

Southwestern College Sustainability Council

April 25, 2011

Attending: Elise Blas, Rick Cowlshaw, Sarah Hallinan, Jean-Gabriel Jolivet, Allyson Moon, Sydnee Nelson, Kelcie Parrish, Sara Weinert, Steve Wilke, Trent Williams (phone).

Steve Wilke welcomed the committee, which had no absent members. Minutes from the previous council were approved.

Discussion of form and structure of council meeting: The council will meet twice per semester. The group will provide coordination for sustainability actions, communication of these efforts, reporting of sustainability efforts, affirmation and celebration, exploration of green initiatives, assignment of tasks. Minutes will go to the administrative council and president, as well as anyone who would like to be included. Trent suggested an Outlook group that would help in coordination of communications. Steve will set this up.

Rick reported on the “new” sustainability minor. This is a revised minor that expands on an environmental studies minor established by Charlie Hunter and Larry Wilgers. The minor is intended to move sustainability at SC beyond the Green Team and into the curriculum. The Sustainability and Environmental Studies minor is intended to get students to think about sustainability beyond recycling and energy, and about the philosophy of sustainability. This will allow them to think about sustainability in their own lives, and consequently, in society. “We are a great school to make that happen—we have the students here who want to make that happen,” Rick said. Faculty from several departments will be teaching in this minor. Rick sees the college as being slightly stuck in recycling, and the minor moves it forward. This department will now be a stand-alone section in the catalog. Jason Speegle will teach Introduction to Sustainability I and II, which has been informally taught as part of the Green Team. Practicum in Sustainability is the third new class and also will be taught by Jason. Steve pointed out that this minor will be completely free-standing among the divisions, with classes taught by faculty in business, natural sciences, English, and other areas. The college will market this minor to all prospects, not just to natural science majors. Rick added this minor is an opportunity for faculty to interact in an interdisciplinary way.

Climate Action Team Report: This team includes Steve Wilke, Rick Cowlshaw, Jeff Gile, and Jason Speegle. The group compiles reports on usage of resources.

Affirmation of Sustainability Efforts: Sarah reported the chapel team did a coat drive and donated the coats during the fall. At the end of year, outreach teams will be assisting her in the donation drives. MANistry did a trail clean-up. Jason Speegle has been putting together a green roof for Wallingford. Alex Gottlob will donate plants. Allyson reported an adjunct faculty member from Wichita is sponsor of the EarthSaver club in Wichita, which braids old t-shirts into rugs. We will be devising a “thank you” artifact that will go to people whose efforts make this report.

Affirmation of sustainability statement: The statement will be refined and talked about during the next meeting. Rick suggested the statement needs to also address the spiritual and faith-based aspects of sustainability. This gets us onto a level different from the level that deals solely with "stuff." Kelcie also suggested we work with Sodexo on food issues that deal with sustainability. Steve suggested between now and September members give thought to the statement and that any thoughts be sent to the group for inclusion.

Meetings next year will be Sept. 26 and Nov. 28, 11 a.m. in Mossman 102.

The meeting adjourned at noon.