

PRESIDENT'S CLIMATE COMMITMENT REPORT

Campus Life Subcommittee Chapter

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~~Campus Affairs Charge #5~~

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~~5. Consider changes in university policy that could reduce the carbon footprint of the University, make it a leader in developing and promoting green policies and research, and reduce its energy expenditures. Consider other ongoing efforts on campus.~~

Chair: Jodi Herzik

Committee Members: Russell Meyer, Jessie Payne, ASUN Representative, John Sagebiel, Jessica Henning, Delia Martinez, Garth Kwiecien, Dan Ruby, Jason Geddes, Larry DeVincenzi, Diana Chamberlain, Tom Devine, Austin Wallace, Amy Harris, Bill Jacques, Stephanie Woolf

CAMPUS LIFE



The University of Nevada, Reno is committed to reducing its carbon footprint in the years ahead. We recognize the value of environmental sustainability and are aware of our responsibility to the community and the world at large. By creating a culture of sustainability and environmental sensitivity, we can attract students, faculty and donors and subsequently, enhance our reputation. Our goal as a university is to put that awareness into practice. The Campus Life Working Group has focused on actions that can be implemented immediately, and on the continuing education of faculty, staff and students about issues of sustainability. By bringing attention to “little actions,” a large difference can be made regarding sustainability on the campus and in our community. The Campus Life Working Group sees itself as the University liaison to the students, and as such, we feel it is vital that sustainability initiatives be undertaken hand-in-hand with our students. We want to provide members of our campus community the proper tools so they can make educated decisions and in turn, pass this knowledge and experience on to others.

Staff members already engaged in sustainability efforts, continue to pick the low-hanging fruit. They switch out light bulbs across campus, gaining energy efficiency along the way. They design new construction to LEED Silver certification standards. Campus dining services has increased the foods sourced from regional growers. Each year approximately 350 tons of paper and cardboard and over 55,000 lbs of aluminum cans, tin cans, glass bottles and plastic bottles are collected from the bins located around campus. These recyclables are picked up, sorted and delivered to recycling centers. All of these efforts support the University Presidents Climate Commitment to achieve carbon neutrality.

The challenge lies in portraying the shift to sustainability as a community-wide goal, the success of which will strengthen the entire University. Students’ enthusiasm to think innovatively about their place in a rapidly changing world must be nurtured. All members of the University community must feel inspired to embrace the vision of a sustainable campus as their own. The Campus Life Working Group tackled this issue and in this chapter, presents an overview of current progress toward sustainability at the University and recommends next steps for further reducing our carbon footprint.

We examined five components of sustainability efforts: campus culture, food services, purchasing, recycling and energy/water use. Each section describes current efforts and future goals.

The Campus Life Working Group, which is composed of faculty, staff, students and community members, agreed that in order to determine what needed to be done, we needed to first establish the types of environmental sustainability practices and projects already in place at the University. We are delighted to report that in the past several years, the University has taken significant steps to become a more environmentally sustainable campus, and that there is an increasing number of groups—both student and faculty—working to promote sustainability and conservation through education, special events and community activism.

