

Marquette University
Task Force Meeting Minutes

Task Force Meeting Minutes: November 24, 2009
3:00 – 4:30 4th Floor Conference Room 707 Building

Members:

Present: Mr. Arthur Scheuber, Dr. Christopher L. Miller, Dr. David E. Clark, Mr. Jay Kutka, Mr. Todd Vicker, Mr. Michael Whittow, Mr. Andrew Seifert.

Excused: Mr. Henry Thomas, Dr. William Cullinan, Ms. Laura Skaife

Proceedings:

Mr. Scheuber called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m. on Tuesday November 24, 2009.

Mr. Whittow began by providing updates on recent sustainability initiatives over the summer and this semester. One of the more recent initiatives was a webcast event hosted on Campus Sustainability Day on October 21, 2009. The webcast, entitled Sustainable Strategies for Vibrant Campus Communities, was attended by students and some members of the Working Groups. Mr. Whittow then went on to explain the different meetings with faculty members. One such meeting over the summer was with Dr. Robert Pavlik who wishes to introduce a graduate level sustainability program to Marquette. Another meeting involved Dr. McGee Young who spoke about his fall semester Political Organizations class focusing on energy efficiency. Mr. Whittow gave a campus sustainability presentation to Dr. Young's class and fielded questions from the students. Dr. Young's class also began a class project focusing on energy efficiency and created the group MU = E2 (Marquette University = Energy Efficiency) to promote their cause. Mr. Whittow also mentioned that Mr. Michael Jahner, the University Architect, was given the Big Diverter of the Year award for the universities efforts on recycling the old 1212 building. The 1212 building was roughly 98 percent recycled by volume, mostly consisting of concrete and steel. Such recycling goals may not be possible with the Trebor, Kalt, and Carmel buildings because they were built differently. Another award Mr. Whittow mentioned was the EnvironLITE Achievement Award which was awarded by Stay-Lite lighting and given to Mr. Whittow and Mr. Ronald Ripley. Mr. Whittow then mentioned that the Alumni Memorial Union created its own Green Team made up of both students and full-time employees and meet for 30 minutes every other week. This Green Team is dialed into sustainability and wanted to challenge themselves to become more sustainable. They have also created a digital newsletter. Mr. Whittow concluded the updates by mentioning the switch to single-stream recycling. Since the switch during the summer, campus-wide recycling has gone up two percent and overall recyclables collected (water bottles, aluminum cans, etc.) has gone up ten percent compared to the September 2008 statistics. With the new switch, several questions have arisen concerning contamination of recycling containers. These questions have been addressed thus far and will continue to educate people on the recycling conditions of the single-stream program.

Mr. Whittow then went on to give an update of student involvement around campus. The Office of Sustainability continues to work with Students for an Environmentally Active Campus along with several of their members as acting co-chairs of the working groups. Another student initiative is the MUSG Green Week planned for the week of April 6 – 9. The planning committee is a diverse group which includes several faculty members, several student groups, MUSG senators, the Art Museum and various administrative departments. Another MUSG initiative was for a light bulb exchange for off-campus student residents living in houses. This was a joint effort between MUSG, Public Safety and the Office of Administration. The goal of this project was to exchange inefficient incandescent light bulbs with energy efficient ones to help encourage students to keep their porch lights on. By keeping their porch lights on,

students are helping boost neighborhood safety, and the energy efficient light bulbs will help lower their electricity bill. Several off-campus landlords were eager and very helpful in installing the new light bulbs. Once this was complete, an MUSG senator and a Public Safety Officer walked around to these houses distributing information on safety and energy efficiency. Mr. Art Scheuber added that PrintWise was also involved and helped print the brochures that were handed out.

A discussion on PrintWise followed. One part of the discussion was to determine how to get students, and everyone else, to realize how much they are actually printing. Students should be aware of how much they are printing rather than simply printing over and over again. In the past, two dumpsters loaded with paper were hauled away each week. In addition, the printing on campus roughly cost the university around \$80,000. In order to try and cap this number, the university began working closely with PrintWise.

