Minutes

Sustainability Charter Committee Tuesday, September 10 12:30 PM - 2:00 PM

**Room 301, Communications Center**

In attendance: Biger, Matthieu; Conrads, David; Fravel, Michelle; Giannakouros, Stratis (Administrative Liaison); Hammerich, Jenna; Irish, Erin; Lindmark, Megan; Manders, Emily; Meisterheim, Melissa; Ponto, Laura; Rupe, Blake (ex-officio)

Absent: Blackman, Isabella; Krist, Julia

Excused: Sander, Heather

The meeting was called to order at 12:30. With no announcements, Matthieu reported that Heather Sander’s student has studied the effects of lighted windows on mortality of migratory birds and wishes to present at the next meeting, to which all present agreed. The results might support a request from this committee to FM to reduce lighted windows at night.

Stratis provided an update from the OSE. Three interns have been hired, who will examine pesticide use on campus, food waste in Dining Services, or work in communication and outreach for the office. UI Athletics is creating a sustainability committee with Tony Senio heading it, which will coordinate with OSE, targeting game day events and marketing. In the spring, efforts toward reintroducing prairie to Ashton Cross-Country fields will include athletes working with school children to construct “seed bombs” to establish plant species that would support diverse pollinator species.

Emily reported on the roundtable discussion held by President Harreld and Provost Fuentes with UISG, where the establishment of a sustainability core for General Education courses was discussed, as was ongoing negotiations to establish the P3. Auxiliary services that are already collaborating in sustainability efforts are Dining Services and Athletics; the hospital would be an important partnership to pursue.

Stratis distributed draft copies of the OSE’s Strategic Plan, inviting committee members to examine it and plan for a discussion at the next meeting.

Discussion turned to the P3, following up on the report from Rod Lehnertz on 8-27-19. Although this committee had hoped to have a voice during the establishment of the P3, it is probably too late; however, there will be committees that oversee the ongoing operations, both in the generation of energy and in the spending of the funds generated by the P3. A motion to request representation on those committees from President Harreld was made by Dave and seconded by Laura, and with no further discussion passed by unanimous assent. The co-chairs will draft such a letter.

The Climate Crisis Declaration, initiated by Emily Manders of this committee, has gained wide, national support with signatories including all Big Ten’s student governments and local support from Iowa City Schools and the City of Iowa City. The UI has not (yet) signed. It was proposed that the declaration be presented to Faculty Senate and Staff Council, and should they approve, be presented to President Harreld for consideration. Discussion of this will be on the agenda, along with participation in P3 oversight, for the meeting with Pres. Harreld, [Date ~~TBD~~ December 3, 2019].

Discussion turned to the possible establishment of a Sustainability General Education Core. It was agreed that this would be a heavy lift: already students have to take several such courses and with the requirements of most majors, additional requirements could make graduation in four years a challenge. On the other hand, a simple solution might be to have courses offered under the Sustainability Certificate umbrella count in existing categories. The establishment of a Sustainability Core would entail, among other steps, finding a suite of courses and dedicated instructors for them. A first step would be to find out what courses are currently offered and what typical enrollment is, plus capacity for increasing that. Jenni Stacy-Adams will be invited to the next meeting so that we can discuss what is offered and we can look for gaps.

The final item for discussion is the need for a dedicated website. At present the web presence of this committee is located through the OSE, or from the list of charter committees; more direct access was viewed as desirable. A link on the A-Z directory will be pursued by Matthieu.

The next meetings will be:

* + Tuesday, October 1 2-3:30pm – 301 CC
  + Tuesday, November 12 12:30-2pm – 301 CC
  + Tuesday, December 3 2-3:30pm – 301 CC

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Erin Irish, co-chair