

**Sustainability Committee for Academic Senate  
Monthly Meeting Notes from September 9, 2016**

**Present:** Jeremy Kagan, Paul Adler, Dan Mazmanian, Josh Goldstein, John Silvester, Darren Ruddell, Howard Greenwald, Kelly Sanders, Catherine Coleman, Ed Avol, Lessa Grunenfelder, Raphael Bostic

Here is a summary of where we got to by the end of the meeting:

Knowing that the Senate has the ear of the provost, the question before us is what we on this subcommittee recommend?

The next meetings will focus on three areas we can advance.

**1 - In the area of education and research which is a faculty concern - our intention is to have Antonio Bento meet and share his progress with the proposal of taking advantage of USC strengths in communication and public policy - and letting this be USC's unique role in sustainability - to advance the information and implementation of the science.** This would be a centering of the communication schools and the public policy schools. How can we take advantage of what already are good assets of USC – the School of Cinematic Arts, (rated third year in the row as the best film school in the nation) and Annenberg School of Communications, also well respected, along with the schools dedicated to policy - Viterbi School of Engineering, Price School of Public Policy, and the schools of Law and Business.

**2 – We will have Halli Bovia’s boss of the Office of Sustainability and Halli come in to share where things stand on the larger committee = the Sustainability Steering Committee** created by Provost Quick which has met now over the last 5 months and has members from the faculty, administration , staff and students and has subcommittees that are preparing recommendations on specific areas – Education/Research (which Antonio is heading and presenting the above), Engagement ( working on a university survey), Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emission ( note that solar is off the agenda for them!), Procurement, Transportation, Waste, Water. I am enclosing notes from the meeting in July.

Members of this Sustainability Steering Committee are Paul Adler, Ahlia Bethea, Hilda Blanco, Halli Bovia, Jason Chan, Mark Ewalt, Erin Fabris, Carol Fern, James Gibson, Brian Gross, Nikita Hamilton, Jeremy Kagan, Travis Longcore, Stacy Lockett, Tony Mazza, Angie Perassolo (in place of Eric Johnson), Michale Prenger, Karen Reed, David Wright.

### **3 – We will also invite from the Mayor Office Matt Peterson to share what the city is doing and potentially see how we can coordinate with the city**

Our discussion began with Chairperson Darren Ruddell telling us what he learned from his recent meeting with Provost Michael Quick.

The three “wicked problems” the provost articulated are: 1) homelessness; 2) issues of aging and dementia; and 3) security. And the efforts to advance sustainability would fall under the “umbrella” of security. There would be a communication strategy - dealing with issues like water and energy security as well as cyber security – that could be initiatives under the security.

How if possible might the Board of Trustees be approached? Knowing that many are opposed to the sustainability issue being in fossil fuel businesses and real estate, and there are others more open to it, can we get to them? David Orr who visited our campus last year talked about getting to the board as powerfully effective and what they did at Oberlin College which now has one of the most advanced sustainability programs in the country.

**Paul Adler** spoke to looking at the overall strategic vision and how to challenge that and present broader longer term visions -

**Dan Mazmanian** spoke of present California goals and how they will effect us - And **Kelly Twomey** remarked that these standards will make us change whether this is wanted or not just to meet the state's goals.

Dan went to say that the UC Campuses – under Janet Napolitano - have already said they are going on this path – and there is the **American Campus Act on Climate**. All UC campuses have already signed a pledge but USC has not signed the pledge.

Dan then asked - Who are our target populations for sustainability efforts?

For California planners it is the planet – Gov Brown's attitude is how it benefits the state and beyond. Who might be the target of what a sustainability program might offer at USC?

Joshua Goldstein spoke to it being about - where is the money - and where is the activity around these issues in Los Angeles. Some attract more support than others. More money.

A fear brought up - is sustainability being folded into another wicked problem? And is this a political maneuver – it is believed that the Provost supports this issue but as John Silvester noted this is the provost negotiating.

