THE COUNCIL

Co-Chair: Dr. Chris Williams (ckwillia@udel.edu)
Co Chair: Sustainability Manager: Michelle Bennett (mbennet@udel.edu)
Executive Vice President’s Office: Kimberly Reinagel-Nietubicz (karn@udel.edu)
Provost’s Office: Karen Anuinas (kra@udel.edu)
Facilities Leadership: Peter Krawchyk (krawchyk@udel.edu)
Office of Student Life: Katie Morrison, Assoc. Dir. of Residence Life & Housing (kpifer@udel.edu)
Intercollegiate Athletics & Rec. Serv.: Jake Schrum, Ath. Fac. and Oper. (jschrum@udel.edu)
Mandy Minner
Representative for Community Engagement: George Irvine (girvine@udel.edu)
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at UD - Wilmington - Gloria Cooke (gcooke@comcast.net)
Faculty representatives from remaining 7 academic Colleges (2 from CAS)
CAS - Biden School representative: Dr. John Byrne (jbbyrne@udel.edu)
CAS - Humanities: Dr. McKay Jenkins (mckay@udel.edu)
COE - Dr. Michael Chajes (chajes@udel.edu)
CANR - Dr. Chris Williams (previously mentioned)
CEOE - Dr. Lindsay Naylor (lnaylor@udel.edu)
LCOBE - Dr. Anu Sivaraman (anusiva@udel.edu)
CEHD - Dr. Martha Buell (mibuell@udel.edu)
CHS - Dr. Chris Knight (caknight@udel.edu)
Graduate Student representative – Samantha Bingaman (CEOE, sebinga@udel.edu)
Graduate Student representative – Prashant Ramesh (COE, rameshpr@udel.edu)
Undergraduate Student representative – Kristie Arlotta (CEOE, arlottak@udel.edu)
Undergraduate Student representative – Amani Thurman (AS - EEP, amanidt@udel.edu)
Graduate Student Fellow – Cara Clase (AS - Public Policy, cmclase@udel.edu)

21 Members, Including 3 Extra Non-voting Students
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Council was granted 3 years (2019-2022) of financial support from the Office of the Provost in collaboration with the Faculty Senate and EVP Office.


3. The Council formed Subcommittees around 4 high-priority topics:
   - Sustainable Landscaping
   - Student Voices and Engagement
   - Carbon Neutrality
   - Sustainability in Academia

   - The actions with the greatest potential to improve our AASHE STARS score involve deeper engagement with departments and individuals to gather information about existing programming for the report.

Budget

Initial administrative support for 3 years (2019-2022) provided by the Office of the Provost, in collaboration with the Faculty Senate and EVP Office.

- $28,000 Graduate Fellow
  - Full-Fellowship (20hrs/week)
  - Conduct research and analyses on behalf of the Sustainability Council.
  - Upgrade the Sustainability website, develop a Sustainability Scorecard, generate social media content
  - Creation of communications plan to promote the Sustainability Plan upon completion.
  - Coordinate Green Liaisons and Green Grants

- $2000 Miscellaneous for meetings expenses and communication.
  - Up to 10 meetings over one calendar year.
  - Participation at national meetings.

Activity Details

At this stage we have been updating members about ongoing projects or interests on campus, such as the desire for more electric vehicle charging stations or the movement to prioritize native plants on campus.
We have challenged the Sustainability Council to organize and identify priorities to focus on and develop topical white papers, plans, or recommendations. We intend to amalgamate these documents into a broader campus plan for sustainability.

- The Sustainability Council recruited members and met every two weeks in the first five months. Meetings began in February of 2020.
- Discussed topics from these meetings are summarized below:
  - Mar. 4th: Carpooling and Council Re-branding/PR
  - Mar. 18th: AASHE STARS Report
  - Apr. 24th: Native Plants at UD
  - May 8th: Analysis of Comparator Institutions AASHE STARS Report Performance
  - May 22nd: Landscaping and Sustainability Opportunities in Academics
  - Jun. 11th: Renewable Energy at UD
  - Jul. 17th: Anaerobic Digestion at UD
- Sub-committees have been formed around high-priority topics:
  - Sustainable Landscaping
  - Student Voices and Engagement
  - Carbon Neutrality
  - Sustainability in Academia
- AASHE STARS submission, international rating, and plan for improvement
  - U. Delaware earned a ‘Bronze’ rating which is well below our competitor institutions.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges in early March, barely a month after our initial launch. We continued to host online meetings but shifted our focus to analyses and documentation that could be completed remotely. We also increased our focus on matters of justice, equity, and access in the wake of ongoing police brutality against black communities across the United States and historic protests in the midst of the pandemic.

