

Dimensions of Sustainability for Higher Education

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Critical Dimensions of Sustainability in Higher Education

The Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future (ULSF) supports sustainability as a critical focus of teaching, research, operations and outreach in higher education through publications, research, and assessment.

Wilson Community Colleges Dimensions of Sustainability for Higher Education was developed from the Critical Dimensions of Sustainability in Higher Education chapter which appeared in Sustainability and University Life, Walter Leal Filho ed., published by Peter Lang © 1999.

http://www.ulsf.org/pdf/Critical_dimensions_SHE.pdf

Definitions

- Dimensions** - the areas, divisions, and departments of the College in which sustainability practices are occurring and measured.
- Indicators** - instruments used to demonstrate how sustainability is involved in the values, concepts, and processes of the College.
- Activities** - the specific tasks, events, processes, and milestones that the College has completed or is engaged in related to sustainability and sustainable initiatives.

Dimensions of Sustainability for Higher Education		
Dimensions	Indicators of Sustainability	Activities
Institutional Mission, Structure & Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal written statements of mission and purpose reflect a commitment to sustainability • Positions, committees, etc. exist which reinforce sustainability • Sustainability and environmental issues given broad visibility on campus 	
Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses with sustainability content in all departments • Sustainability part of traditional disciplinary education • Institution's relationship to surrounding environment part of formal and informal education 	
Student Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation and opportunities for student action and involvement in sustainability initiatives • Exposure to environmental or sustainability-related careers 	
Community Outreach & Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects and programs support sustainable local communities • Partnerships for sustainability with K-12, business, government and other institutions at regional, national and international levels 	

Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Environmental and sustainable practices (such as energy conservation and waste reduction) •Operations integrated into education and research 	
Faculty & Staff Development & Rewards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Hiring, tenure and promotion recognize faculty contributions to sustainability •Faculty and staff development opportunities enhance environmental awareness and sustainability 	
Research & Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Research and scholarship on sustainability-related topics/ issues •Interdisciplinary programs/ structures for research and policy development 	

Institutional Mission, Structure & Planning

Board approved Mission and Vision Statement expressing sustainability as a primary value and commitment

Sustainability Dean, Sustainability Director and Coordinator, Committee, and Presidents Climate Commitment Task Force established

Charter Signatory of AACUP Presidents Climate Commitment

Educational Member of AASHE (Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education)

USGBC membership (Institutional and local chapter)

Discussions to develop a Sustainability statement for Southern Association of Colleges and School

Curriculum

Sustainability incorporated into courses and programs (credit and non credit)

ACA 111/122 (College Student Success)

Development of workforce training courses

Green Building for Residential Contractors
Weatherization Technician Certificate
Green Purchasing (under development through the VLC)

Sustainability included in Electrical, Automotive, Diesel, Heavy Equipment Operation vocational programs and courses.

Student Opportunities

Invitations to students to attend Sustainability Committee meetings, presentations, and conferences

Students attending Sustainability Committee meetings

Students attending annual NC Energy Conference

Establishment of a seat for student representative on the Sustainability Committee

Discussions on how to develop student interest, participation and leadership in sustainability

Community Outreach & Service

Exploration of College serving as a waste and recycling collection point for community

Development of a Sustainable Business Rapid Response Team to provide support and resources to businesses and industries

Advocacy/presentations on sustainability made to:

- State and local government
- Community Faith Based Groups
- Economic Development Council
- Civic and Professional groups
- American Association of Community Colleges AACC National Convention, K-12 classes

Website features Growing Green section dedicated to sustainability and sustainable activities - <http://www.wilsoncc.edu/climate.cfm>

Operations

Renovations to existing facilities

Roofs, Boilers, Windows

New construction to be built to LEED Silver standard

Energy Efficiency Measures

- Waterless urinals
- Motion sensor light switches
- Retrofit of lighting from T-12 to T-8
- No irrigation used for landscaping

Green Purchasing policy

Energy savings summer schedule (college closed on Fridays during summer months)

Faculty & Staff Development & Rewards

Invitational presentations and Webinars made available to students, faculty, and staff on sustainability

Sustainability Dean, Director and Coordinator

Sustainability presentations and discussions held for college PD activities

Foundation Director hired with selection criteria included interest, functionality, and advocacy of sustainability.

Research & Scholarship

Foundation involved with development of sustainability programs for students, community, curriculum, and professional development

Library function includes supplying and archiving informational research and resources for sustainability

Wind study being conducted to assess potential wind energy applications for campus

Installation of small scale solar/pv demonstration/educational systems

LEED Student Services building serving as a demonstration/educational site for green building and green technologies