

**Academic Senate Sustainability Committee
Monthly Meeting Notes from December 6, 2017**

Note taker: Lessa Grunenfelder

Present:

Darren Ruddell, Erin Moore, Paula Cannon, Paul Adler, James Steele, Ann Close, Josh Goldstein, Karla Heidelberg, Esther Margulies, Lessa Grunenfelder

Visitors:

Ken Nealon (Director of Wrigley Institute)
Philine Qian (ECORE)

Phone conference: Jeremy Kagan, Kate Svyatets, Dan Mazmanian, Antonio Bento

Prior business

November minutes approved

New business

Update on Dean's task force and USC Solutions Lab (Antonio)

Proposal for USC Solutions Lab including campus-wide center and structure for education programs is moving forward. Dean from Price has made a commitment to back the proposal and help to share it with the rest of the deans on the sustainability task force. Amber Miller (Dornsife) and the dean of social sciences are putting together a new initiative on social sciences for sustainability which will strengthen the USC Solutions Lab proposal. Amber Miller is looking over the proposal and will designate someone as point person to interface with Antonio.

Dean Yortsos (Viterbi) emphasized his support and has identified a faculty member in engineering to further the proposal. Success with the proposal will require action from all parties on campus – the idea is that each school will contribute to the budget and the provost will match.

Education: many details remain to be worked out, but there appears to be support for a professional master's degree. Would provide a solid partnership between the schools on campus as well as a source of revenue.

Discussion

Paul – Currently the focus seems to be on Price, Dornsife and Viterbi – are other schools involved? Keck, Architecture, etc.

Antonio – The hope is to involve more, cinema and Annenberg are targets as well. We need to develop guidelines and infrastructure to reach out to colleagues across campus to facilitate the formation of inclusive interdisciplinary groups. Plan is to have Solutions Lab report to a council of deans with a leading dean. Plans include bringing in the deans of Marshall and Keck. Communication and dissemination of information is critical. We need a strategy for next semester to bring additional deans on board.

Jeremy – how many deans do we want to bring on board?

Antonio – The deans themselves need to decide on a model and strategy. It will be up to them to decide who will participate and provide commitments of faculty teaching time, etc. Might be best to have a few deans involved in management of the operation and then enlist others to become fellows

Jeremy – Deans are very busy – which programs would see involvement as an advantage to their school?

Antonio – Dornsife, Viterbi and Price are the key players and are on board. The next tier would be Marshall and Keck.

Jeremy – will the schools be putting their own money into this, or will the administration kick in?

Antonio – contributions from the deans and matching funds from the provost. Each school will benefit but the provost will provide seed funding.

Paul – a council of deans makes sense, as does the commitment of school resources. Do we have a feel for where Dornsife stands on bigger picture issues of sustainability?

Ken – We need someone from Dornsife to step in to be point person. There is huge interest from Wrigley, and the potential for effective multidisciplinary groups. The Wrigley institute, on the island, plans to lead by example by becoming fully sustainable in the next few years and testing scale-up ideas. The institute will be a major part of the operation, but a point person has not yet been identified as far as a larger effort at the college.

Kate – With respect to the professional master's degree – can we open this to online education? Attract students globally.

Antonio – proposal is for the program to be mostly an online degree, which will be the most competitive in the market place. Global masters of public policy has a similar format. Online education with weeklong face to face residencies.

Darren will circulate Solutions Lab proposal – Antonio requests feedback to incorporate broader ideas. Committee is asked to provide edits and suggestions.

Environmental Policy Seminar (Jeremy)

Bill McKibbin has been invited – will hopefully respond in the next couple of days. Hoping to schedule a seminar to be held between January and May.

Discussion

Darren – are we aiming for a monthly speaker? One to two per semester?

Antonio – It depends on who takes the lead and is willing to organize. Ann is willing to aid in co-sponsoring with Wrigley as well as student groups. Goal is to have organization of speakers be a shared effort. Would be great to have a speaker once a month to bring everyone together.

