



Office of Sustainability
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Sustainability Advisory Council (SAC) – Executive Summary
Recommendations Meeting, May 14th, 2021
11:00am - 12:30pm
[Full Recording Available Here](#)

Cheryl Gittens	SAC Member
Mark Guthier	SAC Member
Emma Heins	SAC Member
Chris McIntosh	SAC Member
Sarah Schutt	SAC Member
Natalie Tinsen	SAC Member
Nola Walker	SAC Member
Michael Williams	SAC Member
Josh Arnold	Office of Sustainability and Supporting Staff
Alex Frank	Office of Sustainability and Supporting Staff
Deb Gurke	Office of Sustainability and Supporting Staff
Nathan Jandl	Office of Sustainability and Supporting Staff
Jake McCulloch	Office of Sustainability and Supporting Staff
Missy Nergard	Office of Sustainability and Supporting Staff

Summary Notes

I. Welcome & Goals for Today

- a. *Congratulations to our students for a successful end of the semester and graduating!*
- b. *Review of last meeting*
 - General feedback was positive
 - Some concern about making the material more digestible
 - We recognize that we have a responsibility to educate stakeholders and ourselves
 - Clearly explaining “priority” vs. enabling/ supporting
 - Some concern about making recommendations that we don’t have the resources for yet

II. Student Subcommittee Debrief

- So grateful for this experience and being a part of the process, we want to ensure that student voices will continue to be heard
- On the initial Framework
 - We liked the organization of the chart, it’s comprehensive yet mostly easy to understand

- The enabling section was the only one that was somewhat hard to grasp, there was some discussion around renaming the sections for clarity
- Sustainability is listed in nearly every bullet, yet we don't have a shared definition of sustainability, we may want to revisit this

III. Prioritization Framework Revisited

- Above all, thank you for your effort this past year, 2020 was extremely challenging in so many ways, yet we managed to produce useful outcomes as a team for advancing campus sustainability
- a. *Preliminary Framing*
 - We tried to step back and dig into the ideas to think of a better way to translate these definitions for the campus community
- b. *Our Draft Recommendations*
 - Goal here is to take these terms and describe a vision for these domains
 - Instead of just listing the priorities of these focus areas, we wanted to also include preliminary initiatives
- c. *SAC and Action Groups*
 - We will document our approach to these priorities by creating action plans
 - These plans will feature background information, relevant campus initiatives, peer best practices, preliminary milestones, and metrics for success, each action plan will have an action group with relevant stakeholders
 - To complete these, we'll be meeting individually with SAC members to review the action plans that would fall within your unit
- d. *Feedback*
 - Appreciate you walking us back through our journey over this last year, and congratulations to the team for taking all of the discussions and feedback and synthesizing and distilling it into what seem to be very clear and actionable items
 - Also appreciated the comment from the students about establishing a shared understanding of sustainability
 - Supportive of this approach, I'm much more looking forward to the individual meeting and exploring our future work, thank you for your work

IV. Planning for Action

- a. *SAC and Action Groups 2021-2022*
 - Action groups are accountable to the SAC and the SAC removes barriers and acknowledge champions
 - These plans will be developed in the context of current sustainability plans, campus plans, and community plans
 - Action groups will:
 - Develop working norms
 - Validate and refine actions plans
 - Identify resources needed for implementation
 - Report progress to SAC and semi-annual meetings

V. Next Steps

- We are on very fertile ground for implementing these action plans, we have federal and state policy that aligns with our priorities and we're approaching a fall semester where many campus units are reevaluating their norms
- Submit draft recommendations to Provost and VCFA this summer
 - 1-on-1 meetings in late May
 - This will be the time to share any and all feedback you (SAC member) may have on the draft action plans.
 - We'd also appreciate on feedback on the process of the last 8 months
 - Finalize recommendations and share with SAC for feedback
 - Present recommendations w/ SAC to sponsors (late summer)
- Roll-out of sustainability strategy in the fall
- SAC meetings will shift to once a semester or so to review how the sustainability strategy is unfolding.

VI. Closing thoughts

a. *How could you take what you've learned here back to your teams and start that sustainability integration and culture change process?*

- I'm so grateful for the structure that was used throughout this journey. I feel much more grounded and confident in my ability to share the learning and our developmental journey with others. It was consistent, not overwhelming, and digestible. The level of reinforcement and care built great momentum. I feel a sense of shared accomplishment. I can look back and see how much I've learned. This has been one of the best experiences in an advisory group I've had because of the care and structure and representation from all over campus. It's been an honor of our presence.
- The quality and integrity of this process has blown me away. I've learned so much about facilitating an advisory group in addition to the sustainability knowledge I've gained. What am I going to do as an advocate to share in all my circles? I have many different audiences that I can bring this to and I am willing and excited to. I'm willing to work this into my schtick. We as SAC members will need communications materials in order to do this effectively however.
- Kudos to this team. It's an exciting time in athletics. We're gearing up for change ourselves with new leadership coming in soon that will be charged with making sustainability a priority. Additionally, since the SAC has started, we've had a group of student athletes who have put together their own internal group who have expressed their desire to make progress in the realm of sustainability. I see this becoming a collaborative effort and a great opportunity that we're excited about. I've been sharing our group's progress along the way with my leadership and we're ready to hit the ground running. I really appreciate the lack of judgement when one of us doesn't have an answer or even a direction. We were all eager to help but we didn't always know where to start and the OS has helped me in that realm.
- I so appreciate the way the OS has designed and managed this process and engaged every thought, not excluding anyone's input no matter where they were in their sustainability journey. This work is very synergistic with the type of working being done and the type of culture we want to build on campus. All that

you're doing is aligned with the goals and the mission of the Diversity Office. From my seat the work that we're doing here is completely in line with our diversity statement, our values, and the kind of campus we are trying to create. We're building a culture that is inclusive and thoughtful of the lives of the people we have here and the planet that we are a part of. One of our priorities is generating the next generation of leaders. What I saw in this process was a great example of students being leaders. The alignment with DDEEA is there and we are always willing partners in this work.

- I'm looking forward to having some OS members come speak to my leadership council and share an overview of this work. That council will then be discussing forming a working group and get active in this space on behalf of campus, most likely focused on education and awareness. I echo what everyone else has said about the great process and great experience.
- I gained a very clear breakdown of the different strategic areas of sustainability. It's such a big concept and having a clearer idea of the specific areas enables us to make change.
- How can I expand the student voice here? We students have a lot of different hats but there are so many more voices we can engage.
- I want to continue the conversation. Getting those voices that are historically not represented in these conversations. Getting students to be a part of the whole process.