

**Academic Affairs
Sustainability Group Meeting
Meeting Minutes
June 6, 2008, 9:00 a.m.
UN 211**

Attendees: Carpenter, Cox, Eng, Feucht-Haviar, Fillbeck, Gibby, Hatfield, Jennings, Kurland, Michaud, Neubauer, Pontikis, Ramesh, Rusche, Say, Simon, Spagna, Stephens (Chair), Vasishth, Wigfall, Zell

WELCOME / DISCUSSION

Stephens welcomed all and introductions were made across the room. Vasishth began the discussion by presenting information detailing the current situation in the world related to sustainability and how our actions impact the environment. He noted the importance of CSUN assuming a leadership role in this area.

The following ideas were covered and discussion ensued:

1. Curriculum information that prepares students with knowledge not only for today but also the essential tools needed in ten years;
2. Ecological footprinting being used in other institutions to measure the effect on our surroundings related to campus operations;
3. A location on campus to discuss sustainability issues;
4. Courses taught by whom and how we can build a network of courses; and
5. A background in greening provided to remove misunderstanding of the term “sustainability.”

Stephens proposed an Academic Affairs approach and added the importance of achieving consistency by not limiting activities to the curriculum, but also looking at our practices. The proposed establishment of a Sustainability Campus Task Force as part of the university will be composed of faculty, staff and community members. She noted that an interest has been expressed by some faculty and administrators to participate.

Jennings shared the vision of a multi-college institute providing both an actual and a virtual place to make things happen.

Say emphasized the value of a united group when meeting challenges in a global environment.

Kurland and Zell discussed the usefulness of a survey to determine how other colleges have engaged in these issues. What courses are actually being taught on sustainability? What are faculty teaching and how are they connected to sustainability? If so, how often are they offered? What courses are faculty interested in teaching? Are they involved in activities in the community and/or campus?

Feucht-Haviar suggested a variety of terms be considered. Possibly “green” or “environmentally sensitive” could be used under the umbrella term of “sustainability.” She also noted the need to join with other sponsors in order to bring higher visibility in the valley with the goal of CSUN serving as a resource. Feucht-Haviar further suggested a Community Service Learning

component partnering with the university offering solutions and social support. Jennings commented on the Institute's purpose and the importance of communicating consistent messages to the community.

Developing a graduate program with a concentration in sustainability was discussed as well as the prospect of certificate programs attached to graduate degrees. Pontikis suggested taking from various areas to bring together a Master's degree in Sustainability Design with a structural perspective.

At Stephens' request, Vasishth further discussed sustainability for the benefit of the group:

1. Three variables are considered: 1) economical, 2) social; 3) environmental. If too much concentration exists in one area, it will not be sustainable over time.
2. Sustainability is defined as a system that allows the use of resources today without depleting them for the future.
3. Context vs. consequences of doing things one way vs. another way.
 - a. How you view the consequence is the full range of impact on the environment.
 - b. Energy /energy consumption – how can we expand decision making to take into account all of the variables?
 - c. The ecological approach is to begin to look at the context.

He concluded with asking that attendees see things through different perspectives. Also, Vasishth added that education should be viewed as a sustainability factor.

For more information related to support of sustainability, Vasishth encouraged all to visit his web page at http://www.csun.edu/~vasishth/Campus_Sustainability_Resources.htm
The site contains computer-based tools and references that are useful.

A concern was raised that students with backgrounds in sustainability have experienced difficulty obtaining jobs. CSUN sensibility must be applied to this effort. A need to know who is doing what was expressed. Maintaining a database with courses and faculty names to create alliances was suggested as a possible solution. Say recommended the Oviatt Library as a resource as an information repository.

Stephens requested that all attendees respond ASAP to a brief survey located at:
http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=6PqQDDHB_2bLvEkE_2buRTC_2fBw_3d

ACTION ITEMS

1. Campus discussion to be organized by Academic Affairs with opportunities for student engagement.
2. Submit names to diane.stephens@csun.edu to become a Core Team member.
3. Submit college representation names to Stephens. She will contact Deans.
4. Set up email list serve including attendees at meeting to inform and maintain involvement.
5. Obtain results from survey for accurate portrayal of campus activities.
6. Set up monthly Core Team meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.