Karla - Environmental studies is running a seminar series as well. We should develop a public calendar to list all events related to sustainability – set up google calendar.

*Think about who might be a high impact speaker – provide suggestions to Antonio.
Darren will speak with Mark about setting up a calendar.*

University Village (Jeremy)

We should talk about the UV in terms of several issues – all windows are sealed, requiring significant energy for heating and cooling. Seems to be a large embarrassment to the university – do we want to focus some of our energy on this issue? Not just to be critical but to find ways to enhance sustainability at the village through proposals.

Discussion

Paul – we face institutional bias and it is not obvious how to turn this into a win for sustainability. USC is issuing its first annual sustainability report – cover is photograph of north campus. Masters student in green technology is interested in an independent study environmental audit of university village. Do we think this is feasible and/or a good idea? Might be nice to have an objective document.

Esther – we should also look at what we could have done – the potential. There are metrics and benchmarks for this and faculty willing to assist.

Josh – transparency is important. We should also look to the future – what is the next building to target? How can we do better in the future?

Paula – they are planning a new hospital on the health science campus which will be a huge project. This is also a topic worth bringing up at the full academic senate. Last year the impact of UV on the local community was discussed, incorporating sustainability in our building projects would be a good topic to follow up with.

Paul – perhaps we should have a preliminary meeting with facilities before taking this to the senate.

Dan – is the data available? Might be better to do a comparative study of the village vs other buildings on campus to show our current trajectory.

Darren – this connects to the work that Kyle has been doing. Kyle has funding for sensors to track thermal comfort – we can see what buildings are using more or less energy. Could be a good way to track how the village is doing comparatively.

Jeremy – we should also compare off campus to other buildings in Los Angeles. If there are other buildings in the city that are also new but may be more sustainable that would be useful information.

Darren - Environmental audit could be included in the sustainability forum next spring as a showcase event

Darren and Paula will follow up with FMS and the academic senate, and discuss this topic with Kyle

Feedback from Dean Fliegel (Darren)

Document circulated with several good ideas – do we want to pursue some of these independently, group some into the Solutions Lab, etc.?

Discussion

Josh – we should get this to the student groups to see which ideas excite them.

Paul – how do we move ahead at the undergraduate level? Antonio has been focused at the graduate and faculty level, we have not thought as much about education at the UG level. There are several existing programs and organizations, but efforts are currently underpowered and siloed.

James – the GE courses are a rich area to target – not to add a new GE but to reconfigure existing curriculum

Paul – Fliegel sees GEs as not as impactful as other potential solutions.

Darren – the office of sustainability did an audit to come up with courses associated with sustainability, available on the web (appears to be incomplete)

Philine – E-Core and student circles have also discussed the GE issue. Rather than adding a new category, there are GEs that can be fulfilled by specific courses. We could put a sustainability requirement that could be fulfilled by one of many courses which also count toward degree requirements. Could be an efficient way to encourage this – similar to how diversity requirement works now.

Darren – we don't have to abandon the idea of a GE to explore some of Fliegel's other recommendations and options. Some would be simple to implement and would not require additional staff hiring.

Antonio – The budget of the university and the way the colleges are structured do not lead to effective collaboration. For undergraduate education the college is the place to focus, specifically the environmental studies program.

Karla – Environmental studies asked for a staff person to help run programs and increase academic opportunities. Worked with HR to post a job add for a program specialist, but then funding was pulled. The proposal was strong, but was thrown out as a result of bookkeeping issues. There are no resources currently.

Antonio – There are no active education proposals for Sustainability 2020, the Sustainability Solutions Lab will be the first. A good ask would be to give environmental studies more support to grow the degree and allow for additional strategic planning.

Paul – that is a good idea to explore – though it might be outside the scope of what is intended for the 2020 funds.

Karla – there is a growing partnership between environmental studies and Wrigley that have produced real accomplishments – but this needs to be expanded to include other professional schools. This has huge potential. Where are we with staffing in the sustainability office?

