

Grand Rapids Community College

Sustainability Plan

PROGRESS REPORT

2008*

*All items in bold are new in 2008

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Grand Rapids Community College Sustainability Plan

“Academic Excellence – Operational Efficiency – Environmental Responsibility”

Statement of Purpose: The Sustainability Council will lead Grand Rapids Community College’s efforts to implement sustainability in all academic, operational and community work.

Vision: GRCC will be a leader in our community in making sustainable practices the norm through education and example.

Goals:

- A. Education: We will provide education to members of the college and the community about the ethics, alternative resources, and best practices needed to create a sustainable environment.*

Objectives

1. Design courses/programs/certificates that teach sustainability practices and principles

Action Plan: Develop a sustainability certificate to be offered through GRCC, patterned after similar work done at Western Michigan University and other schools.

Indicators of Success:

- Benchmark and assess demand
- Identify potential coursework
- Design 30 credit certificate
- Present proposal to the appropriate college committees
- Obtain approval for certificate
- Market certificate
- Begin to offer certificate

Outcomes: On hold

Action Plan: Develop individual courses that teach sustainability principles and practices.

Indicators of Success

- Courses CARPed and approved
- Courses successfully taught
- Sustained enrollment in the courses

Outcomes:

- **SUS 201: Introduction to Sustainability - an interdisciplinary course**
- **EC 290: The Modern Irish Economy**
- **GE 293: Sustainability in the Face of Globalization: Mexico's Land of the Maya**
- **New SS 120: Introduction to the Study of the Future – sustainability integrated throughout course**

2. Incorporate sustainability principles and practices into existing programs and coursework.

Action Plan:

- Review existing courses to identify sustainability principles and practices in place (Completed, Summer, 2006)
- Benchmark our work against what other colleges are doing
- Develop plan to familiarize faculty with concepts related to sustainability
- Train faculty in sustainability principles/practices
- Create faculty team to develop learning objectives specific to sustainability
- Support introduction of appropriate material into GRCC courses

Indicators of Success:

- Complete review of GRCC courses (Done)
- Complete training plan
- Complete training
- Appropriate material integrated into courses

Outcomes:

- **En 102: Two sections with sustainability focus**
- **Ge 210: Unit on sustainability**

- **An 210: Sustainability integrated throughout course**
 - **Fm 105: Unit on sustainable practices**
 - **Hs 120/121: Sustainability as introductory issue for course**
 - **Preschool recycling project**
3. Incorporate sustainability principles and practices into GRCC General Learner Outcomes

Action Plan

- Identify and clarify sustainability in the context of General Learner Outcomes (GLO's) (Summer, 2006)
- Meet with Assessment Coordinator (Fall, 2006)
- Obtain appropriate approval (Fall, 2006)

Indicators of success

- Complete proposal for presentation to Assessment Coordinator and General Education Team
- Sustainability principles integrated into GLO's

Outcomes

- **Beginning discussion of GLO emphasizing sustainability and community engagement**

4. Promote seminars and workshops on sustainability for community and for GRCC staff

Action Plan

- Identify community needs, working with area organizations (Ongoing)
- Develop schedule of tentative workshops and /or seminars (Yearly)
- Begin offering workshops and seminars
- Develop internship opportunities with companies, organizations and schools that promote sustainability

Indicators of Success

- Identification of potential offerings
- Coordination with interested community organizations

- Offer workshops and seminars

Outcomes

- **Photovoltaic Apprentice Training Class – Dec. 2008**
 - **LEED Greenscaping session at Habitat for Humanity home – May, 2007**
 - **Green Residential Construction course, Sept. 2004-present**
 - **Green Construction Remodeling course, Sept. 2008 – present**
 - **Green Advantage environmental certification course, Sept. 2008-present**
 - **“Great Lakes Water Wars” lecture and panel discussion**
 - **Earth Day projects and celebrations**
5. Support use of non-toxic resources (such as chemicals) in classrooms

Action Plan

- Identify toxic substances in use
- Work with faculty and staff to identify ways of replacing toxics where possible
- Establish procedure for making decisions about use of toxics

Indicators of Success

- Reduction in toxic materials use – established targets for reduction in place

6. Develop Service Learning opportunities for students

Action Plan

- Create a list of sustainability related opportunities in coordination with Service Learning program
- Promote opportunities for students
- Implement service learning for students

Indicators of Success

- Sustainability learning opportunities identified

- Coordination plan with Service Learning in place
- Students beginning to take advantage of the opportunities

Outcomes

- **Develop an active student Earth Club**
- **Earth Club service learning projects**
 1. **Grand River bank clean-up**
 2. **Community movie screenings**
 3. **Discussions on sustainability**
 4. **Weed pulls at community rain gardens**
 5. **Adoption of a community rain garden, working with two youth groups as partners and mentors**
- **SS 120 service project conducting sustainability audits for community organizations**

B. Operations: We will integrate sustainable practices into our campus operations

Objectives:

