



We're For Strategic Planning

Goal Two:

Advance Experiential Learning

Initiative: 2a Initiative Name: Climate Action Plan

Introduction

The Climate Action Plan (CAP) is a multi-faceted plan to combat the climate crisis using the unique assets of the university setting with curricula that incorporate sustainability and projects that encourage student involvement. As a signatory to the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), ISU has agreed to engage in a dynamic climate action planning process, including maintaining a greenhouse gas inventory that is updated biennially. The CAP uses experiential learning to instill the importance of sustainable living in future generations. The CAP will also help support the research done at ISU on sustainability and to disseminate that research at national conferences.

Purpose

Sustainability is one of the most important topics to many college-age students today and has become a buzzword for many corporations as well. The basic definition of sustainability that has been adopted by the President's Sustainability Council is "to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". This concept is simply good business practice and is the basic foundation for best practices at colleges and businesses alike. The Climate Action Planning process works to engage students in "greening" campus operations and provide sustainability experiential learning opportunities in the community, simultaneously making ISU a more sustainable campus and making our students more marketable as future employees with experience in the field of sustainability (recent research shows that 87% of large business employers take sustainability training of job candidates into consideration when making hire decisions).

Methods

- 1) Increase student engagement and experience with sustainability through research.
- 2) Increase student engagement and experience with sustainability through events.
- 3) Increase student engagement and experience with sustainability through community projects.
- 4) Integrate sustainability into the curriculum.
- 5) Present student research about and campus results of sustainability efforts at national conferences.



Discussion

The Climate Action Plan and associated Greenhouse Gas inventory will be due for renewal in FY 15 (ACUPCC's reporting deadline is 1/15/15). Institute for Community Sustainability (ICS) staff can again lead the campus-wide planning process. In FY 14, we completed ISU's first STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System) report, an international metric that identifies sustainability strengths and areas for improvement on campuses. This report will greatly facilitate data collection and speed the CAP planning process.

Summary

The CAP process helps to keep ISU competitive among institutions of higher learning. 62% of prospective college students take a campus' sustainability policies into consideration when making decisions about where to go to school. Our CAP contributes to the portfolio of what ISU has to offer students. Thousands of students have experienced interdisciplinary sustainability projects, events, research, and community service at ISU. As we renew our CAP and greenhouse gas inventory this fiscal year, we look forward to being able to build on past successes to increase experiential learning and community engagement.

Initiative Chair(s) and Contact Information

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