Creating A Campus-wide Sustainability Plan

Presented by SUNY Sullivan and Hospitality Green at

Innovations in Technical Education to Advance Sustainability: Student Leadership
Presenters

• Michael Fisher, Professor, Chair-Division of Professional Studies
  – MA, Media Studies, The New School for Social Research
  – BS, Speech-Radio and Television, Syracuse University

• Evadne Giannini, Principal, HospitalityGreen
  – Fifteen years as an innovator, capacity builder and trainer in the hospitality, manufacturing and environmental industries
    – BA The New School for Social Research
    – Resource Conservation Specialist, Cook College
It’s All About the Mission

SUNY Sullivan provides programs and resources that educate, inspire, and empower students and the broader community. Through excellence in teaching and learning, we prepare students for a diverse and interconnected world, and we support positive economic and social change within Sullivan County and beyond. We model sustainable actions and promote socially, environmentally, and economically responsible citizenship through an overarching culture of excellence.
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Who We Are

SUNY Sullivan
• Opened in 1963—We’re Middle Aged.
• The smallest unit in SUNY
  – More than 1400 full and part-time students in 40 degree and certificate programs
  – A College and Community in Transition

HospitalityGreen
• Started in 2008 to help businesses implement sustainable solutions to their operational challenges
• Teams of professionals from varied backgrounds working in person and online with over 200 organizations
• Core values: building capacity, empowerment, client precedence with tangible returns and sustainability
Run Up to the Plan

- Appointment of the Director of Sustainability
- Creation of an ad hoc Sustainability Committee with involvement of Chair, Dean for Continuing Ed and Purchasing
- Creation of an interim plan based upon AASHE Star program
  - Curricular, co-curricular and operational areas
    » Focus on purchasing and waste.
Run Up to the Plan

- Realization that we had less expertise and time in developing a comprehensive plan
- We had a really good resource in the community
- We had buy in from the campus
- We created an RFP-HG’s proposal was accepted
The Right Partner

- Sharing
- Communication
- Expertise
- What else?
“Soft Eyes”

“Hey Kima, you know what you need most at a crime scene is not rubber gloves but soft eyes.

You got soft eyes you can see the whole thing.

You got hard eyes; you’re staring at the same tree and missing the forest.”

Bunk / Episode 4/ The Wire/ Dennis Lehane
Mission

Operational Policy
SUNY Sullivan is committed to protecting the environment, the health and safety of our staff and students, and the community in which we conduct our business. It is the college’s policy to adopt environmentally and socially responsible business practices such as conserving energy, water and other natural resources; purchasing energy efficient and recycled products; reducing our use of toxic maintenance products; and managing our waste in an efficient and sustainable manner by practicing source reduction, recycling and waste diversion programs.

It is our intention to carry these goals into our educational curriculum and into each of our departments.
Steps

- Observation
- Survey / Response
- Establish a Working Policy for the engagement
- Engage Soft Eyes
- Lay out a process of assessment, analysis and test initiatives
Observation

• Can a system change motivate a habit?
• WASTE – Does anyone else notice?
When not at school:

- Do you turn off lights when leaving a room?
- Do you turn off the water while you brush your teeth?
- Do you recycle?
- Do you compost?
5. If you have an empty soda can or juice bottle in your hand, which of the following best describes your habit?

- I carry the can or bottle to a recycling bin.
- I throw it in the first trash or recycling receptacle I see.
- I'm not sure. I never thought about it.
5. In your opinion, from the following choices where can we improve? Please choose the choice that is most important to you.

- Environmentally Preferable Purchasing
- Recycling
- Energy Conservation
- Waste Reduction
- Water Conservation
- No improvement needed
Soft Eyes

• Summer Interns
• Collection of Data and Assessment
• Discussion and Analysis
• Recommendations
Analysis

• Realign the resource management system from purchasing through disposal
• Address contracts and purchasing expertise
Analysis – Part 2

• Develop a working blue print for operations
• Develop behavior triggers
• Initiate pilots
Implementation

• Set-up test Sites
• USE THE BLUE PRINT
• Engage students in systems, monitoring and training
Seeing Results

• Monitor and Adjust
• Report Out
• Shout Out Progress
How does “it” happen?
Cultural Change

- Executive Engagement
- Provide the right tools
- Listen, watch and learn
- Don’t underestimate the obvious
Institutionalize

• Train a core of people and keep widening the net
• Use social tools to create a social norm
• Use policy to stay diligently on target
• Support, engage and stay attainable
Interesting Outcomes

• We co-opted the Purchasing Guy
• Our new President came, “…because of your sustainability mission.”
Interesting Outcomes

Appreciative Inquiry
- Sustainability was one of the top 5 values
- It became one of the guiding principles of our budget process
- It was one of the guiding principles of our BOT retreat to develop a new strategic plan

Sustainable Operations
- Saving money on waste and recycling
- Reducing waste through a paper towel purchasing change
- A Purchasing Policy
- Evaluating system and work flow efficiencies
- An engaged community
Something is Brewing

Appreciative Inquiry

- A proposal to have a microbrewery
- There is a curriculum proposal in the works
- We are growing hops
- Lots of community buy-in
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Sustainable SUNY Sullivan