

Contact: Patrice Sayre/Diana Gonzalez

CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY ANNUAL REPORT

Action Requested:

- Receive the annual report on the Campus Sustainability Plan
- Approve the modifications proposed for the Plan

Executive Summary: At the March 18-19, 2009 meeting of the Board of Regents, the Campus Sustainability Plan presented by the Regent institutions was adopted. The Plan was an initiative proposed by President David Miles to provide an integrated and collaborative effort towards greater sustainability to make the Regent institutions leaders in the nation on:

- Operational practices
- Education
- Research
- Economic development

Sustainability has been defined as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (United Nations Brundtland Commission, 1987). As stated by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), there is no commonly accepted and fully understood definition of sustainability or “campus sustainability,” let alone agreement on what indicators to use in measuring it. Regent institutions intend to apply campus sustainability broadly – in the general operations of each institution, in the curriculum and experiences of students and employees, in effectively partnering with industry and government, and in technology transfer.

The Regent institutions, with their more than 4,000 on-campus and 1,000 off-campus acres (excluding farm acreage), approximately 35 million gross square feet of space, more than 70,000 students, over 45,000 employees, and hundreds of thousands of visitors to the campus annually (including more than 700,000 clinic visits to UIHC), have a significant environmental impact. Conducting significant research with distinguished faculty, Iowa’s public universities are positioned within the state and nationally to lead in the greening of buildings, purchasing and transportation. Regent institutions have an educational responsibility to students to expand discussion about sustainability, create student awareness and provide programming incorporating the principles of sustainability.

Since work began on the Campus Sustainability Plan last year, the three public universities have each added a Sustainability Coordinator to their administration. The Sustainability Coordinators will present an overview of the efforts of Regent institutions over the past year:

Elizabeth Christiansen – SUI, Director, Office of Sustainability
Merry Rankin – ISU, Program Manager, Office of Sustainability
Eric O’Brien – UNI, University Sustainability Coordinator

Each institution has also provided a report on their respective efforts in this agenda item.

Finally, revision to the Plan is requested for Board approval.