

Southwestern College Sustainability Council 11/29/11

Members present: Steve Wilke, Richard Cowlshaw, Elise Blas, Allyson Moon, Kelcie Parrish, Sydnee Nelson, Sara Weinert, Trenton Williams (by phone)

Rick explained the work that has been done on defining “sustainable lifestyle.” This definition acknowledges that sustainability is an action that affects the future, that creation care is part of our spiritual heritage, and that well-informed people will choose sustainability. Minor changes were made in the proposed wording. The group discussed whether “Creation Care” should be emphasized more strongly. At this point, we will leave the wording as amended. Rick moved we accept the definition and Elise seconded the motion. The motion carried.

At Southwestern College, sustainability is founded in the understanding that today’s actions shape tomorrow’s lifestyles. We realize that a sustainable future requires rethinking our relationship with the Earth—economically, ecologically, and spiritually. We believe that if persons are provided the knowledge and the means, they will choose to create and conserve rather than consume and waste, securing a sustainable environment for future generations.

Updates

Single stream recycling: Kelcie reported the process is working well, with the only problem being that we are dependent on another group to pick up the recycling and the recycling shed sometimes fills. The amount of materials recycled has gone up significantly. We will be measuring recycling vs. waste next semester. Professional Studies will be starting single-stream recycling as soon as the bin is in place.

Energy use: Sydnee reported we still have a couple of dorms whose energy meters are not working. Jason is working hard to get these fixed so that we can have dorm energy wars.

Wellness efforts: PS will be meeting next week to discuss what will be established.

Water waste: Elise reported they have met and have a plan, but nothing definite has been established yet. Steve reported Jeff Gile and Larry Schuster have received a list of “water wise plantings” from K-State Extension service. They will be looking at places where they can use river rocks to replace plants that need to be watered.

Personal engagement with behavioral change: Sarah and Steve have been working on this issue. Duke University sends out to employees a personal carbon footprint checklist, and Steve and Sarah will be working on this kind of survey to be completed by spring.

Paper use update: We are signed up for a pilot program through Staples. By the end of this month, Elise will be receiving information about the program. Staples selected us to try out a new product, a paper

that is treeless in origin. We have reduced our paper usage by almost a million copies in the last four years. This is a 47% drop.

Communicating green achievements: 1. Beloit College has a very nice sustainability map, with a map on one side and descriptions of the sustainability efforts on the opposite side. Steve is working with three freshman members of the Green Team to develop the descriptions for a similar Southwestern College map. 2. Council members were encouraged to send green tips to Sara for inclusion in the Jinx Tale.

New Business

219 pounds of old microfilm was recycled from the library. These are materials that are available through the database.

The Climate Action Plan will be due Jan. 15. The plan-building team (Jason Speegle, Jeff Gile, Steve, Rick) have met and are working on the report. Energy usage in this report went down 1 percent. Natural gas usage also went down. Water use was up.

Steve is working on a campus sustainability council page. This would include the climate action plan, minutes of these meetings, the green map, links to AASHE and other resources.

Dates for next semester's meetings: Feb. 27, April 23.

Minutes submitted by Sara Weinert