Minutes | Research and Development

DATE: 22, FEBRUARY, 2019 | TIME: 02:30 PM – 5:00 PM EST | LOCATION: EMPIRE COMMONS & CONFERENCE ROOM

ATTENDANCE:

- Present: Mary Ellen Mallia (Director of Sustainability), Todd Foreman (VP of Finance and Administration), Shao Lin (Professor in Public Health, specialized in Climate Change and Health Effects), Wendy Turner (Professor of Biology, specializes in Ecosystems & Ecology, evolution and transmission of environmentally transmitted and vector borne diseases), Mathias Vuille (Professor in Atmospheric and Environmental Science specializes in Climate Change, reduction of glaciers in South America), Melissa Samuels (Director of Alumni Programs), Oliver Elison Tim (Professor in Atmospheric and Environmental Science, specializing in Climate Change regional impacts)

- Absent: Satyendra Kumar (AVP in Research) Zina Lawrence (Director of Graduate Student Services, School of Business, Vice Chair of University Senate), Fardin Sanai (VP of University Development), Dan Winsome Foderingham (Development, Major Gifts Officer), Terri Scalise-Roller (Development, Director of Corporate Engagement, Chris Thorncroft (Director of Atmospheric Science Research Center), Matt Grattan (Director of Community and Economic Engagement), Debernee Privott (CAS, Assistant Dean for Public Engagement), Lindsay Van Berkom (Dewey Library, Director of Scholars Archive), Rick (CFO, University at Albany Foundation), Loida Vera Cruz (Associate Director, Alumni Programs)

MEETING OVERVIEW:

Welcome & Introductions:

The working group was lead by: Mary Ellen Mallia, Director of Sustainability and facilitated by student workers: Nat Walts, Jason Espinosa and Kyle Lininger. Group members introduced themselves and the goals and agenda for the meeting were reviewed.
Meeting #1 Goals:
- Gain a clear understanding of current state
- Understand operational definitions of planning terms
- Develop list of opportunities for the strategic plan
- Begin shaping list of prioritized opportunities into draft, high-level goals and supporting strategies
- Provide an overview of the next steps for the planning process

Meeting #1 Agenda:
- Welcome
- Review goals, agenda, and core values
- Introductions
- Review of focus area and current state
- Develop and prioritize draft goals
- Summary
- Next Steps
- Strengths and Improvables
Core Values:
- Full Participation
- Assume Good Intent
- Collective Wisdom
- Shared Responsibility
- Radical Transparency
- Have Fun!

**Review of Current State: Baseline Information**

A document providing an overview of research activity and our STARS rating was provided. We reviewed how the university ranked on the research and investment categories on STARS. There isn’t an explicit assessment for development or alumni efforts. We score well on range of research but could improve by providing more support and creating an open access policy. This policy is to be created by 2020 which was mandated by SUNY. We could include a small grant or incentive program for sustainability research. We don’t receive any points for incorporating sustainability into our investment decisions. This item is available on the Research & Development One-Drive folder.
**Activity 1: Worksheet Questions**

In this activity, each member of the group answer questions of what we could be doing, what we can improve on, what should we stop doing, what makes us unique and what we could do if we had a magic wand. Items that fell outside of the Research & Development working group’s scope were put in a “bike rack” to be communicated to the appropriate working group as a strategy.

**What Else We Could Be Doing?**

1. We should develop a no idling policy for the diesel vehicles used on the podium. (Bike Rack)
2. We also could make interdisciplinary graduate programs that brings in environmental, public health, biology and other majors to exchange knowledge and research.
3. We need better communication between faculty and students to improve with alumni donations and research topics, faculty should adopt some student ideas and broaden their research.
4. Create a sustainability fellowship, integrate interdisciplinary research.
5. Create an award or recognition for sustainability research.
6. We need more institutional funding to serve as seed funding for faculty/student research.
7. Fundraising that supports research in sustainability.
8. Set up fellowship to award students who would like to work in the field of climate change.
9. Add interdisciplinary research into evaluation criteria for faculty promotion/tenure.
10. Award faculty/student who have good publication and grant record each year.
11. Improve a bottom-top and top-bottom communication about research trends and interests.
### WHAT WE COULD BE DOING BETTER?