University of Nevada, Reno sustainability efforts

- The new Marguerite Watts Petersen Athletic Academic Center received Leadership in Energy and Environment Design (LEED) Silver certification by the U.S. Green Building Council—the first LEED accredited building constructed on the University campus.
- The Joe Crowley Student Union has many “green” features including the use of natural light, recycled materials and energy-efficient technologies. In 2007, a photovoltaic energy system — with 112 power-generating solar panels—was placed on the roof generating the equivalent of \$7,200 of energy each year.
- Solar panels on the Nye residence hall, which opened in 1967, have been helping to heat the building’s water for more than 25 years.
- In 2005, there was a total of 7,732 pounds of recyclable material collected on campus. That number nearly quadrupled in 2006 to 27,910 pounds. 2007 ended with a total of 61,652 pounds, more than double the total amount collected in 2006.
- The University's Food Services has made a commitment of 1 percent of the meal plan revenue to go towards funding sustainable initiatives on campus. They are in the pilot stage of a food composting project in conjunction with the student club, EnAct (Environmental Action Team).
- Food Services has an agreement in place to recycle fryer shortening with a local biofuels group. Paper product recycling bins have been placed in the dining halls and catering facilities, in addition to the glass and plastic recycling containers.
- Recycling is promoted campus wide. Drop-off locations and appropriate containers are added regularly.
- [In a partnership with a local grower, Nevada Naturals, University](#) Food Services has committed to adding locally produced products to their menu ~~as well with a partnership with a local grower, Nevada Naturals.~~
- Student s ~~hosted and~~ produced [and hosted](#) the first “Trashion Show” in conjunction with Earth Day and repeated the show on campus and at a local eco-event in 2009.
- University-initiated water conservation efforts included the replacement of natural turf with artificial turf on athletic practice and playing fields.
- [Construction of a](#)The University constructed the Renewable Energy Laboratory at the Redfield Campus ~~promotingto promote~~ research in the areas of solar, wind, hydrogen and geothermal. An interdisciplinary Renewable Energy Minor began in 2007, ~~a.~~ [This](#) program is designed to expose students to the technical, economic and social issues relevant to renewable energy.
- The Renewable Energy Center, [established in 2009](#), is a collaborative ~~among~~[effort of](#) four colleges within the

- University: Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources; Business; Engineering; and Science. The Center will focus its efforts on ~~and coordinate~~[coordinating](#) programs for competitive research ~~in order~~ to increase Nevada's national stature in the renewable energy field.
- The University's Parking and Transportation Department uses biodiesel fuels for campus shuttles and subsidizes public transportation for faculty and students. They also support National Bike Month each May.
- The University has an Energy Star purchasing policy ensuring that new products are energy efficient.
- The University promotes environmental sustainability efforts by providing training and expertise to the community and state.

Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center

The Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center [was](#) designed to include the latest energy-efficient technologies. Sustainable design features incorporated into the building will result in significant cost savings for the University ~~over time~~.

Sustainable attributes of this building include:

- A large atrium provides natural light for much of the building.
- Southside window shades protect the interior from heat in the summer and allow for maximum sunlight in the winter.
- Grids inside the windows bounce light into the interior.
- Lights in the stacks are motion-activated and dim when no one is present. Computer controlled blinds on large windows produce maximum energy efficiency throughout the day.
- Sensors in all staff offices turn out lights when offices are vacant.
- All lights are energy efficient.
- Skylights are installed in several areas.
- Temperature controls are state-of-the-art and computerized by zones.
- The building's plate and frame heat exchanger allows the building to be cooled without running the building's chillers when outdoor temperatures are below 70-75 degrees F. This saves considerable electrical energy as chiller's compressors do not need to run and it lowers the building's operating cost.
- The chilled water design for the air conditioning system saves energy dollars and eliminates the need for chemical treatments.
- Glazing on windows eliminates ultraviolet light.
- The building's roof is white to reflect heat.
- Recycle stations are incorporated throughout the building and are easily accessible.
- Faucets, toilets and lights in the restrooms are controlled by motion-sensors.
- Carpet is installed in tile blocks which can be easily and economically replaced in small sections when necessary.

Securing Campus Commitment to Change

The Campus Life Working Group encourages collaborative approaches to improving campus sustainability measures. It is vital that both administration and students share in the responsibility

and decision-making process as we move the University toward carbon neutrality. The Campus Life Working Group recognizes the shift toward sustainability is as much about the process as the destination. Much of our institutional sustainability can be accomplished behind the scenes, through operational efficiencies, but ultimately our success is dependent on the campus community's commitment to change. The following section addresses how the University can implement this change and achieve buy-in from the University community.

