UF Sustainability Committee Meeting

11/09/2017

12:30pm

Reitz Union 2340

Attendance:

John Duncan

Mark Ronson

Maya Patel

Ernesto Escoto

Dustin Stephany

Chris Martinez

Leah Dosal

Ravish Paul

Madison Smith

Leslie Thiele

Phone:

Liz Storn

Ann Lindell

Amy Stein

1. Campus Recycled Goods Standards Discussion
   1. Dustin Stephany - UF has partnered with Interface, a carpet manufacturer for carpet recycling, they have changed their policy to no longer accept broadloom carpet, which UF has much to dispose of
      1. Interface is no longer accepting broadloom because the customer that was purchasing it from them is no longer doing so
      2. UF is seeking to find a sustainable way of disposing it
      3. One company offers to incinerate the carpet; the question is whether or not this is sustainable/acceptable to campus
      4. A diversion solution will help UF to reach the state mandated 75% waste diversion rate
      5. John Duncan - are these the only two options (incineration/landfill)?
         1. Yes, unless UF will allocate additional funds to other carpet diversion possibilities
      6. Future carpet installations will no longer be broadloom; due to updated construction standards
   2. Liz Storn - all waste-to-energy options are more polluting than coal power plants, it is not a sustainable option (greenhouse gasses and particulate are both worse)
      1. How many tons of broadloom carpet does UF produce annually?
         1. Dustin Stephany - approximately 8 tons annually
         2. Liz Storn - in comparison to UF’s total waste output, that tonnage is negligible
      2. Offered to pull together a comparison of AASHE vs State of Florida standards for recycling standards and rate calculation
         1. Right now no counties are meeting the current state standard
         2. In the past, two numbers (State and AASHE standards) have been presented by UF
   3. Les Thiele - Are these topics open to potentially be given to student groups for consideration?
      1. Matt Williams - The recycling industry fluctuates very regularly and can quickly affect what items can or cannot be taken, making it difficult to have longer processes of studying options
   4. Matt Williams - Regarding the state standard, it is important for UF to decide if it will adhere to the state’s minimum requirements, or if campus will set higher standards
      1. Setting a precedent of waste-to-energy incineration could set a precedent for future campus use of the method, which would be a poor sustainability choice
      2. Perhaps a sub-committee could advise on these AASHE v SoFL standards and what is best for UF to consider
      3. A recommendation has been made to simply store items that do not off-gas or leach into water supplies until a future recycling option is possible
   5. Amy Stein - What factors are generally agreed upon at this time?
      1. Matt Williams - There are currently no agreed upon standards or factors. Prior to 2010 there was no state guideline in place. Since then, monitoring of recycling has improved, which accounts for many changes in recycling rates, more so than actual actions taken by campus
   6. John Duncan - perhaps we should consider focusing on adhering the AASHE standard, which campus uses to compare itself to other schools
      1. It is important for UF to present a consistent and unified number
      2. RE: Broadloom carpet disposal; What steps can the committee take?
         1. Matt Williams - There is no real need for the committee to issue an opinion on this topic, the conversation about the topic was a needed step
         2. Perhaps the committee can research and advise on campus-wide sustainability standards in a more general way; how are campuses reporting on sustainability topics?
            1. John Duncan requested volunteers for a committee to review this topic; no volunteers presented themselves

Matt Williams - if a perceived lack of expertise is an issue for those serving on the committee, consider that the situation is the same for other committees and that your opinion on these topics is valid

* + - * 1. Chris Martinez - recommended that we continue using the AASHE/SoFL numbers in the future
        2. Mark Robinson - Motion to advise Dustin Stephany to choose the landfill as the solution to his broadloom carpet question based on AASHE’s guidelines not accepting incineration as a sustainable solution

Second - Ernesto Escoto

No vote

* + - * 1. Discussion - Motion Idea: In decisions regarding sustainability topics, the committee recommends that the university should consider the AASHE recommendations or standards regarding those practices
      1. John Duncan - recommends the committee recommend the AASHE standard as a reference for questions of this nature in the future

1. AASHE STARS
   1. In past meetings the committee has discussed targeting specific topics where improvement is needed in the AASHE STARS ranking
   2. The Support for Sustainability Research topic seems to be the best for the committee to address
   3. John Duncan recommends that a sub-committee be formed to examine this topic and create goals for the committee to consider
      1. The sub-committee should determine which sub-topics can be addressed and what it would take to address them
      2. Additionally, the sub-committee should work to identify any existing opportunities that can be reported
         1. Chris Martinez pointed out that extant programs in his area may qualify and could possibly serve as a model for other groups
   4. Liz Storn reviewed the topic’s details from the AASHE standards
      1. In past years we have not pursued this topic
   5. Associate Provost Lindner has a program in development (Quest) to provide undergraduate research/experiential education opportunities for students
      1. This may be a possible source of input for the STARS topic considerations
      2. Les Thiele offered to contact Lindner to see if this would work, potentially even for a beta test of the program in the short-term
   6. The goal of the committee should be to have this portion of STARS worked out by the end of the committee’s year
   7. Matt Williams - It will be important to parse out the information for each subtopic in the STARS report; this might be a good delineation for the committee to consider
      1. Ann Lindell offered to explore the open-access program in the library
         1. Matt Williams - Sustainability topics and specific support (ex research guides) will be valuable here
      2. Ravi Srinivasan offered to examine the faculty research support programs extant on campus
      3. Les Thiele offered to take on the student research support sub-topic
      4. Chris Martinez suggested everyone familiarize themselves with the standards presented by the STARS programs; he will examine the standards and report back to the committee as a whole in December; he will also examine the interdisciplinary research support sub-topic
      5. Matt Williams offered to pull all of the data from other schools’ submissions into an excel file for the committee (Maya Patel will execute)
2. Paper Policy Recommendation
   1. Last year significant research was completed towards this goal
      1. The goal was to develop a recommendation on a recycled paper purchasing policy for campus
   2. The committee should revisit the previous work on this topic and begin to prepare a recommendation on a new policy
   3. AASHE STARS may be able to offer insight on the policies of other universities; attention should be paid to land grant universities with forestry programs similar to UF (per Chris Martinez)
      1. John Duncan will gather and evaluate this data
3. Discussion of parking issues at Law School and on campus - Amy Stein
   1. New electric car charging stations drawing complaints from students
   2. Group generally concurred that these spots should not pose an issue for students and others
4. Discussion of Law School Solar Launch Day - Amy Stein
   1. Will be looking into making it a yearly event to recognize the Law School’s sustainability efforts
5. Office of Sustainability Update
   1. AASHE has highlighted UF for our Neutral UF Carbon Offset Commuting program
   2. Sustainable Transportation Fair
      1. Our best yet
      2. Electrical vehicles and bikes were available for viewing and demonstration
      3. The fix-a-flat station was another highlight
      4. Hannah Ulloa would like to attend Grean Team meetings to discuss office resources in the future
   3. Solar report will be available to the committee in the coming weeks
6. Meeting adjourned at 2:12pm