotion of transit use and other alternate modes of transportation, and like sustainable transportation initiatives.		Short
31. Establish policies and practices to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants from vehicles, for example through establishment and enforcement of a "no idling" policy for all vehicles on York's campuses.		Medium
32. Develop a York University policy or framework aimed at governing campus food service operations in a more coordinated fashion that enables and supports the implementation of sustainable practices at a much greater degree than is presently possible.		Short
33. Develop a University food services policy that protects the investments made in campus food operations by restricting on-campus catering and food service provision to caterers and food service providers that are contracted, permitted or otherwise authorized by the University's Food Services office.		Short
34. Improve the University's marketing of the range of available food services on both campuses, for example through website improvements, and better signage.		Short
35. Expand and enhance the availability of sitting/common space for use by students (both indoors and outdoors) and improve access to microwaves, water-bottle refilling stations and sinks for those that bring food from home or want to refill water bottles.		Medium
36. Compile and analyze studies of the natural features of the University's two campuses, establish a York inventory of natural features and develop a comprehensive plan for protecting and enhancing York's endowment of natural features.		Medium
37. Continue to develop ecologically progressive plans and procedures to guide campus landscaping and grounds management practices.		Short
38. Integrate relevant research and studies into grounds management and other areas of campus operations by establishing formal opportunities with straightforward processes for the engagement of students (for example, through course-related research projects, internships, paid work, or volunteer opportunities).		Short
39. Continue to position the University to manage its carbon footprint more effectively through the implementation of the energy management program and other initiatives; and expand efforts to engage the community in prudent energy conservation practices in order to sustain, and possibly improve, the targeted reduction in energy consumption and emissions.		Medium

## PROGRESS ON THE 2010 PSC REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations	Status	Implementation Timeline
<b>Sustainability and organizational structure</b>		
1. Implement a pilot project for student engagement in sustainability in the summer of 2011.		Short
2. Compile a list of University policies and procedures that are related to sustainability. The list will be reviewed to see if there are any opportunities for modification, and the list of relevant policies and procedures will be posted on the Sustainability Website.		Short
3. Encourage University divisions and departments to integrate sustainability into their Integrated Resource Plans.		Short
4. Create a President's Sustainability Award that would recognize efforts of an individual or a team that initiates, adopts and/or fosters a culture of sustainability.		Medium
5. Create a strategy that details how the Council and the Student Sub-Committee will engage the York community to establish greater awareness of sustainability, the work of the Council, as well as the opportunities for engagement.		Short
<b>Sustainability in the curriculum</b>		
6. Cultivate intellectual interest in sustainability among students and faculty through symposia and/or key events.		Medium
7. Bring forward discussion of sustainability to the Teaching & Learning Working Group on Technology enhanced Learning in order to identify strategies to embed sustainable practices in course design and teaching practices across the University (for example, use of electronic assignment drop-box).		Short
8. Explore the opportunity, perhaps in collaboration with relevant faculty members, to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. undertake research to identify how other post-secondary institutions nationally and internationally support sustainability in the curriculum; and</li> <li>b. conduct key informant discussions internally and externally to identify opportunities for new or enhanced academic offerings related to sustainability that meet emergent workforce needs.</li> </ul>		Short
<b>Social justice and human rights</b>		
9. Establish an assessment model for community investments, including time, financial, in-kind and other resource allocations.		Medium

## PROGRESS ON THE 2010 PSC REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations	Status	Implementation Timeline
10. Develop the York University-TD Community Engagement Centre (CEC) as a hub for York's various academic and non-academic outreach and engagement activities, by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>expanding employment and enrollment recruitment sessions at CEC and with CEC partners;</li> <li>creating more opportunities to educate local community agency/support staff (such as youth workers, job developers, faith leaders) recognizing their important role as key influencers within the community for youth/residents interested in post-secondary education;</li> <li>building/enhancing current mentoring activity between York students and local youth (including WAY, partnering with Teacher candidates, and through nursing student placements in local schools and at Black Creek Community Health Centre); and</li> <li>developing capacity to host and support more York students who are high achieving local secondary school grads.</li> </ol>		Medium
11. Explore policies and procedures at other institutions with a view to developing the best practices for improved community access to York, including access to events such as college speakers' series, the March Gala, public workshops, and fine arts performances.		Short
12. Develop an electronic portal for external groups to understand York engagement opportunities and make requests for York resources and services.		Medium
13. Develop promotional materials for local neighbourhoods and other underrepresented communities that outline programs, admissions, scholarship, financial aid and engagement opportunities.		Medium
14. In collaboration with the Harry Sherman Crowe Housing Co-Op, explore creation of on-campus employment opportunities for HSC Co-Op youth and residents (e.g. social enterprise, summer employment).		Medium
15. Explore a program for workplace training opportunities, for example, through internships, skilled trade apprenticeships and other employment training in collaboration with local partners and community initiatives, including systems and support for faculty and staff to participate in supervision.		Medium
16. Advocate, with the City of Toronto, the Toronto Region Conservation Authority and other partners, for the construction of a physical link across the Black Creek, to enhance pedestrian and bicycle access to York University.		Long
<b>Campus operations and development</b> 17. All University contracted, non-franchised food service outlets that serve coffee and tea provide its customers with at least one option of fair trade certified coffee and tea at all times; that information on fair trade be displayed; and that these options are priced so that cost alone will not be an overriding factor in consumer selection. This approach, as a principle, should be extended to include other fair trade commodities (for example, sugar and cocoa) where this becomes feasible.		Short
18. Request the York University Development Corporation and the York University Student Centre to take the same approach with their contracted tenants and embed the requirement for a similar fair trade certified coffee and tea option in leases of food service operators within their respective premises. This approach, as a principle, should be extended to include other fair trade commodities (for example, sugar and cocoa) where this becomes feasible		Short

Recommendations	Status	Implementation Timeline
19. The University should give preference to suppliers who can meet or exceed predetermined "green" specifications. Procurement Services could include in their Request for Proposal (and other "RFx" procurement documents) criteria/specifications from suppliers that could be quantified on responses received. As a starting point to be able to test this recommendation, Procurement Services should focus on goods that are easily measurable and have accepted industry standards, such as appliances (EnergyStar, Energuide), paper (FSC - Forest Stewardship Council) and vehicles (fuel efficiency, hybrid/alternate fuel technology).		Medium
20. Develop a York-University-wide Green IT program that would, among other initiatives, include the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop and issue a series of green IT guidelines to be adopted by all IT units across the institution;</li> <li>further explore and, where practical, adopt virtualization technology and cloud computing as means of achieving efficiencies and energy consumption reductions;</li> <li>establish institution-wide standards for the management of IT infrastructure, servers requiring spaces with specialized utilities, and other considerations;</li> <li>work with Procurement Services to establish and adopt minimum power efficiency standard for all new computer hardware;</li> <li>work with Procurement Services and the Waste Management department to develop a procurement process that requires consideration and adoption of life-cycle assessment for computer hardware purchases and in-house mechanisms to collect, recover and ensure that end-of-life computer equipment are recycled responsibly;</li> <li>develop and implement a centralized workstation power management initiative for all laboratory (and "computer common") workstations, as a way to reduce power consumption from these workstations, beginning with the approximately 2,000 laboratory workstations managed by UIT; and</li> <li>phase out desktop printers in favour of an environment of duplex and network printers only.</li> </ol>		Short

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