Encouraging Student Activism

One of the University's immediate objectives is to support and harness student sustainability activism. As student energy awareness is in large part achieved through peer education, the University should focus on its ability to create durable and lasting incentives and/or institutional structures to facilitate the following goals:

- Increase the publicity and visibility of global, local and campus environmental issues.
- Foster a green culture on campus by introducing sustainable practices in all aspects of campus life.
- Become a leader in campus energy conservation and efficiency, as well as greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction.

A campus with a visible and widespread green culture will educate the student body about the environment and increase energy awareness for campus environmental issues. Energy conservation efforts should begin to emerge organically from the bottom up when there is administrative support for student initiatives. In order to encourage such a campus culture, methods of individual lifestyle change must be both well-publicized and made convenient to the student body. In addition to encouraging students, the Campus Life Working Group recognizes that faculty and staff also need to take a greater interest and level of ownership in relation to their activities and be aware of the impact they may have on the environment.

To encourage our campus community to become more committed to environmental sustainability, the Campus Life Working Group worked with the Academy for the Environment and student groups to initiate the following:

- A sustainability survey was designed by the Campus Life Working Group. It is scheduled to be administered campus-wide in fall 2009. The results of this survey will be used to gather baseline data and to create a database that will help educate and provide information to the campus community.
- A campus Sustainability website was designed and launched in May 2009. This website can also serve as a recruitment tool for prospective students.
- The Campus Life Working Group is compiling a list of existing sustainability projects for a database.
- Working with the Reno Bike Project (RBP) and University Parking, two additional bike stations were added to campus. Partnering with Residential Life and the ASUN Bookstore, RBP will now carry bike supplies and offer repair instructions. RBP has also volunteered to hold bicycle repair classes on campus.
- The Campus Life Working Group is working with students to design a Green Guide that will be distributed to all incoming freshman at orientation. Scheduled to be completed by fall 2009, this

guide will provide resources to current students and be featured on the Sustainability website. The Green Guide will include facts about current campus sustainability practices, community contacts, energy facts, recycling information and a section devoted to what each person can do to make a difference.

- Working with the Campus Life Working Group, three student groups (EnAct, the Ecohydrology Club and SAIWI) are planning the first UNR Energy Wars in October 2009. Energy Wars is a competition between residence halls on campus to promote energy conservation.
- Color posters were designed to raise awareness and emphasize “Thinking Green.”
- A Student Sustainability Pledge [waswill be](#) drafted by students to be added to new student orientation packets.
- Support the creation of a sustainability news column in the student newspaper, the Nevada Sagebrush. A weekly or monthly sustainability column will engage a broader student and alumni interest in green initiatives both on campus and nationally.

Student sustainability initiatives have played a significant role in spreading the word about environmental awareness. By actively endorsing student-run energy awareness and peer education initiatives as part of a coherent, long-term energy conservation strategy, the University will gain access to a highly motivated constituency that is dedicated to reducing the University’s carbon footprint. Student energy conservation initiatives at other universities have yielded significant positive results in all areas including monetary savings, energy conservation, CO2 emissions reduction and positive national media attention. Creating an environmentally savvy, or “green” culture, on campus will not only improve the University’s energy efficiency and public image, it will impart all students with a sense of their own commitment to adopting sustainable lifestyles they will carry with them when they leave our University.

Future Goals

The following are future goals to change the campus culture to a more environmentally sustainable one; however, they will require support from the entire university community:

- **Establish an “Eco-Rep” program.** Eco-Reps are students employed by the university to educate and encourage students about living sustainably. The focus of the Eco-Rep program is to persuade students to recycle and engage them in energy awareness activities.
- **Increase energy awareness by installing energy monitors in residence halls.** Other universities have seen a remarkable decrease in energy use in residence halls after the introduction of a real-time energy monitoring system. Assuming similar success, the cost of installing these monitors and the real-time program software could easily be recouped in a few years and campus energy awareness would increase significantly as a result. (At several universities students pay for their own utilities, namely electricity, rather than having those fees lumped into their residence hall fee. The impetus for this was the need to educate responsibility and the proper use of today’s technologies; additionally it serves to incentivize sustainability needs.)
- **Engage non-sustainability oriented groups and disciplines in campus sustainability initiatives.** The sustainability movement has spanned many different student groups on campus that might potentially contribute to improving campus energy-use awareness. For instance, campus religious groups have recently been emphasizing environmental responsibility; the Arts and Music communities have the potential to produce a significant following. The campus is in a

great position to encourage these groups to work together towards the energy conservation goals of the University as a whole.

