

To: Dr. Sudip Chakraborty
Executive Secretary, Faculty Senate

From: Arsalan Wares
Chair, Environmental Issues Committee

Date: November 23, 2015

Re: Environmental Issues Committee Assessment of Charges and Goals, 2015-2016

Assessment of Charges

The charge of the Environmental Issues Committee (EIC) from the Bylaws and Statutes:

To review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to environmental issues as they relate to recycling, facilities use, campus beautification and stewardship, and traffic planning.

The specific standing subcommittees and their responsibilities:

- Campus Beautification and Stewardship is the body designated by the VSU Tree Preservation and Maintenance Policy that the administration is required to consult regarding any and all proposals for tree removals on campus. The subcommittee also works with Plant Operations (Grounds) to oversee, enforce and implement other aspects of the TPMP, including care, maintenance, and planning for new plantings and landscaping. The subcommittee is charged with approving expenditures from the Jewel Whitehead endowment for the purpose of campus beautification.
- Resource Conservation is responsible for evaluating usage of energy, water and other resources on campus in both internal and external environments and making recommendations for ways in which resource conservation can be attained. EIC will also work with the VSU Administration in overseeing and implementing the VSU Campus Outdoor Lighting Policy.
- Recycling is responsible for recommendations regarding institutional policies or improvements in the areas of recycling and pertinent maintenance practices. The subcommittee seeks to work closely with Plant Operations and other relevant administrative units to promote goals of recycling and waste reduction in support of a better environment.
- Traffic and Parking Planning is responsible for recommendations regarding institutional policies and improvements in the areas of planning for traffic and parking, specifically with regard to the campus and community environment.

Specific Assessment of Charges

EIC Committee:

- Set regular meetings, establish subcommittee chairs, assess the charges of the EIC, and establish goals for the 2015-2016 academic year.

- Respond to issues forwarded by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.
- Revise Bylaws: ‘Article IV, c), 4. be reviewed concerning its fourth subcommittee charged with addressing parking and transportation issues—which is currently inactive—in lieu of a University Campus Parking & Transportation Committee, on which the EIC will have a voting member.
- Schedule the walk-through for the Outdoor Lighting Policy.
- Continue to work with the President for the full implementation of the Campus Climate Commitment.
- Engage with the University on future decision making regarding the use of solar panels.
- Coordinate with COSA/SGA/SAVE about campus environmental programs and activities.

EIC Subcommittees

Campus Beautification and Stewardship:

- Replacement tree plantings (e.g. for longleaf pines lost to ongoing attrition, within existing groves; possibly adding native midstory species in same areas).
- Post-construction oversight of tree re-planting – various projects; work towards ensuring invasive/prohibited plants/trees are not included in future landscaping.
- Plans for invasive species removal (e.g., Chinese Tallow tree), especially along campus creeks.
- Monitor and enforce of recent amendments to Tree Preservation and Maintenance Policy, prohibiting destructive sampling (e.g., coring) and placement of signs or other attachments.
- Survey and assessment of campus irrigation, identifying areas of need for drought mitigation, particularly to enhance health and survival of tree groves.
- Outreach to campus units involved with current and future construction and renovation, urging use of our growing stockpile of heart-pine lumber from VSU trees, using it for flooring, paneling, furniture, etc.
- Put permanent signs to illustrate the significance and history of the Longleaf pines on campus.
- Put permanent signs in the Longleaf Pine garden area to discourage students from using the area for hanging hammocks.

Resource Conservation:

- Work with the University administration toward full implementation of a campus-wide resource conservation program, especially as it relates to educating the campus community about the VSU’s Energy Policy.
- Identify general and specific areas of concern about resource usage on campus and strategies for reducing resource consumption.
- Evaluate resource usage on campus and make recommendations for ways in which resource conservation can be attained.
- Promote the use of public transportation by VSU faculty, staff and students.
- Work with the energy experts on campus to determine what we can do to help them.

- Encourage the dining services on campus to provide more vegan, vegetarian and locally grown food choices for students and staff.

Recycling:

- Educate and involve the Campus Community (e.g., students, staff, faculty, administration) about the VSU recycling program.
- Engage the VSU administration toward full implementation and development of the campus-wide recycling program.
- Audit the recycling procedures and their implementation on campus to ensure recycling effectiveness.
- Explore the possibility of reusing and recycling water from air conditioners.
- Look into the possibility of getting some money back from recycling.
- Look into the purchase and use of better recycling bins.
- Develop methods to educate students and staff about recycling.

Respectfully submitted by Arsalan Wares