

President's Sustainability Council Meeting  
April 21, 2017 9:30am – 11:00am  
213 Bergeron Centre of Excellence

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Minutes

**In Attendance:** Martin Bunch (Chair), Nicole Arsenault, Anthony Barbisan, Richard Francki, Mikhaela Gray, Celia Haig-Brown, Usman T. Khan, Deborah McGregor, Andrew Plunkett, Darryl Reed, Lorna Schwartzentruber

**Regrets:** Steve Alsop, Michael Charles, Michelle Chin-Dawe, Sheila Forshaw, Ian Garrett, Jason Gerrity, Rawan Habib, Dustin Klaudt, Dirk Matten, Ijade Maxwell Rodrigues, Ross McMillan, Pamela Persaud Yvette Munro for Alice Pitt, Helen Psathas, Noel Sturgeon, Laura Taylor, Carol Yorkden-Chamberlain, Craig Scott, Sapna Sharma, Christine Till, Alexandra Williams, Chris Wong

## **CHAIR'S REMARKS**

The Chair invited Council members to attend the President's Sustainability Leadership Awards ceremony in the Bergeron lobby after the meeting.

The sustainability strategy process is currently focused on reviewing draft goals that have been derived from the consultations. The President's Sustainability Council members will have an opportunity to review the goals and help with prioritization. The survey that was created for the sustainability strategy will close on April 26, 2017. 450 survey responses have been received to date. The responses will help give direction on how to strengthen or prioritize goals.

## **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

Martin Bunch motioned to approve the meeting minutes of March 28, 2017. The minutes were approved by the Council pending a minor change. Richard Francki requested that the word cyclisation that was used in the minutes be changed to carbon recovery.

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

There was no student representative in attendance to provide an update on the student sub-committee.

## **REVIEW OF WORKING GROUP REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### Research Working Group:

The initial research working group meeting took place. They discussed the sustainability task force report which will be revisited at a future meeting. The working group also identified strategic goals for the sustainability strategy. Another research working group meeting will be scheduled before the end of May. A Y-File article was published about the working group.

### Campus Operations and Development Working Group:

The working group meeting took place in the February and most of the discussion was focused on the new Markham campus. There was also discussion on the sustainability strategy.

### Administrative and Organizational Structure Working Group:

The Administration working group met in late March and identified strategic goals for the strategy. The next meeting will take place in May where the working group will discuss the sustainability annual report and the green fund. Jeff Briand in Advancement is supportive of the idea to find donors to help fund sustainability projects. The vision for how this would work needs to be discussed further. Corporations may be able to sponsor some of the projects. Decisions will not be made about sponsorship or donations without consultation with the Council. Other institutions use a levy or find other funding for projects without depending on donors. The strategy will lead to the development of implementation plans. A green fund would be helpful to support the implementation of sustainability initiatives. More research and discussion on creating a green fund at the University will be pursued.

### Social Justice and Human Rights Working Group:

The working group has met twice. One of the meetings focused on the sustainability strategy and the second meeting focused on fair trade designation, as well as, reviewing the anchor institution framework and discussing implementation.

### Curriculum Working Group:

One curriculum working group meeting took place this year to discuss strategic goals for the sustainability strategy. William Gage, AVP teaching and learning, joined the meeting on behalf of Alice Pitt. Another meeting on curriculum will be scheduled before the end of June. There was a concern raised at the working group meeting regarding the feasibility of requiring Faculties to have learning outcomes related to sustainability.

Meeting participants discussed how learning outcomes related to sustainability could be achieved at the University. A Council member noted that a lot of what is already being

done in courses could be recognized as sustainable learning outcomes. There would need to be a mechanism to help identify the outcomes that already exist in curriculum. Another Council member suggested that during the cyclical program reviews every 8 years, learning outcomes could be modified during that process. It was mentioned that Centennial College was successful in embedding learning outcomes related to global citizenship in curriculum and used the program review process as a mechanism for implementation.