- **Create an “Eco House” residence hall.** A dedicated residence hall would provide sustainable living options for energy conscious students on campus and allows motivated students to live sustainable lifestyles, and creates a model for sustainable living on campus to which other students might look for information and guidance.
- **Establish a green fund.** A green fund could be created from a small student fee. This fund would be collected and reserved for sustainable initiatives and available to students through an application process. These funds will provide the university the opportunity to highlight student activities and facilitate new initiatives.
- **Establish a green revolving loan.** Sustainable design projects often cost more up front than do business-as-usual models, over time these green projects tend to save considerably more money in energy conservation than the initial cost differential. Harvard’s Green Campus Loan Fund (GCLF) is probably the best example of an effective green revolving loan fund in the nation. With a budget of \$12 million, the GCLF provides capital for design projects that promise to reduce University environmental impacts and have a payback period of five years or less. The departments who benefit from the energy savings repay the initial cost of the project with the money they saved at no interest.

Environmental conservation begins with individual lifestyle change. The Campus Life Working Group believes the University, as an institution of higher learning, has an obligation not only to be [ana](#) model of campus energy efficiency, but to equip its student body with the proper knowledge and tools to adopt sustainable lifestyles as they go on to become responsible community members and the leaders of tomorrow.

Energy/Water Conservation

Making energy and water data publicly available can be a highly effective means of educating our University community about their impact. For example, energy use data can be posted at various locations around campus showing current electricity rates and daily cost of powering each building and the University as a whole. This will raise awareness and provide a reminder to the campus community to turn off unnecessary lights and equipment. One final consideration is that today’s high-tech buildings with their sophisticated mechanical systems require a huge amount of energy. With an ever-expanding university, the reduction of energy and water consumption remains an ongoing challenge.

Energy/Water Conservation Recommendations

- Continue to improve energy conservation in existing buildings and require the most advanced conservation technology for new buildings.
- Continue to sponsor campus-wide energy and water conservation drives.
- Create demonstration projects with real-time data monitoring.
- Place water and energy-use kiosks with meters and or monitors in prominent locations showing averages and trends of floor/lab/building or campus-wide energy use.
- Provide Kill-A-Watt devices on loan at the Knowledge Center can for individual use. Several libraries offer this service now: <http://wtmlnews.blogspot.com/2009/01/kill-watt.html>
- Build electric vehicle charging stations on campus. DRI has done this as has TMCC: <http://fides.newstin.com/tag/us/89220761>

- Assign a Facilities staff person to promote sustainable practices on campus by participating in decision-making policies within the University and through public education and outreach.

University-sponsored energy and water conservation drives such as energy contests in residence halls or energy and water-focused events during Homecoming can ultimately save money and energy. Several universities participate in such events, and one example of a successful intercollegiate energy conservation competition is the *Million Monitor Pledge Drive*. This is an annual competition between Smith, Amherst and Mt. Holyoke to amass the greatest number of student pledges promising to put their computers to sleep instead of on screen saver. Students who fulfill their pledges can save an estimated \$8.50-\$51.00 (depending on the model) per year. Approximately \$100 per computer per year can be saved at the University of Nevada, Reno if the computer is completely shut down. The installation of energy and water monitoring systems in our University residence halls could lead to dramatic decreases in the amount of energy and water used by students. Additionally, the potential savings realized by the University could be substantial. Energy monitoring systems have been installed by a number of universities that have proven to be very effective, particularly when used in conjunction with yearly educational competitions.

