

Minutes

Eastern Connecticut State University: Green Campus Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 17th at 9:00am Student Center 217.

Attendees

Lourdes Ardel – *Human Resources*

Alex Fazzino – *Institute for Sustainable Energy (ISE)*

Renee Keech – *Facilities Management & Planning*

Jenna Lafleur – *ISE*

Kathy Martel – *Bursar's Office*

Laura Miller – *ISE*

Dr. Nathan – *Environmental Earth Science*

Lynn Stoddard – *ISE*

Norma Vivar – *ISE*

1. Welcome and introductions
2. General Updates: Lynn announced that President Nùñez has joined the steering committee for Second Nature, a nonprofit organization focused around sustainability in higher education. The president of Second Nature invited President Nùñez to join the committee of 12-15 university presidents from across the nation. President Nùñez will soon be posting an editorial on the continued green leadership of higher education in spite of the reluctance of the federal administration. Lynn also announced that the ISE has hired 3 new interns.
3. Green House Gas Calculator Submission Update: In 2007, Eastern signed Second Nature's American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment, pledging to make Eastern carbon neutral by the year 2050. As part of the pledge, the nearly 600 participating campuses submit a regular inventory to track of their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Submission used to be once every few years, but is now required to be updated annually. The data collection for Eastern's current GHG inventory is incomplete, but Facilities and the ISE are working together to complete the data.
Laura presented a PowerPoint summary of Eastern's GHG emissions for the fiscal year 2014 and 2016. She can send out the PowerPoint to anyone interested in viewing it in detail. Eastern's building energy and fuel use was increased when the FAIC came online in 2015. Our overall building fuel oil use is down about 60% due to a switch to using other fuels, like propane. Eastern's diesel fuel pump use more than doubled since 2014, but we haven't confirmed how much of that use was by Eastern fleet vehicles, and how much is by non-Eastern vehicles. Vehicles use a fob to activate the fuel pump so that the appropriate institution can be billed; this could be a starting place to identify which vehicles consumed what quantities of fuel. Another potential resource is a spreadsheet started by a previous ISE intern, Kevin, to track Eastern fleet vehicle fuel use by vehicle using their Vehicle Identification Numbers. The report also looks at student and staff commuter miles, cogeneration from the fuel cell, electricity, solid waste, and carbon sequestration through the arboretum.

4. Waste/Recycling Updates - Recycling education needs: ISE interns will perform waste audits once a week throughout the summer. Renee reported that we have almost reduced our waste service contract by half thanks to the data gathered by the waste audits. We could save another \$50,000 in reducing the frequency of dumpster pickups because currently most dumpsters are half-full at best when they are emptied.

- Renee observed that the Burnap and Crandall recycling dumpsters were very contaminated with trash. Zac will help investigate the recycling dumpster contamination levels per building for next month's meeting. The committee discussed more ways to educate students on proper recycling habits, with ideas like promotional emails and placing recycling posters within the entryways of residence halls. Lynn suggested resuming reusing white food buckets from Hurley for students to use in their dorm rooms, but Renee noted Hurley doesn't produce enough buckets for the 1,000+ rooms. Renee said that although there isn't currently room in the budget to purchase a recycling bin for every dorm room, recycling bins are on the list of things that resident students should bring with them to campus.

- A lot of trash was produced during Move-Out, and the committee discussed ways to reduce trash and increase donations. Jenna suggested that email alone was not the strongest promotional tool, reflecting that students don't always read their email. One idea was to gather non-Eastern volunteers, like students from the adjacent high schools, to help collect reusable items at Move-Out. Another suggestion was to have a collector truck on-site to have a distinct visual that encourages donating. Laura is going to meet with Housing to discuss Move-Out and other opportunities for sustainable collaboration. One possibility could be to appoint one of the new ISE interns as a Housing Ambassador to assist them in green initiatives. Lourdes suggested having an ISE intern research how other universities handle Move-Out and seek out best practices. Norma suggested the creation of a 'green czar', a voluntary position that students could perform for their residence hall in exchange for priority points. The czar could encourage recycling and other sustainable behaviors to the other students in their dorms, similar to how RAs host informative sessions and regularly check in with the students on their floor.

- President email: Around Earth Day, President Núñez sent out a campus-wide email highlighting Eastern's sustainability initiatives, particularly the new food recovery program.
- Video
- Signage
- SOAR program follow-up: Laura said that SOAR counselors will be trained in recycling and Eastern's green culture. The counselors will be connected to the recycling videos ISE's social media.

5. Food Waste Updates:

- Share information from Quantum Bio power tour: A small group from Eastern toured Quantum Biopower in Southington, CT on May 10. Eastern has started diverting food waste from Hurley to Quantum to be converted into biofuel. The tour was timed so the group could witness the first delivery of Eastern's waste to the facilities. Quantum has a depackager, but they were pleased with how clean Eastern's food waste was. Jeff Kwolek of Dining Services trained Hurley's chefs to separate their scraps into clear buckets prior to storing them in the compactor. Lynn noted the benefits of Jeff's efforts, saying he could present his training methods to other institutions. Eastern's food waste is not picked up on a scheduled routine; rather, pick-up is based on a meter that tracks when our compactor is full. Diverting food waste to Quantum is cheaper than just leaving it in the trash. Currently we only send pre-consumer

food waste to Quantum Biopower, but the Center for EcoTechnology (CET) could help provide education and training when we do eventually try to add post-consumer waste.

-Another tour to Quantum will be scheduled for the CT Alliance for Campus Sustainability, to which GCC members will be welcome to join.

6. Upcoming events:

- June 2nd Campus Tour with Windham Tech 8:00am – 11:30am: ISE's Laurel Kohl and Facilities' Renee Keech will lead Windham Tech freshman on a tour of Eastern's sustainability and HVAC highlights, featuring the Science Building, the FAIC, the fuel cell, and High Rise's geothermal installation. Ed Figiela will also give a presentation on energy management.

- June 6th 1:30pm Webinar: Laura will help present on the insights gained during the Community Resilience Building Workshop hosted by Eastern in March in partnership with Second Nature, the Town of Windham, and The Nature Conservancy.

Next meeting: Wed. 6/14, 9am in Student Center 217. Laura will coordinate the summer meetings over email. For now, meetings are the 2nd-3rd Wednesday of the month at 9am; we will seek more input from GCC members on whether to keep or change this schedule. We can alter the time for the fall semester to best suit everyone's availability.

For more information contact Laura Miller at MillerLau@easternct.edu