

President's Sustainability Council

Terms of Reference

Updated January 2017

Introduction

York University is committed to sustainability and has a strong history of sustainability-related activity in research, education and application. As a signatory of the Talloires Declaration, York has a responsibility to provide leadership and dedication to sustainability on its campuses and to the greater community. The President's Sustainability Council (PSC) has been established to provide an advisory and coordinating function in an effort to advance sustainability and sustainability research on our campuses.

Terms of Reference

Mandate: The PSC is an advisory body to the President with responsibility for providing input and recommendations on how to advance York University's sustainability initiatives, projects, and practices and to provide oversight of the required actions from approved recommendations. It is also a mechanism through which to support and enable York students, faculty and staff to participate meaningfully in the planning and implementation of York University's sustainability policies, initiatives, projects and practices. It will serve to foster the integration of knowledge and issues about sustainability into research, education and application.

The PSC operates in an atmosphere of collegial co-operation, where all participants respect each other's participation through sharing of expertise, information and strategies.

Specifically, the objectives of the PSC are:

1. Develop a framework for understanding the different dimensions of sustainability, including research, as relevant to the University's campuses;

2. Conduct assessments of sustainability to establish common understandings and benchmarks in the context of the 2001 Report of the President's Task Force on Sustainability and subsequent PSC Annual Reports;
3. Provide a forum in which members may discuss sustainability challenges and opportunities to foster pan-university approaches to sustainability initiatives;
4. Identify and review current university sustainability practices and initiatives, and ascertain opportunities for synergies and engagement;
5. Through a planning/prioritization process, identify and examine specific high priority issues and develop recommendations for the President to consider implementing;
6. Develop communication tools that promote and enhance awareness of sustainability activities and initiatives, including the work of the Council, throughout the entire York Community; and
7. In support of the work of the PSC, working groups will be established to work on an identified theme or topic. The working groups shall be chaired by members of the PSC and tasked with (i) developing new sustainability-related recommendations; and (ii) monitoring progress towards past Annual Report recommendations. Working Group chairs will ensure that key Working Group activities and recommendations are recorded and reported to the PSC. Membership of the Working Groups will be open to encourage broad representation and input from across the University.
8. In support of the work of the PSC, a student sub-committee will be established to act as a student advisory body to the PSC to advance student's sustainability goals at York University. The student sub-committee (PSCSS) will have four of its members (Chair, 2 Student Representatives and the Secretary) sit as voting members on the PSC.

9. Produce an Annual Report on sustainability at York relative to the Council's Activities.

Membership:

The PSC Chair will be appointed by the President for a two-year term, with an optional one-year extension.

Membership of the PSC will be broad-based, ensuring representation from students, staff and faculty, and from key sustainability-related research and administrative offices, including:

Assistant Vice-President, Campus Services and Business Operations
Associate Dean Research (from one faculty)
Associate Vice President Research
Chief Information Officer
Chief of Staff, Office of the President
Dean, Faculty of Environmental Studies
Director, Campus Planning and Development
Director, Centre for Human Rights
Director, Transportation and Master Planning, York University Development Corporation
Director, YU-Card & Food Services
Manager, TD Community Engagement Centre
Manager, Transportation & Student Services
Staff Representative from Glendon College
Staff Representative from the Division of the Provost
Staff Representative from the Division of the Vice-Provost Students

Staff Representative, Finance & Administration
Sustainability Coordinator, Office of the President
Tier 1 Canada Research Chair or York Research Chair or similarly distinguished researcher
Tier 2 Canada Research Chair or York Research Chair or other high profile emerging researcher
Vice-President, Finance & Administration
Vice-Provost Academic
Vice-Provost Students
12 faculty members (1 from each faculty plus one at large)
6 student representatives, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 representative from the York Federation of Students (YFS) • 1 representative from the Graduate Students Association (GSA) • 4 representatives from the President's Sustainability Council Student Subcommittee

The 6 Student representatives will be elected by student groups (4 from the PSCSS, 1 from the York Federation of Students, and 1 from the Graduate Student Association). Staff and Faculty members of the PSC will be appointed by the President, in consultation with the PSC Chair.

PSC Decision-Making: PSC Recommendations to the President will be reached, to the extent possible, by consensus, while striving to reflect the diversity of views of the PSC membership.

Meetings: The Sustainability Council will meet at least quarterly throughout the year, with Working Groups establishing their own meeting schedule and meeting at least twice a term during the Fall and Winter.