

## Minutes

### **Eastern Connecticut State University: Green Campus Committee Meeting**

**Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am Student Center 217.**

1. Welcome and introductions – This is our first meeting since February because the March meeting was cancelled due to a snow day. Laura is organizing a tour of Quantum Biopower for the second week of May, since the first tour planned in March was cancelled. Those interested in attending should RSVP to millerlau@easternct.edu. Laura also checked in with Housing and confirmed that they have taken charge of this year's Move-Out waste collection.
  
2. Food Updates: Eastern has started a trial-run of sending pre-consumer food waste to Quantum Biopower, an anaerobic digestion facility in Southington. Willi-Waste gave Eastern a compactor to hold food waste between pick-ups. So far, 10-15 five-gallon buckets' worth of waste has been collected from Hurley per day. Moving forward, we could get a deodorizer for the compactor. The next potential step would be to collect Hurley's post-consumer food waste.
  - Disposable dishes: Eastern currently uses compostable disposable dishes. These dishes cost more, aren't bio-digestible, and still go in the trash just as if they were non-compostable. While Quantum Biopower does have a de-packager, the contaminated dishes would still wind up in the trash. A possible, cheaper alternative would be recyclable disposable dishes. Although food contaminates paper products, plastic dishes can be cleaned at the recycling plant. However, Chartwells' has 'green'-influenced limitations on what materials can be used when buying certain items, so plastic disposable dishes might not be readily available. Research is needed, perhaps with help from one of Dr. Torcellini's students, to help determine which type of disposable dishes would fit Eastern best. A first step could be to use recyclable dishes just for events.
  
  - Free Assistance with Food Waste Diversion – Coryanne Mansell, CET: Coryanne works for the Center for EcoTechnology (CET), an environmental nonprofit that offers businesses and institutions free assistance with food waste diversion. The CET works with several partners, including the Massachusetts DEP and US EPA. They offer training on source separation, outdoor storage, and reduction of food waste. The CET provides cost analyses with guidance on potential contractors and resources. They help institutions coordinate with waste haulers, end users, and the Board of Health to ensure that food waste diversion runs smoothly. Institutions can also seek marketing assistance to promote waste composting and reduction. The CET creates video and written case studies for the businesses it helps, to recognize their achievements and to highlight successful practices.
  
  - Of the CET's services, Eastern would have interest in: Signage to clarify what items are trash, recyclable, or compostable—including mobile signage for events; assistance with bins and dumpsters around campus; a review of our specs when signing on with Quantum Biopower; training for the food services staff; and a case study.
  
  - The CET has interest in working with CT Technical High Schools with particular focus on their culinary education departments. Lynn is going to help Coryanne connect with contacts that the ISE made while benchmarking the Tech Schools.

- The CET has two free, upcoming events—a biannual forum for colleges and universities on May 4 at Smith College and a WasteWise food waste forum on May 9 at Gillette Stadium. Laura will send out an email with further details on both events.

- Food Waste Recovery Program at Eastern Awards – Zach: The program began in January under the leadership of students at the ISE and CCE. CCE volunteers drive leftover food from Hurley Hall to the Covenant Soup Kitchen twice a week. So far, about 53 trays—or 800 lbs—of food have been saved. The program was recently featured in the Willimantic Chronicle. The food recovery program won the Best Green and the Best New Program awards at the CCE Service Expo.

- Reusable To-Go Boxes – Jeff: Jeff is looking to pilot reusable To-Go boxes at Hurley Hall. Students could buy a box for \$5, and every time they visit Hurley they could bring in their dirty To-Go box and exchange it for a clean box. Students could possibly sell their To-Go box back to Eastern at the end of the school year. A second phase of this initiative could involve offering the reusable containers to staff and faculty to use in the Food Court. Jeff is interested in promoting the initiative during student orientation.

We currently go through about 8-10 cases of disposable To-Go boxes per week, so switching to reusable containers could have a significant impact. The president is concerned students might misconstrue the initiative as a reduction in service, so she wants to ensure that student support is involved when launching reusable To-Go boxes. To start getting student feedback, Jeff is going to present the initiative to the SGA. Jeff could also seek input from ISE interns or green theme housing residents. One suggested idea was to have ISE interns help track the current use and cost of disposable To-Go boxes for eventual comparison to the use and cost of reusable To-Go boxes.