Another way to reduce printing is to educate people on campus. Some of the ideas conjured were brown-bag luncheons, focus groups, involve faculty more, and have student view a “print preview” screen before printing. Students have also expressed interest in using Desire2Learn (D2L) more for course work. Dr. Clark went on to mention that some faculty members prefer paper copies in front of them for various reasons. This is partly because it is sometimes difficult and/or strenuous to read 20+ papers on a computer. Other points include faculty members not always grading near a computer and it being easier to make comments/corrections on paper copies. In order to make comments on a data file, all files would need to be in the same format and would need to be accessible to comments – for instance Adobe does not allow markups. It boils down to preference among faculty members. One suggestion Dr. Clark made was to show faculty members the high costs associated with printing. Additionally, PrintWise is now defaulted at double-sided and even offers students a discounted rate to double-side print rather than single side. There has also been a surge in strong student environmental ethics and may find single sided printing a waste. Faculty who prefer single sided copies should be made aware of this growing point of view.

Mr. Whittow continued with student involvement updates indicating that the Office of Sustainability has joined the Off-Campus Senator meeting group along with Public Safety and the Office of Public Affairs. These meetings are held on Monday’s at different points throughout the semester. Mr. Whittow went on to express the goal of continuing to garner more student involvement and point students in the right direction when they need assistance on certain sustainability efforts. One way to help this push was the creation of a Facebook page that provides news as well as offering a sustainability discussion board.

Mr. Seifert continued by giving an update of the four working groups from the working group minutes. The working groups include Recycling, Natural Resources & Utilities, Suppliers, and New Buildings.

Mr. Seifert continued by sharing the most recent sustainability grades given to Marquette University. The Sustainable Endowment Institute gave Marquette a C+ this year, the same grade as last year. The National Wildlife Federation gave Marquette an “exemplary” mark and the Princeton Review awarded Marquette 96 out of 99. These grades vary mainly because each survey asks different questions and use different indicators in their grading procedures. In the future, the Office of Marketing and Communication will be included to help determine which surveys are being considered most among academic entities and peer institutions. Another goal is to include a wider range of student organizations more often to help make these surveys as accurate as possible and help each other advance the students’ and university’s sustainability efforts. In addition, student organization advisors should be consulted on a regular basis to help keep these ties together due the natural state of student

turnover. This will help continuous collaboration efforts to be more successful. Certain other initiatives since the surveys should also help raise these grades. Some of these initiatives include three construction projects and one renovation project seeking LEED certification, designated parking spots for commuters and alternative fuel vehicles behind Zilber Hall, and the possibility of a wind turbine on campus.

Another concern that came up about student involvement is the need to engage them at the beginning of the semester. This helps generate student involvement before they reach “crunch time” at the end of each semester. Students have also tended to lose interest as the semester goes on which makes it especially important to reach them early on. In addition, meetings times should be cognizant of students’ schedules. Students are often times more available during the night time after classes are finished for the day.

The discussion then switched over to the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment. Many colleges and universities have signed on knowing full well they may not be able to attain certain requirements. More than 50 percent of the institutions who were supposed to turn in their Climate Action Plans have yet to do so. One reason schools still sign on is because the commitment is not legally binding and lacks teeth in forcing action. However, Marquette’s stance is that it will not sign a commitment without knowing full well that it would be able to meet that commitment and/or its requirements. Certain aspects of the commitment may prove difficult because certain requirements call for university-wide overhauls. Some of the major issues include changes to the curriculum and attaining carbon neutrality without needing to purchase carbon offsets. In order to better understand the commitment’s requirements and to gain further knowledge of sustainability measures, the working groups will continue looking at the commitment in the future.

Another topic that was brought up was the idea of funding for the working groups. The working groups have been generating ideas recently that require funding. Some of these include: calculating the university’s carbon footprint, conducting a greenhouse gas audit, installing outdoor recycling bins, installing a solar array, light bulb exchanges, establishing a car-sharing and/or ride-sharing programs, and several others. One recommendation offered was to tie some of these projects into other projects, for instance, combine the solar array project with the new engineering school. Another option was to involve MUSG more in our working groups to help broaden student buy-in. MUSG, along with all the other students on campus, have a certain stake in the future of Marquette’s campus and can help the university become more sustainable. In order for a standalone project to obtain funding, it is highly recommended to submit a business plan outlining all the pertinent information. In addition, since environmental sustainability is relatively new to campus, smaller projects should be considered and tested before any major investments are made. Should these smaller projects prove successful and beneficial to campus; more consideration will be given to funding larger sustainability initiatives in the future. It was also suggested that these projects should be intended to help raise the grades given to the university from outside organizations.

With no further business, the sustainability Task Force meeting concluded at 4:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,

Andrew Seifert