It was also suggested that sustainability outcomes could be linked with experiential education to support the University's ongoing commitment to EE. It was also suggested that outcomes related to Indigenous Way of Knowing could be interconnected with sustainability.

## **2015-2016 ANNUAL SUSTAINABILITY REPORT**

The 2015-2016 annual sustainability report can be accessed through the sustainability website. Mikhaela will circulate the link to the report to the Council. The timeline for the report was pushed back due to difficulty during the lay-out phase of the report.

There was a discussion on the waste statistics which were highlighted in the report. It was noted that although 68% diversion rate seems modest, it is one of the highest rates in Ontario and that Campus Services and Business Operations is doing a good job to increase the rate.

It was suggested that the report in the future could include a section on ongoing initiatives and improvements that still need to be made at the University to demonstrate our continual commitment to advance sustainability efforts on both campuses. The section would identify the areas York needs to work on and where it is going which would be a pedagogical opportunity.

## **2016-2017 PSC ANNUAL REPORT**

The PSC Annual Report is an internal document that presents recommendations on sustainability to the President. The appendix includes recommendations from the past.

A few more working group meetings are scheduled to take place in May. Martin has requested that working group chairs submitted their reports by early June. The report will be sent to Dr. Shourki by mid-June.

## **SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY UPDATE**

The draft goals were shared with Dr. Lenton for her review. The list of goals is subject to change and may be revised after any further consultations with the York community, and review by the President and Vice-Presidents. The recommendations are currently organized by working group but they will be categorized by people, place and knowledge in the report.

The Chair of the Council reviewed the goals that had been generated to date for discussion.

### *Administration Working Group Goals*

Discussion points included:

- Including a land acknowledgement and the importance of Indigenous ways of knowing in the preamble of the report;
- Goal #1 could be strengthened by being more specific about the types of planning and strategies. It was noted that strategic planning needs to start from sustainability not incorporate it afterwards. Council members suggested that the phrase be re-written to say “long-term institutional and strategic planning”;

### *Campus Operations Working Group Goals*

Discussion points included:

- Plans that will be developed post-strategy on energy and transportation;
- Including text boxes in the strategy that highlight examples of what the goals would look like in practice.

The need to address behavioural change and sustainability on-campus was discussed. It was suggested that Christine Till and Lousie Hartley could be contacted to discuss further. At the University of California, a behavioural psychologist was hired and now students and faculties compete against one another to achieve different sustainability targets. It was suggested that the Residence Race to Zero that used to exist at York could be reinvigorated to incorporate technology and regenerate interest in the activity among students. It was noted that there is a Ted Talk by Alex Laskey on the reduction of energy conception. People reduced their energy usage when they learned that their neighbours were doing better.

### *Curriculum Working Group Goals*

Discussion points included:

- Adding a word to the third goal to highlight action

### *Research Working Group*

There was a discussion on how the goal about establishing a NCE was different than an organized research unit and past ORU's on campus. The Networks of Centres of Excellence in Sustainability is a program funded by the Federal Government. It was suggested that this goal could be made more explicit.

The list of draft goals will be circulated electronically for people to provide comments. If any Council members feel that a goal is missing from the list, they are encouraged to let Martin know. Andrew and Martin will review the survey results and compare these to the goals that were generated by the working groups.

The pre-amble of the report will address the ongoing assessment of progress to achieve sustainability goals. There will be an Indigenous Land Acknowledgement, as well as, a note about sustainability goals and Indigenous thought.

## **PRESIDENT'S SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP AWARDS AND EARTH DAY EVENT**

The president's sustainability leadership awards will be presented following the meeting. The event will include remarks and food. Council members are invited to attend the event.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

A campaign with facts on sustainability will be running on LED screens across campus during the summer. There was a discussion on MetroLinx and the fare integration plan.

The Chair thanked everyone for their participation on the Council and extended his appreciation for their hard work over the past year.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.