3. Waste/Recycling and Composting Updates: Renee just received the first waste weights from Willi-Waste. The ISE will give Renee updated data from campus waste audits. Renee will use the data to renegotiate our service contract to reduce the number of pick-ups performed by Willi-Waste. Zac is drafting an email—to be sent out by President Núñez—that promotes Eastern’s green initiatives, like recycling and food recovery. The ISE is talking with SOAR about incorporating the recycling videos into freshman orientation. Jeff could also see if he can talk about food waste reduction and recovery during orientation. In thinking about continued recycling education, a recurring issue that needs addressing is the mistaken recycling of pizza boxes. Another issue, observed by Weronika, is that students are jamming food in the sculpture outside Hurley Hall.

- Recycling re-sticker: ISE intern Oscar Gomez has gone around campus to update recycling bin stickers as needed.

- Room to collect office supplies surplus: There is no space readily available for such use at this time, and there is already an unofficial system by which people typically use email to find takers for their surplus supplies. Therefore, creating and maintaining a collection room is a low priority for now.

- UCONN Green Dining Hall Certification

[today.uconn.edu/2017/03/uconn-among-first-universities-gain-green-rating-dining-halls/?utm\\_source=FacStaffDailyDigest&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=UConnTodayDailyDi](http://today.uconn.edu/2017/03/uconn-among-first-universities-gain-green-rating-dining-halls/?utm_source=FacStaffDailyDigest&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=UConnTodayDailyDi)

gest: This particular success by UConn is an example of the kind of achievement that Eastern can readily pursue. Part of this process lies in making good choices when replacing or adding equipment to dining facilities. For example, sensors could be installed in fume hoods to turn off their fans during the kitchen's slow periods. One suggested installation is the Notifeye app, which monitors and reports upon the temperatures of food-storage units. Eastern owns the equipment used in its kitchens, which gives the university more decision-making leeway than if ownership lay with Chartwells.

4. Earth Day Events – Friday April 21<sup>st</sup>, 11am-2pm in the Student Center Lobby: The ISE, Food Services, and Dr. Torcellini's chicks are a few of the planned vendors:

[docs.google.com/document/d/1T\\_r3sr2iBbcRoF2EapSEqjBmYF7vQYfH8XiriSBj2Ek/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1T_r3sr2iBbcRoF2EapSEqjBmYF7vQYfH8XiriSBj2Ek/edit)

– Monday 4/17: The EES department showed “Just Eat It” in the Student Center Theater. The documentary is about a couple that ate only food waste for an entire year. About 30-40 students attended the event and gave positive feedback. EES used endowed funds to buy the educational license to the film, adding the “Just Eat It” to its budding collection of environmental films. EES now has enough films that it could hold a week-long film festival, perhaps as part of Campus Sustainability Week. Lynn suggested we promote the films on the Eastern Sustainability webpages, to let students and faculty know that the films are available for borrowing; Zach will contact Paul for further information.

5. University Hour for Fall 2017: A proposal has been submitted for approval for the fall semester. The proposed event would feature Eastern alumni who now work at Eversource and other local, green jobs to present on their various projects and programs. Ideally, this University Hour would occur during Campus Sustainability Week.

For more information contact Laura Miller at [MillerLau@easternct.edu](mailto:MillerLau@easternct.edu)

**Next meeting:** Wednesday, May 17<sup>th</sup> 9:00am Student Center 217

#### Attendees

Alex Fazzino - ISE

Eric Germain - EHS

Cindy Hodis – Purchasing

Renee Keech - Facilities

Jeff Kwolek – Dining Services

Jenna Lafleur - ISE

Weronika Lewkowicz – ISE

Kathy Martel – Bursar's Office

Laura Miller - ISE

Shellena Pitterson – Facilities

Lynn Stoddard – ISE

Zach Stygar - ISE

Paul Torcellini - EES

Norma Vivar – ISE