Faculty Committee on Sustainability Annual Report AY 2014/15

May 2015

1. Committee Chair: L. Kraig Steffen

2. Committee Membership (Meetings Attended)
   a. Fall 2014: Jim Biardi (3) (Ex Officio, Dir. Env. Studies), Carol Ann Davis (3), Toby Svoboda (3), Katy Phillips (3), Kraig Steffen (3), Aaron Van Dyke (3), Michael Cavanaugh (0), Lynn Babbington (0) (SVPAA)
   b. Spring 2014: Jim Biardi (2), Carol Ann Davis (2), Lucrecia Garcia-Iommi (4), Katy Phillips (4), Kraig Steffen (4), Aaron Van Dyke (4), Michael Cavanaugh (2), Yohuru Williams (3) (SVPAA rep).
   c. Subcommittee of members elected to serve on the Campus Sustainability Committee: Carol Ann Davis, Aaron Van Dyke, Toby Svoboda, Kraig Steffen.

3. Number of Meetings attended by members
   See numbers after member’s names in membership list under item 2.

4. The Faculty Committee on Sustainability met on the following days.
   a. September 10, 2014
   b. October 1, 2014
   c. November 5, 2014
   d. February 4, 2015
   e. March 4, 2015
   f. April 1, 2015
   g. May 6, 2015

5. Principle topics considered by the Committee
   a. Continued review of the Campus Sustainability Plan (CSP) and coordination with the University Committee on Sustainability to move the CSP forward.
   b. Campus Open space resources and planning map
   c. Review of the hillside restoration plan for the slope behind Rafferty Stadium
   d. Review of an Art/Env. Studies Floating Wetlands project
   e. Sustainability and the Fairfield 2020 Initiative
   f. Desire to infuse sustainability issues into University life
6. **Decisions made by the Committee**
   
a. The Committee reviewed updated versions of the CSP and wholeheartedly supported sending the document to senior administrators and encouraged its full implementation by the University. The CSP represents a major step forward for the University and, if formally implemented, will provide a strong framework from which to consider sustainability issues for the entire University community. A copy of the CSP is included as supplementary material to this report.

b. A campus open space resources and planning map has been released to the FCS by Facilities. This map, which grows out of earlier work by faculty with Facilities, shows open space areas on campus and their status including conservation easements, wooded areas, and other open space resources. Although useful as provided the format (simple pdf) is not up to modern GIS information standards and the committee has agreed to work with local campus experts to enhance the quality of this artifact. A copy of this map is included in the supplementary materials for this committee.

c. An ad-hoc subcommittee of the FCS met with Facilities personal and reviewed the status of the hillside area to the east of Rafferty Stadium. A Preliminary plan for restoration of this wooded slope was discussed including removal of brushy material, a few trees near the lower stone wall, and vines. It was agree that the area would be maintained in a natural state with appropriate trees, shrubs and grasses remaining and/or to be planted at a later date. We provided Facilities with lists of appropriate native trees and shrub as encouraged by the State. There is a native plant policy for the campus. This policy and the links to the State lists are included as supplementary material.

d. The Committee approved the Artificial Wetlands project brought forward by artist Mary Mattingly. This project featured the creation of small artificial wetland islands that are constructed from recycled materials and filled with wetland plants. The project is meant to focus attention on wetlands restoration, the aesthetics of wetlands, and the usefulness of such structures as water purification systems. Dr. Biardi is working with a student monitoring their installation and growth. A Description of this project is included in the supplementary material.

e. The CSP has been developed in parallel with the Fairfield 2020 vision and the Committee agrees that its implementation is consistent with the overall goals of Fairfield 2020 with an emphasis on living and learning initiatives.

f. The Committee has formed a subcommittee to develop ways of infusing sustainability issues across the University, working with the CSC and others as appropriate.

7. **Anticipated Effects of these Decisions.**
a. We expect the CSP to become a major resource for all members of the campus community.
b. We expect the campus open space map to eventually serve, with improvements in its format, as a valuable tool for campus discussions on open space value, use, and protection.
c. We expect to continue our work of work advising, and when necessary admonishing, campus facilities on green space issues.
d. We expect to lead campus efforts increasing the visibility of and attention to sustainability issues on campus.

8. Unfinished Business

This committee’s work, like many, is ongoing and most of the concerns and questions addressed this year will continue to be of interest

9. Future Agenda Items

a. Consideration of campus fertilizer/herbicide application policy
b. Development of specific Sustainability awareness programs and actions for faculty and campus activities.
c. Possibility of hosting a CAE or FDEC event highlighting the CSP and academic initiatives that could stem from it.

10. Supplementary Material

a. Minutes from AY 14/15 year Faculty Committee on Sustainability meetings.
b. Copy of the Campus Sustainability Plan
c. Campus Open Space Map
d. Copy of the Native Plant Policy which includes the CT native shrubs/trees/grasses lists.
e. Brief description of the Floating Wetlands project

Respectfully Submitted 5/14/15
LKS