A Case Study

Oberlin College sets the national standard for residence hall energy monitoring. Oberlin has adapted its residence hall energy monitors to export a real-time data feed of its residence hall energy use to a public access website. The program was installed in 18 residence halls during the 2004-2005 academic year. During a two-week residence hall energy conservation competition in 2005, Oberlin students saved 68,300 kWh and \$5,107 in electricity costs and reduced campus greenhouse gas emissions by 148,000 lbs of CO₂ and 1,360 lbs of SO₂. Many residence halls reduced their energy consumption by over 50 percent, and nearly every residence hall reduced its energy consumption to some degree. This example illustrates the potential for energy awareness among the student body and how that awareness can have a significant impact on how energy is consumed.

Water Conservation

Water conservation is a huge issue in the arid West and the University plays a key role in educating students about water usage. In light of this, the University has engaged in a water conservation program in the residence halls that has resulted in a significant reduction of usage. All residence halls are metered by the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA). Over the last few years, the University has engaged in a water conservation program in the residence halls that has resulted in a significant reduction of usage. Residence hall retrofits have included installation of both low flow showerheads and low flow sink aerators. A major bathroom renovation of Nye Hall in the summer of 2009 included the installation of electronic faucets in all bathrooms to reduce water usage. Installing floor-by-floor water metering and linking it to a common website will provide immediate feedback for students to measure their water consumption. ~~This has been done at schools like Oberlin College and has resulted in reduction of water use. Landscaping practices on campus that are water efficient will be recognized using various signage.~~ Water conservation projects on campus will be encouraged, supported and could be funded through a Green Fund.

Landscaping practices on campus that are water efficient ~~will~~**should** be recognized using various signage and in campus publications. In addition to the existing xeriscape gardens and landscaping,

more xeriscaping principles could be implemented campus wide. Water conservation projects on campus will be encouraged and supported ~~and could be funded through a Green Fund.~~

Possible Water Conservation Projects

- Policies to support energy savers; sustainable landscape choices for water use and distribution; water-efficient landscape selections and maintenance; and the incorporation of natural features into the campus landscape.
- Plan, design and build water harvesting structures such as functional fountains, rain gardens, bio-retention basins, terraces.
- Install and retrofit where possible electric faucets, waterless urinals and low-flow toilets in all campus buildings using the residence halls as a case study.
- Use low-impact development practices
- Support and build student gardens, community gardens and composting centers.
- Convert landscape irrigation to take advantage of reclaimed water.
- Replace or reduce turf where appropriate as part of a xeriscape strategy.

Solid Waste Management and Recycling

The University ~~has supported~~ supports the campus-wide bottle aluminum can, paper and cardboard recycling in residence halls, dining facilities, classrooms and offices. In addition, paper recycling efforts have increased by enlisting more students and faculty to better utilize recycling bins already distributed campus-wide. The Campus Life Working Group supports eliminating waste streams on campus—with the ultimate goal of a net zero waste campus—through the implementation of “cradle to cradle” processes and practices. It is recommended that an early objective be the reduction and, ultimately, elimination of the paper flow on campus. For example, convert all communications to electronic format. It is vital to educate and encourage the campus community to rethink how they live and work. There will be continued support for the campus-wide plastics; aluminum and metal cans; and paper and cardboard recycling efforts. The goal is to maintain the University’s capacity to divert recyclable materials from landfill waste generated by dining facilities, residence halls, cafeterias and offices through public awareness campaigns and expanded operations. In addition, continue to increase paper recycling efforts by enlisting more students and faculty to increase their use of recycling bins already distributed campus-wide. A recycling chart (see Appendix A) will be posted on websites and emailed to students and staff. It will also be included in the Green Guide for students. A simplified version will be posted at recycling locations around campus, as appropriate.

Short Term Goals (0-1 years)

- Design a survey to identify waste on campus to determine ways to improve recycling on campus.
- Collect and analyze data about existing campus conservation and recycling efforts.
- Create action plan based on determined needs.
- Design a marketing campaign to educate students/faculty/staff and the community.
- Students will be encouraged to participate in environmental events such as Recycle Mania, Earth Week, and recycling contests among residence halls which use friendly competition to encourage positive awareness of recycling habits and waste prevention methods.
- Reduce waste by 5-10% (taking campus growth into account).

