



Memorandum

DATE: February 5, 2010  
TO: Senior Staff  
FROM: Jim Dees/Jon Varnell  
SUBJECT: Update on Environmental Sustainability

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Because of the continued growth of the role of sustainability on campus and its importance to our campus community we want to update senior staff on the things happening and get feedback on continued coordination of all of these efforts and more. As you all know, we are approaching the year of sustainability.

American College & Universities President's Climate Commitment:

On Sept. 15, we were among 87 ACUPCC colleges and universities to submit a Climate Action Plan by the organization's earliest deadline. Our plan continues to evolve and will change as the conversation continues on-campus and technology improves. The goal continues to reach some form of carbon neutrality by 2047.

With at least 665 signatories, there is much collective sharing of information and strategy that is on going and will continue for years to come.

Our second Greenhouse Gas Inventory is underway as a community effort that involves the Environmental Sustainability Council, Dr. Eva Lawrence's environmental psychology class, facilities and Sustainability Office.

Great gains in carbon reduction are coming as a result of our aggressive pursuit of energy saving on a building-by-building basis. More lighting and controls retrofits are underway and being planned for this spring. Since nearly 70% of Guilford's carbon footprint is tied directly to our buildings, these projects are working to reduce our footprint.

Environmental Sustainability:

The ACUPCC is the main focus of the Environmental Sustainability Council. For this academic year, the Council is targeting the advancement of climate related issues in the curriculum and the behavioral component of the transportation solutions.

The council has been re-structured this year to refocus the efforts of the council and position the group to balance both operational and curricular issues. Also, the focus is on

returning to the original focus of the committee to adopt student-initiated projects supported by the council.

The fourteen member council is co-chaired Mark Justad and Jim Dees and has representation from Residence Life, four faculty departments, facilities, bookstore, dining, communications and marketing and the athletic department.

In addition to working on the updated Greenhouse Gas Inventory, the council is working on: (a) An on-campus partnership with a local bike shop, (b) a web-based social network for Triad-area commuters that facilitates ridesharing and carpooling and (c) the beginning steps of addressing the curricular changes of the ACUPCC. The curricular effort is being led by Mark Justad with Jim Hood, Sanjay Marwah, Damon Aikens and Vicky Foust.

### **Composting:**

Part of our summer renovation of the dining seating area included a new high efficiency dish washer which is estimated to save nearly 100,000 gallons of water and enough electricity to save 35% of the capital cost in the first year. Also part of that renovation was the installation of a pulper system that almost 100% eliminates trash from the dish room operation and then is transferred into our Earth Tub composting unit.

The Earth Tub is being used by a number of other schools but Guilford is on the leading edge of this whole system. In the first semester of operation, the Earth Tub diverted 6000 lbs of food waste from the landfill and turned into soil for use on campus.

The compost system has to be managed daily and is done by students from the Sustainability Office and the Environmental Studies program. Compost pick-up is provided by student volunteers and is taken to the Greenleaf and the alt. houses.

### **Community Gardens:**

Through the efforts of student and community volunteers, twenty raised bed gardening plots have been installed in the meadows next to New Garden Friends School. Guilford College will host the only community garden in the northwest section of Greensboro.

The leadership team for the garden is two staff members, two students (one as a credited intern –Martha Orhai) and one Master Gardener Volunteer from the North Carolina Cooperation Extension Service.

### **Student Energy Management Program:**

NCICU funded an internship program last academic year which has carried over into this year to fund another energy program. Bryce Bjornson is this year's energy intern and has been working on the Energy Use Limitation Program effecting North Apt, Pope, Campbell, Pines and Cobb Houses.

In conjunction with Residence Life, the program established energy use limits by averaging the past 4 years of energy data per location.

This behavior modification program has resulted in a 35% reduction in energy use where employed. Our goal is to continue to expand this program to realize more carbon and dollar savings through behavior modification.

**Recycling Program:**

Annual recycling efforts continue across campus by Environmental services, grounds and the sustainability department. Our campus perception in this area does yet match our work to date. Strong effort and support are needed in this area to move Guilford toward the more global thinking behind zero waste communities.

This year marks our second year of participation in the nation-wide collegiate recycling competition known as “Recyclemania”

Last year we ranked 176 out of 206 schools for cumulative recycling rate because we recycled only 16% of the solid waste that we disposed of. The winner, Cal State University –San Marco recycled 78.1%.

We expect significant gains will be made due to the composting system now in place at Founders Hall. Still, we need a more campus-wide interest in reduction to see numbers comparable to our environmental aspirants.

**Solar Energy Power Agreement:**

A press release is forthcoming in the announcement our partnership with FLS Energy for solar energy power purchase. Bryan, Mary Hobbs, Binford, Milner, Founders, PE Center, Libray and Frank Family Science Center will all be sites for solar to hot water set-ups similar to what is already installed at Shore Hall.

We have a site lease and agreement to buy the solar from FLS as produced by the nearly \$1M worth of solar. The carbon reduction and investment in renewable energy is significant. This is a major contributor toward our ACUPCC plan and will reduce our cost.

More details will be available as we design these systems and begin planning the installations. This is a great way to kick-off the Year of Sustainability next fall.