1. We could do a better job of marketing the research that we do, we should brag about all research especially within sustainability. We need to promote multidisciplinary research.
2. We should create a network between many universities to share knowledge and data.
3. We need to offer tenured positions to sustainability researchers. We need to work to market research on campus to student, and have professors work to reach out to students for research opportunities.
4. We should be promoting global research, and health research (and animals).
5. We should promote international professors and researchers to help students get a global perspective on sustainability and health.
6. Promoting co-curricular research
7. Expediting open access policy
8. Use university website or social media to make research findings visible or publicized
9. Award research collaboration or global research
10. Financial incentive to promote research productivity
11. Encourage faculty to step out of their traditional research “playground” and search for new interdisciplinary sustainability research projects

### WHAT WE SHOULD STOP DOING?

1. Decentralize the long term planning and major decisions on the environment and create a larger conversation on the topics.
2. Improve the conversation about climate and how the university deals with new policies and projects
3. We should ask “what do you think?” more.
4. Allow faculty and students to take part in sustainability research vision/plan development
5. Self evaluate and rebrand ourselves every 2 years
**WHAT WOULD WE DO WITH A MAGIC WAND?**

1. We would have a completely renewable energy run campus.
2. We would do ‘sellable’ research, market the discoveries for profit.
3. Programs of carbon offsets for faculty travel, try to balance out the travel and commute made by faculty. The price of these offsets are currently low. We could create our own sustainability offset program, to minimize campuses carbon footprint. (bike rack)
4. Also we would expand the research facilities to expand the number of possible projects on campus
5. Composting in the campus center, compostable silverware, complete renewable energy (bike rack)
6. Identify all faculty who have been working in this area
7. Develop a sustainability institute with faculty and a sustainability major
8. A national leader showcasing a green university
9. Take the greenest path although it may inconvenience many

**WHAT IN THIS FOCUS AREA COULD UALBANY BECOME AN EXPERT AT?**

1. State Government connection
2. Translate research into practice
3. Work with policy makers
4. Climate Change and Adaptation science
5. Weather data

**WHAT IS UALBANY POSITIONED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE REGION, STATE, NATION, WORLD?**

1. We are making movements towards connecting with government officials.
2. The university can improve how they utilize their findings more efficiently.
3. The Mesonet is an underused resource. The data already collected has a lot of potential for NYS.
4. NYS Department of Health
5. Linkage to Capitol/State Government

**ACTIVITY 2: REVIEW OF DRAFT GOALS**
The working group reviewed the following draft goals that had been previously created and provided feedback.

**BRAINSTORMING OF DRAFT GOALS**

1. We need to act to secure sustainability designated budget to fund sustainability research. An increase in funding and value in the tenure process could occur but investors need to know “for what?”

2. Start using FRAP for new programs, this might get people to start riskier work to get outside funding. Using FRAP as a stepping stone and as seed money, we can get the data to get outside funding. Seed money would be to strategize to create a fund that faculty can apply for in order to expand their research for new projects.

3. We need to expand our networking to obtain interdisciplinary grants for research.

4. The next steps could be to work on the connectivity between labs, who is sharing knowledge and working together?

5. The goal is to have researchers hit all three pillars to be a sustainability researcher, the school of public health is a common area for hitting all 3 pillars.

6. Info from other universities near us revealed a lot of conflicting answers on engaging with alumni and development offices with no clear method.

7. Students are interested in becoming a fair trade university, to ensure we are not purchasing from companies with mistreated and enslaved employees. Students are becoming more interested in how the university runs and what products they are purchasing, Sodexo and Barnes and Noble meet the requirements for the fair trade certification. This was put in the “bike rack” place for operations.

8. To encourage research through students and faculty some ideas are to give monetary incentives and or create a fellow programs to increase student involvement. Faculty also apply funding to student projects that encourage research, however it can’t be limited to only sustainability. Faculty can use

www.greeneru.com
the sustainability research (since it crosses over in many areas) as a way for Junior faculty to be promoted or tenure.

9. There is more of an opportunity to receive a grant if we have a multidisciplinary goal

10. There is no donor profile for sustainability in alumni offices and this goes for many universities.

11. The problem with funding and investing right now is that it is hard to get funding and investments because nobody really knows what they are supporting, we need to make it more clear on exact plan, outcome and goals.