Intermediate Goals (1-5 years)

- Enhance and further develop the university-wide Recycling Plan.
- Conduct a study of solid waste cogeneration to determine feasibility.
- Implement a plan to convert organic waste to compost.
- Within three years, the University will ~~also~~ have in place a system for conducting campus-wide waste audits, with ongoing measurement and verification capability.

Long Term Goals (5-10 and 10-20+ years)

- Establish a secure funding source to provide for ongoing environmental activities.
- Campus Green Awards to recognize student organizations/departments with exemplary recycling and conservation programs, and establishing outreach programs to local K-12 schools.

Long-Term Waste Reduction/Recycling Goals

Goal 1: (5-10 years) 50 percent reduction in total weight (per capita) of campus waste

Goal 2: (5-10 years) Identify and remove or reduce the most environmentally problematic waste leaving campus

Goal 3: (10-15 years) 80 percent reduction in total weight (per capita) of campus waste

Goal 4: (20-25 years) 95 percent reduction of total weight of campus waste

Goal 5: (25-30 years) Zero waste

Purchasing and Administration

The University of Nevada, Reno is committed to sustainable purchasing practices; current sustainable practices include:

- A paper procurement policy for the Copy Center and the Copier Program adopted in 2007.
- At least 30 percent recycled content paper for copy paper
- At least 20 percent recycled content paper for color paper
- Refusing hard copies of vendor catalogs and encouraging the use of online catalogs (currently over 30 vendors)

The following was added to all formal bids/RFP/RFQs issued in 2008:

The University of Nevada, Reno is committed to sustainable purchasing practices. Sustainability requirements are included in all University RFPs and will be different for different commodities. These requirements may include criteria for:

- Energy efficiency (such as ENERGY STAR® designations).
- Energy conservation.
- Waste reduction.
- Packaging reduction.
- Trade-ins/retrievals/refurbishment of used products.
- Use of recycled and recyclable material (products, packaging, shipping materials).
- Responsible shipping and transportation usage.

- Reduced water usage.
- Reduced paper usage (including e-procurement, e-payment).
- Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) program.

Short-Term Goals (1 year)

- Add specific language to University job announcements, job descriptions and Classified Work Performance Standards that outline the University's expectation for sustainable practices.
- To achieve more sustainable practice in our business operations, BCN Purchasing shall ask vendors to ID sustainable products in their on-line catalogs, and encourage vendors to accept p-card as method of payment.
- Work with vendors to develop better contract ID methods to improve – delivery, packaging, invoicing/payment, require recycling take-back program for the disposal of used products and assist in LEED credits.
- Further define and add the following language to all formal BID/RFP/RFQs to include the following language:

Local Preference: In all reviews, when two or more competing respondents are equally qualified, local firms shall be given preference. "Local firms" are firms that currently have a main office or a branch office or satellite office with at least three full-time employees located within various City of Reno/Sparks limits. "Equally qualified" shall mean essentially equal in the judgment of those who are evaluating the proposal.

Buy American products: In all reviews, the vendors shall agree at least 51 percent from U.S. firms and sources (FAR Definition).

Intermediate-Term Goals (1-5 years)

- Initiate a campus-wide transition toward integrated electronic ordering and processing for procurement, accounting, business services and administrative services that will include using e-signatures.
- Write a records retention policy for electronic storage of items issued in either hardcopy or electronic formats from any office (the office of record) not covered by the current NSHE records schedules. Records will be appraised as appropriate for the legal, administrative, fiscal, and historical value.
- Phase out the use of virgin paper system-wide.
- Establish and implement a cost savings/offset methodology/policy (lowered consumption offsets higher costs).
- Establish and implement strategically sourced agreements for paper, office supplies, janitorial supplies, carpet, furniture, etc. with the additional criteria of ecofriendliness.
- Introduce LEED credit requirements into all construction projects.

