Engagement Focus Areas for Review

At its next four meetings, the Sustainability Advisory Council (SAC) will prioritize focus areas for sustainability at UW-Madison. Here is the schedule:

December 2020	Academic & Research focus areas
January 2021	Engagement focus areas
February 2021	Operations focus areas
March 2021	Planning and Administration focus areas

The focus areas identified (so far) for our January meeting are in Table 2. These were identified through a review of peer best practices, results of UW-Madison's Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) report, Office of Sustainability staff experience, and feedback from the campus community during public listening sessions.

Additional focus areas may be defined by the SAC members. Before initial prioritization, the SAC will review, discuss, and identify resources that support the implementation of initiatives or challenges that could stall initiative progress.

Source(s) of focus areas are identified by the following:

⭐ = STARS & Peer Best Practices

🌐 = Office of Sustainability Experience

🦡 = Listening Sessions

👤 = SAC Members

Focus Area	Issue(s) to Address	Example Initiative(s)	Example Action items
Sustainability Leadership and Advocacy	As an institution, UW-Madison does not: • take part in direct advocacy efforts toward sustainability-related public policy issues • lead regional or national sustainability initiatives in higher education	**Alignment and engagement** of students/faculty/staff as advocates for sustainability-related public policy issues that support UW-Madison's mission **Collaborations** across the UW-System and Big10 to share best practices, provide leadership to address policy barriers, and implement regional sustainability initiatives	• Join the University Climate Change Coalition (UC3) • Advise the State's Office of Sustainability and Clean Energy on Department of Administration on impacts of sustainability policies on UW-Madison and UW System • Develop resources for supporting student advocacy (e.g., mentoring, presentation reviews, etc.) • Formalize UW System STARS best practices and peer review processes • Lead new regional collaborations following the Midwest Climate Summit • Organize and sponsor regional meet-ups at sustainability conferences (e.g., AASHE)
Sustainability Co-curricular Learning	UW-Madison lacks: • dedicated personnel to develop and coordinate sustainability-related co-curricular learning opportunities • a method to connect these opportunities to foster growth and collaboration	**Department-level personnel** tasked with fostering co-curricular learning opportunities **Hub** for co-curricular sustainability activities and student organizations	• Train career and academic advisors on sustainability co-curricular and career opportunities • Develop a community of practice for sustainability student organization leaders • Create a physical space on campus for sustainability student organizations • Add sustainability to the leadership certificate for graduates • Incorporate sustainability into Athletics life skills training • Designate the Office of Sustainability as a potential administrative home for student organizations

Focus Area	Issue(s) to Address	Example Initiative(s)	Example Action items
Sustainability Communications and Branding ⭐	UW-Madison has insufficient: • coordination of sustainability communications • dedicated personnel to support sustainability communications UW-Madison lacks a high profile, annual event focused on issues in sustainability	**Coordinated approach** to sustainability communications that encompasses the breadth of campus and involves a variety of communicators **Sustainability Forum** to share and discuss issues in sustainability	• Incorporate a theme of sustainability into campus-level communications • Develop a sustainability communicators group • Create a network of ambassadors who promote sustainability across the campus community • Deploy an annual survey to assess awareness of sustainability efforts • Create in-building and landscape sustainability signage and deploy consistently across campus • Hold an annual sustainability forum • Expand the Sustainability Community of Practice • Incorporate sustainability progress updates with external advisory boards
Sustainable Events 🦡	UW-Madison lacks requirements for incorporating sustainability into on-campus events	**Policies** for improving the sustainability of campus events	• Require zero waste events • Prioritize sustainable procurement options in event planning • Incentive sustainable transportation options and/or virtual participation options • Ensure all events offer fair trade products • Sustainability tag in campus events calendar
Sustainable Athletics 🦡	UW-Madison lacks requirements for incorporating sustainability into athletic events	**Sustainability requirements** for Recreation and Wellbeing athletic operations and events **Sustainability plan** for Athletics operations, events, and communications	• Hold zero waste athletic events • Develop sustainability themed athletic communications • Incorporate student athletes into sustainability communications • Identify athlete sustainability leaders • Lead Big10 Athletics sustainability initiatives
Continuing Education ⭐	UW-Madison lacks a robust suite of sustainability-related continuing education courses	**Coordinated** outreach and advertising efforts of sustainability-related continuing education courses/programs **Incentives** to support faculty/staff in incorporating sustainability in new and existing continuing education courses	• Collaborate with UW-Extension on expanding sustainability-related continuing education opportunities • Coordinate communications on sustainability-related continuing education • Offer grants to faculty to develop new, or expand existing, continuing education courses that include sustainability learning outcomes

Focus Area	Issue(s) to Address	Example Initiative(s)	Example Action items
Sustainability Onboarding and Training ⭐	UW-Madison does not include information on campus and community sustainability in student/faculty/staff orientation and onboarding UW-Madison does not offer or incentivize training to faculty/staff on sustainability issues related to their career	**Sustainability presentation** during SOAR, graduate student orientation, and employee onboarding **Training** and professional development courses for faculty/staff	• Include a sustainability walking tour and/or add sustainability topics to campus tours • Include a sustainability presentation during SOAR • Develop sustainability materials for distribution during graduate student orientation • Require a sustainability focused video-based training for all students • Develop sustainability materials for inclusion in all employee onboarding • Include campus and community sustainability in New Employee Orientation • Include sustainability in all new employee orientation • Develop UW-Madison specific sustainability training opportunities • Support external sustainability training opportunities
Alumni Engagement	UW-Madison and the Wisconsin Alumni Association have not fully leveraged sustainability to engage alumni	**Engagement** of alumni in sustainability programs, successes, and opportunities **Development opportunities** for alumni to donate to sustainability efforts	• Engage alumni to support new student recruitment to sustainability-related programs • Developed sustainability focused alumni career panels and events • Engage alumni as donors to sustainability initiatives • Regular sustainability related communications in alumni outlets • Alumni events focused on sustainability issues

Other Focus Areas with Engagement Impact

- **Campus as a Living Lab**: Living lab activities foster engagement and collaboration internally between operations staff and academics students/faculty/staff
- **Sustainability Institute**: An Institute could act as a hub for internal engagement, student organizations, and community events
- **Sustainability Courses**: Efforts in this focus area could include support for the development of sustainability-related continuing education courses
- **Sustainability Learning Requirement**: Sustainability student onboarding could fulfill a sustainability learning requirement
- **Honors & Recognition**: Recognition can also include achievements in internal and external engagement

Table 2. Engagement focus areas