NEW IDEAS:

1. Create interdisciplinary graduate program because sustainability is interdisciplinary and our goals cover many aspects of knowledge and life. We need more of a broad range of faculty to work towards sustainable research since so few faculty hit all three pillars of sustainability

2. Adopting an open access research policy is a task that should be relatively easily achievable.

3. There may be resistances to allocating funds for sustainability. We need a clear ‘why’ for investment commissions to understand.

4. We should say we want to practice the best economic and investment practices to promote the sustainable world.

5. We should strategize how to increase donor contributions and how to measure our success. The ‘Angel donor’ is a concept we apply to fund a program or idea.

6. We should be recognized leader in sustainability as a VISION but have a strategy to market ourselves as sustainable.

ACTIVITY 3: CREATE UPDATED GOALS

After brainstorming new ideas and reviewing existing goals, the group worked to create and organize new Sustainability goals for the campus. Goals were organized under five different areas.

**Vision**: *Inspirational: The desired state; big picture, inspirational framework for UAlbany*

- Embody UN Global Goals
● Minimize our contribution to the climate apocalypse
● Be a recognizable leader in sustainability
● Most vulnerable is most affected by Climate Change

**Goal:** Aspirational: *an aspirational description of what Albany would like to accomplish. It is intended to serve as a guide for choosing current and future courses of action/opportunities*

- Grow organized research in all areas of sustainability by 10%
- Increase research activity in sustainability
- Increase sustainability research opportunities in UAlbany
- Economic decisions aligned with sustainability principles
- Expand opportunities for environmental science research for students
- Diverse PI’s
- Investigate environmental justice issues
- Leverage engine of opportunity label and high diversity of campus into sustainability
- Research engine of Innovation and entrepreneurial solutions to sustainability (bike rack item from another group)
- Become an innovation lab, train community (bike rack item from another group)

**Strategy:** Directional focus: *a specific program or project that can be implemented to support the overall goal. It will be measurable, attainable, relevant and timely*

- Seed money for sustainability research
- Create and adopt investment policy that considers ESG principles while maximizing financial gain while meeting fiduciary responsibility
- Create revolving green funds from royalties to go back to sustainability research
- Interdisciplinary programs
- Carbon offset program for faculty travel
- Increase donor contributions to sustainability by $XX
- Market UAlbany as a sustainable campus
- Create opportunities for campus professors to network
- Landscape/campus grounds and buildings as research opportunity
- More visible forms of sustainability research on display
- Address campus perception through better PR (bike rack item from another group)

**Action:** Steps to take, *a breakdown of important steps that will support the strategies for each goal*

- Secure sustainability designated budget to fund research
- Develop programs or affinity groups or other outreach to alumni

www.greeneru.com
- Communicate/increase alumni donations for sustainability goals
- Increase diversity of PI’s
- Interdisciplinary afternoons
- Research coffeehour focused on interdisciplinary work based on topics or parts of the world

**Task:** *Granular action items to assign*

- Review/develop project for angel investor
- Adopt open access research policy

[Sticky notes on a wall with various strategies and actions related to sustainability goals and plans.]
**WRAP UP: STRENGTHS AND IMPROVABLES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRENGTHS AND IMPROVABLES FOR OVERALL SESSION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Timing and pacing was good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Core values clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Todd’s welcome was great</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Overview/high level look was informative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Need more time to review baseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Items presented seemed repetitive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSERT PICTURE OF CHARTING HERE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRENGTHS AND IMPROVABLES FOR WORKING GROUP SESSION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strengths:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Group participants represented a good mix of backgrounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Able to voice goals and pet projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Providing bulleted information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Improvable:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Need more food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Would like to have reconvened and heard a report out of from all groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Not as many people attended as indicated by the RSVP responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Split faculty up more evenly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Talk more about social goals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**REVIEW OF NEXT STEPS:**

At our second meeting, we will review and prioritize the goals from the first meeting. New goals may also be added. At the end of Meeting #2, goals will be solidified and we will begin working on developing and researching strategies to accomplish the goals.