Long-Term Goals (5+ years)

- Establish a goal of 100 percent electronic and paperless systems for all procurement and accounting operations. This will allow us to measure and capture data for purchased products, broken down by category and to the line item by department where feasible, and set target benchmarks.

- Achieve a fully integrated and implemented electronic commerce/communications system for departments, the University, the system (NSHE) and vendors.

Food and Food Service

The Department of Residential Life, Housing and Food Service currently has a multi-year contract with Chartwells College and University Dining Services to provide dining services on the University of Nevada, Reno campus. Dining Services is comprised of one residence dining hall which serves over 2600 meals per day, as well as a convenience store, a food court, three casual restaurants, a coffee cart, and the Silver and Blue Catering operation. Dining Services is a large campus entity, employing 8 full time managerial staff; 77 full time cooks, chefs, kitchen associates, and service associates; 15 part time staff; and 80 student workers. Additionally, a large catering department is contracted by the University. The goal is to purchase quality food and prepare healthy meals for students, faculty, staff, and guests using locally grown and sustainably produced sources where possible, and use food preparation and distribution practices that minimize energy use and waste generation.

Sustainability efforts underway or in the process of implementation

- Biodegradable food/kitchen waste is sent to an off-site composting facility.
- An additional 1 percent of meal plan revenue is committed to sustainability initiatives.
- Recycling of fryer shortening.
- Recycling of plastic, aluminum, glass, and paper. A cardboard recycling bin was added for dining services.
- The addition of more locally produced products to menus, including salad greens grown hydroponically on campus.
- A commitment to use the greenest cleaning products available.

Short Term Goals (1 year)

- Design a marketing campaign to educate student/faculty/staff and the community about dining hall sustainable practices highlighting the best way to reduce, reuse and recycle. This will include updating the website.
- Minimize disposable trays, plates and utensils and minimize the use of reusable items that require a tremendous amount water to wash.
- Conduct tests of biodegradable flatware and disposables. Food Services will use biodegradable flatware and disposables for composting at the Student Farm composting facility. Depending upon the success of the testing, compostable products may or may not replace non-biodegradable products. These products are extremely expensive (50 percent cost increase over regular plastic).
- Use cleaning chemicals that are Green Seal certified (www.greenseal.org).
- Support local growers.

Intermediate Goals (1-5 years)

- Add as many organic and/or local products as possible.
- Create an organic café (student initiative).
- Add sustainability language to all new tenant contracts.

Long-Term Goals (5-10 and 10-20+ years)

- Replace aging equipment as needed with energy-efficient Energy Star models.
- All purchase orders to vendors will contain language regarding sustainability and sustainable criteria as part of a “basis for award” for all RFPs.
- Purchase socially responsible food items that ~~are~~ fairly support workers, [by providing](#) a living wage and encourage fair trade. (This will also reduce the transportation distance of goods from their source to our campus thus reducing energy consumption and pollution.)
- Increase certified sustainable meat, poultry, fish and dairy products and increase certified organic produce. Initiate a pilot program featuring locally grown and fresh, organic produce at the Down Under dining facility.
- Create a regional closed-loop food system by observing sustainability criteria for all purchasing, food preparation and service, presentation, cleaning and waste disposal, equipment and supplies, facility design and renovation, and utilities that includes evaluating and improving:
 - The ways in which energy is used and the types of energy used.
 - How waste is managed by promoting recycling and composting.
 - The types of food purchased, emphasizing local and seasonal items.
 - How food is delivered, received and stored. (This is a HUGE emitter of GHG. The distance our food travels is a big problem not only in petroleum consumption but also in refrigeration.)
 - How food is prepared, cooked and served.
 - Work with campus planners and waste disposal company to site a vessel for composting all disposable products, pulp, and post-consumer waste.
 - Network with other schools, universities, and communities to increase communication and the sharing of best practices for creating a sustainable food system.
 - Provide economical, high quality, healthful and nutritious foods without additives, pesticides or preservatives.