Paul – they should have someone in place in January. Interviews are ongoing.

Add language to prioritize integration and connectivity across schools and students to Solutions Lab document. Could include reference to a staff hire.

Sustainability Program in Earth Sciences update (Karla)

Will be ready for discussion in January

Department Recycling (Erin)

Anthropology worked with student orgs on a grassroots effort to reduce use of Styrofoam. Working on the low end department by department to influence ordering.

Discussion

Paul – there are many people on the administrative side that are eager to change ordering of materials and supplies and push for recycling. The Green Office program can help. We can reach out to those people.

Darren – in the 7 domains of Sustainability 2020 one is procurement. A procurement assessment was completed. Some ordering is centralized and some occurs at the department level. Working with vendors toward greening of office supplies.

Philine – E-core has worked on procurement as well. Committee can send issues to Philine to bring up at an upcoming meeting.

Erin – suggests everyone goes back to their own department and discuss changing purchasing habits. We also still lack bins for recycling.

Darren – new waste diversion contract is rolling out – new bins are coming.

USG Update (Philine)

Three big successes within USG this semester

- Sustainability survey of students living in university housing – opinions on topics like composting. Received over 1,400 responses. Data will be analyzed and shared in the spring
- Compost – Parkside apartments have had access to compost bins. That has been expanded to the other buildings in Parkside (IRC and A&H), bins will be added over winter break.
- Auxiliary services (Philip Turner) – dining facilities provide receipts for every purchase. Hospitality can make no receipt an option for USCCard and credit card purchases, will be beta testing in January in select locations.

Green engagement fund has funded seven projects (one of which is Kyle's). Philine will distribute proposals so the committee can see what is underway.

Wellness affairs is developing a 12 week curriculum for new students that incorporates sustainability. Rough syllabus has been generated and development is ongoing to put the program into place next fall. Will take the form of a required one unit course that will cover key issues for students as they transition to college. Philine would love input on curriculum development for this primer on sustainability – will share current draft.

New issues for next semester include procurement and dining hall food waste campaign. ECore may be interested in taking on UV as a campaign, but would need information about what the issues to target are and what we are asking the university to do in response.

Meeting/Semester Wrap-up

Darren will send email regarding spring schedule

Sustainability forum will take place in spring – send ideas of what that event should look like

Faculty Recruitment for Sustainable Solutions Lab (Antonio)

Several of us should communicate with department chairs and ask for 5 minutes to present on the purpose of the lab as a starting point to recruit faculty to assist in sustainability efforts. Funds are available for faculty-led lunches around specific thematic areas. Organic way to form teams.

Antonio will send Darren instructions on how to follow up for distribution to the committee

Action Items:

1. Read the Sustainable Solutions Lab document (attached) and provide thoughtful/critical/etc feedback to Antonio (**All**)
2. Create public Sustainability calendar to organize events and help improve planning, coordination, and communication efforts (**Darren**)
3. Pass along suggestions to propose a high-impact speaker for the Environmental Policy Seminar Series – send recommendations to Antonio (**All**)
4. Conduct environmental audit of University Village and/or USC campus. Reach out to FMS and others to present and discuss at a Senate meeting (**Paula and Darren**)
5. Pursue options to integrate sustainability into USC GE program (**James**)
6. Add language to the Sustainable Solutions Lab document that articulates goals and priorities to better integrate and connect sustainability efforts across campus (**Antonio**)
7. USC procurement efforts and Green Office Certification – meet with USC procurement contact and report back to group in Jan meeting (**Philine and Erin**)
8. Sustainability Forum event for Spring 2018 – brainstorm event ideas and send them to Darren for review and discussion at Jan meeting (**All**)
9. Distribute draft proposal of First Year Course (**Philine**)
10. Sustainability Solutions Lab – Faculty Recruitment – share new initiative to create and launch the Solutions Lab at departmental meetings and other outreach efforts to bring in scholars to the Solutions Lab (**All**)