

Sustainability Committee ~ DRAFT

Sustainability at the University of the Pacific

Background

Sustainability was established as United States' policy with the passage of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The Act states in part that it is the continuing policy of the Federal government:

to use all practicable means and measures, including financial and technical assistance, in a manner calculated to foster and promote the general welfare, to create and maintain conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony, and fulfill the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations of Americans. Sec. 101 [42 USC § 4331].

Sustainability became part of the Pacific ethos in 1970 when Holt-Atherton Special Collections in the University of the Pacific Library was designated the repository for the John Muir papers. John Muir (1838-1914) was a renowned California-based naturalist, explorer, and earth-scientist who brought an appreciation of the natural world to the national consciousness through several influential books and hundreds of articles. In 1989 the University established the John Muir Center to further support the study of John Muir and environmentalism.

In 2007 the University was honored to host a campus visit by Dr. Gro Brundtland, United Nations Special Envoy on Climate Change and former Prime Minister of Norway. Dr. Brundtland chaired the United Nations' World Commission on Environment and Development. The following widely quoted definition of sustainable development was included in the commission's 1987 report, commonly known as the Brundtland Report.

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

As part of the ongoing comprehensive University planning process, the Board of Regents adopted ***Pacific Rising 2008-2015*** on April 27, 2007. This document included the following statement of aspiration:

While never wavering from our traditions and core values, we know that aspirations help us articulate our vision for the future . . . We aspire to be more fully engaged with the changing world and will broaden and strengthen connections to Pacific. We will advance sustainability through learning, practice and collaboration with local communities by considering our environmental, social and economic impact.

A sustainability advisory group began meeting regularly in the spring of 2007 under the direction of Rob Brodnick, Assistant Provost for Planning, Innovation & Institutional Assessment. Designed and built to meet LEED Silver standards, the Don and Karen DeRosa Center was dedicated in the fall of 2008. In January 2009, Carol Brodie, Pre-Award Manager, Research Administration and Compliance in the Office of Sponsored Programs, was appointed University Sustainability Coordinator [one quarter-time]. Carol is conducting a Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) inventory and supervising Christopher Brown, a student intern, who is compiling a greenhouse gas inventory for the Stockton campus. In August the University contracted with Sightlines to conduct annual evaluations of our carbon footprint, waste production, water consumption, and green building practices.

In May, 2009 President DeRosa established the University Sustainability Committee as an administration committee reporting to the President. The committee is compiling a list of existing sustainability practices and has recommended that the University operationalize the statement of aspiration regarding sustainability. As a first step, the committee will recommend to President Eibeck that the University adopt a statement of commitment and policy supporting sustainability. Before making a final recommendation, the members of the committee are seeking input from the campus community regarding the following DRAFT wording.

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Commitment

Responsible leadership requires individuals and organizations to carefully evaluate short and long-term **social, economic, and environmental** impacts of decisions before acting. The University of the Pacific is committed to creating a campus culture that advances this approach for a sustainable future among all members of the Pacific community. The University will demonstrate this commitment through the use of sustainable practices in the conduct of all operations, as well as sustainability-focused educational programs, research, and outreach with our local communities.

To ensure the highest quality of life for ourselves and future generations, the University seeks to implement proactive innovative pedagogical and operational approaches to sustainability and to develop a culture within the Pacific community and beyond which embraces sustainability concepts and an understanding of the complex and often competing relationships between the economic, social justice, and environmental components of sustainable decision-making. The University will meet its commitment and these goals by:

Teaching, Learning, and Outreach

- Facilitating the development of innovative, multidisciplinary curricular and co-curricular programs to ensure that all Pacific graduates understand the interconnected nature of the social, economic, and environmental components of sustainability and sustainable decision-making.
- Encouraging students and faculty to advance our understanding of sustainability through scholarly activity and artistic expression by providing encouragement, financial support and recognition.
- Engaging the Pacific community and its external constituencies through educational programming and scholarly activities that address sustainability practices and concerns at the local, regional, state, national, and global levels.

Stewardship and University Operations

- Supporting a culture that embraces sustainability by providing the Pacific community with guidance, information, educational programs, and best-practice modeling.
- Using resources efficiently by employing cost-effective technologies and innovative approaches which reduce consumption.
- Reducing potential air, water and land pollution through effective waste management programs, reduced use, and appropriate disposal of non-recyclable hazardous and non-hazardous materials.
- Ensuring that the University is meeting its commitment to sustainability through annual assessment of its programs and practices using established goals and metrics.

Policy Statement

In support of Pacific's commitment to sustainability, all divisions of the University will use these practices and principles during strategic planning and development of programs, capital projects, and policies as well as ongoing day-to-day operations.