1. Establish methods and time lines for reduction of solid waste

Action Plan

- Develop and use effective measures of types and quantities of waste
- Identify methods of waste reduction
- Establish starting point and implement
- Monitor outcomes (Ongoing)

Indicators of Success

- Types and quantities of waste identified
- Methods of waste reduction identified
- Begin to implement the plan
- Outcomes Monitored on a quarterly basis

2. Reduce energy use on campus

Action Plan

- Develop measures of energy usage
- Establish a base line for energy reduction
- Identify energy saving methods
- Implement savings plan)

Indicators of Success

- Energy usage measurements identified and adopted
- Energy saving methods identified and implemented

Outcomes

- **Contract with Energy Education signed**
- **Energy Officer hired**
- **First report of energy savings issued**
- **College adopted an Energy Conservation Policy**

3. Use renewable energy sources

Action Plan

- Identify types of renewable energy available and appropriate for GRCC
- Explore green energy purchase options
- Establish a percentage of energy to be derived from renewable resources
- Implement a plan to achieve established goals
- Develop partnerships for purchase of green energy

Indicators of Success

- Alternative energy types and sources identified
- Plan implemented and percentage goals achieved

Outcomes

- **Alternative energy purchase began at 15% of total energy purchase – Fall, 2008**

4. Expand recycling efforts on campus

Action Plan

- Identify opportunities for improvement
- Locate resources for increased recycling

- Educate the college community about values of recycling
- Implement the plan

Indicators of Success

- Opportunities identified and resources secured
- Education plan implemented
- Recycling on campus increases

Outcomes

- **Additional and larger recycling containers placed throughout campus – Fall, 2008**

5. Adopt environmentally friendly vehicles for the campus fleet

Action Plan

- Identify fleet vehicles and ages
- Examine environmentally friendly alternatives
- Create a plan for adoption of vehicles

Indicators of Success

- Plan in place

6. Adopt a “Green” purchasing plan

Action Plan

- Research existing plans
- Identify possible plan
- Adopt a plan
- Secure appropriate approvals
- Implement the plan

Indicators of success

- Green purchasing plan in place
- Evidence of purchasing based on the plan identified

7. **Adopt Sustainability building and remodeling practices**

Action Plan

Action Plan

- **Use LEED certification practices for all new building and remodeling projects**

- **Build energy saving and producing systems on campus**

Indicators of Success

- **Systems in place**

Outcomes

- **Completed Green Roof on Applied Technology Center – August, 2008**
- **Remodeling of Cook Hall using LEED standards**
- **Remodeling of Winchester Alley using sustainable practices**

C. Community: GRCC will be a leader and partner in sustainability efforts in Western Michigan and beyond

Objectives

1. Support local businesses that employ sustainability in their principles and practices

Action Plan

- Identify businesses with a sustainable business plan
- Join Sustainable Business Forum of West Michigan (Done)
- Participate in training workshops and seminars in collaboration with local sustainable businesses (Ongoing)
- Develop fiscal relationships with local sustainable businesses where appropriate

Indicators of success

- Relationships established and maintained – two per year
2. Support clean and healthy neighborhoods

Action Plan

- Establish and maintain partnerships with community neighborhood associations

- Identify resources that GRCC has to offer
- Link our resources to community needs

Indicators of success

- Partnerships established by December, 2007
- GRCC resources identified and cataloged

3. Collaborate with community organizations with similar sustainability goals

Action Plan

- Continue existing relationship with the Community Sustainability Partners (Ongoing)
- **Participation in CSP Summit, December, 2008**
- Assist other institutions/businesses develop sustainability plans (Ongoing)
- Establish a defined relationship with the Grand Rapids Public Schools re sustainable education
- Seek grants and other support for community collaborative projects (Ongoing)

Indicators of success

- Partnership with GRPS established and functioning
- Grants secured for partnering

Outcomes

- **Member of the West Michigan Clean Cities initiative**
- **GRCC Sustainability Director serves as community representative for City of Grand Rapids Sustainability team.**
- **GRCC Green Roof serves as teaching tool for GRPS Economicology Middle School**

4. Collaborate with regional and national organizations with similar sustainability goals

Action Plan

- **Join and participate in the American Association for Sustainability in Higher Education (done)**
- **Sign the President's Climate Control Agreement (done)**

- **Participate in the Continuous Quality Improvement Network Sustainability Visioning project**

Indicators of success

- **Above items accomplished**

Outcomes

- **AASHE Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating project pilot participant**
- **Climate Control Agreement 2 month report submitted**
- **Participated in the CQIN Wingspread retreat to plan Sustainability Visioning Project**
- **Presentations at AASHE national conference, “Working Together for Sustainability: On Campus and Beyond”**
 1. **Patti Trepkowski and Gary Burbridge, “The Sustainable Community College: Internal and External Paths We have Followed”**
 2. **Gary Burbridge, Panel discussion, “Building Sustainable Local and World Community: Vision for the 21st Century” with Pres. Stepehn Mittelstet, Richland Community College and Ellen Kabat-Lensch, Eastern Iowa Community College District.**