Jeremy brought up working outside the system. Paul talked of student pressures - frustration re the north campus – and then recommended we “don't get hung up on his plan” that “we can make progress without rising to the level of the now three wicked

problems - who and what would our potential leaderships role-be - what initiatives can we now take on research, education - and then work out how it fits in strategic plans”

Darren suggested we can pursue multiple pathways - inside and out.

Could we make friendly board members aware of whatever we may come up with - something we could bring to them - responding to some proposal - something already “cooking” on campus.

Can it be shown that USC competitiveness will be effected if we are behind the aggressive goals of the entire state? Do faculty and students want to be a part of this retrogressive attitude?

It was talked that this might be a right strategy comparing us with other institutions. Will it affect recruiting – once it were shown that not dealing with sustainability would be impacting competitions the board would “get on board.” But how do you document this? Prove the negative – and then we heard that even now in the present petroleum class they actually still have climate deniers teaching!

Kelly mentioned a survey of 200 students - general - re sustainability questions which is being crunched now. (We might want to check to see what is showing up in the enclosed document of the research survey being done by the Sustainability Steering SubCommittee. Don’t want to be duplicating)

Paul will ask administrators re if there is any effect on this issue - Paul will ask Katherine.

Dan mentioned Mary Nichols of California Air Resources Dan re energy issues - how do we align with the themes the city wants - they need metrics - and help to build their initiatives - can we hook up with them?

Raphael Bostic summarized where he thought we were:

- 1 - will university carry the flag
- 2 - what specific policies can we now do on the ground
- 3 - how do we engage with the broader community
- 4 - are there risks that might motivate action
- 5 – how to hook up with outside power sources

It was observed that the Number 2 issue is being dealt with by larger Sustainability Steering Committee with their proposals - and there is some money being put aside for these – see the enclosed for more specifics.

John pointed out some realities of the Senate including some not really knowing about all that is going on re sustainability and that there is a significant turn over so those who were advocates last year may not be serving this year. With lots of other issues it will be our responsibility to recommend and this will go to the executive board who will decide

on how it will be presented to the whole senate. John said we need to Identify the critical issues the Senate needs to be informed about and this could be a role we serve.

As an example: Do we want to endorse Antonio's strategy? This could be effective.

Paul mentioned we could also support the overall plan - like the 20/20 proposal

Paul in pursuing the conversation about who is the audience for our activities – spoke to the cities are one – and Dan reiterated that Matt Peterson - deputy mayor and head of sustainability initiative - a USC grad - from Public Administration - he could come to talk to us - how we might partner.

It was mentioned that our role could be reviewing what those subcommittees are doing – from the Sustainability Steering Committee.

So if the Energy subcommittee makes a presentation we too can have additional input on the issues -

Kelly said to look at what we are doing – like the screens on campus re energy -

And it was mentioned that the Athletic Department is taking the lead on the issues.

What are our area of strength - not the underline sciences- we are in policy - engineering, public policy, communications.

What would our community offer as a pressing initiative?

What could go beyond the city to all urban areas.

What issues would be helping the urban environment.

Like a possible association with TreePeople – their work is supported by the city but still needs for more implementation possibilities.

The city could be a willing partner.

Could we help those kind of proposals build to scale?

Kelly said she would help with list of present initiatives.

**Action Items:**

1. Invite Antonio Bento to share his proposal for sustainability education at the October 3 monthly meeting. (Darren)
2. Contact Halli and her boss to coordinate a meeting to inform this committee on the activities of the Office of Sustainability and the Sustainability Steering Committee. (Darren)
3. Draft a list of sustainability initiatives that have been adopted by peer institutions and/or local/state agencies. (Kelly and Darren)
4. Contact Katherine Herrington (Vice President of Admissions and Planning) to gain insight on student applications and interest in sustainability. (Paul)
5. Set up Dropbox account for committee members to share files and resources. (Darren)