Conclusion

The University of Nevada, Reno has much to celebrate in terms of its sustainability efforts on campus—but there is still much work to be done. Most of the efforts described above emerged from voluntary, grassroots initiatives—spontaneous efforts from groups and individuals without central direction or coordination—and many have become formalized as they have developed and proven to be successful. Without central support and coordination, many of these initiatives will remain ad hoc and will fall short of achieving their full potential. University leaders should take the opportunity to engage the campus community, ~~document~~ [by documenting](#) and empowering ongoing efforts and encourage our University to go above and beyond current efforts in order to meet the challenge of environmental sustainability. If the University is to reduce its carbon footprint in a significant way, it is essential that more faculty, students, staff, and alumni be consulted, become involved, and make contributions to ~~in pursuit of~~ [meet our](#) sustainability goals. It will take a concerted effort to develop appropriate educational and administrative initiatives that will move the University toward a more ecologically, economically and socially sustainable campus, community and world, ~~and only by~~ [working together can we meet this challenge.](#)

Specific Recommendations

- **Incorporate sustainability into the mission of the University.** It is vital that University administration promote and emphasize the importance of sustainability measures across campus. Administration is encouraged to consider sustainable practices whenever institutional planning is done. University administration is encouraged to serve as the role model for environmental change by establishing and investing in proposals that support a sustainable campus.
- **Clarify the University's sustainability expectations in HR documents.** Add specific language to University job announcements, job descriptions and Classified Work Performance Standards that outline the University's expectation for sustainable practices. (see sample WPS below)
- **Clarify the University's sustainability expectations in Purchasing documents.** All purchase orders to vendors will contain language regarding sustainability and sustainable criteria as part of a "basis for award" for all RFP's.
- **Reduce and eliminate paper flow.** Utilize electronic signatures and SharePoint to cut down on the use of paper on campus. Initiate a campus-wide transition toward integrated electronic ordering and processing for procurement, accounting, business services and administrative services that will include using e-signatures.
- **Records retention policy.** Write a records retention policy for electronic storage of items issued in either hardcopy or electronic formats from any office (the office of record) not covered by the current NSHE records schedules. Records will be appraised as appropriate for the legal, administrative, fiscal, and historical value.
- **Establish Campus "Green" Awards.** Campus Green Awards to recognize student organizations/departments with exemplary recycling and conservation programs, and establishing outreach programs to local K-12 schools.
- **Establish an "Eco-Rep" program.** Eco-Reps are students employed by the university to educate and encourage students about living sustainably. The focus of the Eco-Rep program is to persuade students to recycle and engage them in energy awareness activities.
- **Engage non-sustainability oriented groups and disciplines in campus sustainability initiatives.** The sustainability movement has spanned many different student groups on campus that might potentially contribute to improving campus energy-use awareness. For instance, campus religious groups have recently been emphasizing environmental responsibility; the Arts and Music communities have the potential to produce a significant following. The campus is in a great position to encourage these groups to work together towards the energy conservation goals of the University as a whole.
- **Establish a green fund.** A green fund could be created from a small student fee. This fund would be collected and reserved for sustainable initiatives and available to students through an application process. These funds will provide the university the opportunity to highlight student activities and facilitate new initiatives.
- **Establish a green revolving loan.** Sustainable design projects often cost more up front than do business-as-usual models, over time these green projects tend to save considerably more money in energy conservation than the initial cost differential. Harvard's Green Campus Loan Fund (GCLF) is probably the best example of an effective green revolving loan fund in the nation. With a budget of \$12 million, the GCLF provides capital for design projects that promise to reduce University environmental impacts and have a payback period of five years or less. The departments who benefit from the energy savings repay the initial cost of the project with the money they saved at no interest.
- **Create an "Eco House" residence hall.** A dedicated residence hall would provide sustainable living options for energy conscious students on campus and allows motivated students to live sustainable lifestyles, and creates a model for sustainable living on campus to which other students might look for information and guidance.