1. AASHE STARS analyses: Periodic report organized by the Association for A Sustainable Higher Education (AASHE) that engages and recognizes universities and colleges for improved sustainability performance and long-term goals (see p. 5 for details)
   a. Comparator Analyses with similar HEIs (see below)
   b. Score Analyses to identify strategic action for future AASHE STARS reports
   c. Improvement of internal processes to administer AASHE STARS reports
   d. Begin processes AASHE STARS FY21

2. Overviews and updates on sustainability programming and legacy issues on campus
   a. Greenhouse gas reporting, energy performance, and Faculty Senate Resolution on Renewable Energy
   b. Parking, electric vehicle charging stations, carpooling, and multi-modal transportation
c. Proposed anaerobic digester research facility. If / how Sustainability Council should support?

3. Development of Council By-Laws, with discussions and vote to formally adopt planned for August/September 2020

4. Development and launch of the Sustainability Council website
   a. (www.udel.edu/sustainability/council)

5. Development of Council Priorities for sub-committee development and strategic planning

6. Draft White Papers (to be available online after completion)
   a. Sustainable Landscaping practices
   b. Carbon Neutrality
   c. Sustainability in Academic Programming

7. Network Building with campus institutes, centers, etc.
   a. Community Engagement Initiative
   b. Facilities Planning and Project Delivery Dept.
Comparator Analyses

What is AASHE STARS?
The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) is a group of educators, leaders, and sustainability professionals that aim to inspire higher education institutions to become leaders and practitioners of sustainability initiatives. One way AASHE does this is by periodically publishing the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System Report (STARS). The STARS report is a self-reporting framework that universities and colleges use to measure their sustainability performance. This report is meant to engage higher education institutions in creating long-term sustainability goals while giving them a formal platform to publicly recognize their achievements in sustainability performance.

The Results
The following graphs were created for a presentation to the Sustainability Council on May 08 2020 and utilizes results from the FY18 AASHE STARS report to compare sustainability performance at the University of Delaware with other institutions. Notations provide context.

An overview of our performance should NOT reflect a lack of activity on campus. We are still improving information gathering processes in many areas (especially Academia), so some scores will improve as we work with departments to gather information on current activities. This is our first ever AASHE STARS ranking, and the effort is driven by the Sustainability Manager and a small team of undergraduate interns.
The actions with the greatest potential to improve our AASHE STARS score involve deeper engagement with departments and individuals to gather information about existing programming for the report. It’s likely that a great deal of sustainability activity has not been captured. The formation of the Sustainability Council will greatly improve these collection efforts by increasing the prominence and priority of the AASHE STARS report, expanding this initiative’s professional networks on campus, and by sharing some of the work where appropriate. For example, the Sustainability Council’s Academic sub-committee will support efforts to gather more information for the affiliated category in AASHE STARS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPARATOR RANKS</th>
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<tr>
<td>University of Michigan</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Maryland, College Park - Gold</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania State University - Gold</td>
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<td>University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill</td>
<td>GOLD</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Virginia</td>
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<td>Carnegie Mellon University</td>
<td>GOLD</td>
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<td>Boston College</td>
<td>SILVER</td>
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<td>University of Pittsburgh</td>
<td>SILVER</td>
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<td>Lehigh University</td>
<td>SILVER</td>
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<td>University of Delaware</td>
<td>BRONZE</td>
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<td>Stony Brook</td>
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<td>Rutgers</td>
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Many actions in the “Improve / Expand Program” category are relatively simple or require few resources. For example, making an official policy public or minor adjustments to standard forms. Some of these efforts are already underway, especially in the Operations and Academic categories. Some departments on campus will improve their reporting and performance through program improvements or expansions that are not directly related to sustainability. For example, the Procurement office will update their software platform in 2021; this will greatly improve reporting on sustainability performance and other operations that are part of their core mission.

In order to compete with our comparator institutions, the University of Delaware will need to strategically expand sustainability programming in a manner that enhances university priorities. The Sustainability Council does not recommend “teaching to the AASHE STARS exam”; sustainability programming should serve the university community first. The Sustainability Council is studying the results of this AASHE STARS report as it crafts recommendations and priorities for sustainability on campus. For additional details about specific categories or any of the 93 sub-categories, please contact Michelle Bennett (mnbennet@udel.edu).
Looking Ahead

We look forward to reviewing and sharing the recommendations of our sub-committees in future months. The future is uncertain due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so we have not set deadlines for our sub-committees to produce their final reports. We felt this was the best course of action in order to give the extraordinary knowledge and skills of our community appropriate flexibility to produce high-quality work.

As the Sustainability Council identifies its core priorities in a post-pandemic university, we will produce informational white papers, strategies, recommendations, project proposals, policy changes, or other programming. Some of this work may be reserved and aggregated up into a formal Sustainability Plan. Deliverables that are time sensitive or considered to be critically important may be presented individually before a final Sustainability Plan is completed. All efforts will be made to ensure that topical deliverables will support and strengthen each other as part of a larger Plan, rather than a piecemeal approach.

In the face of a recession resulting from a major pandemic, we feel it would be inappropriate for the Sustainability Council to request funding to hire a contractor to develop the campus Sustainability Plan at this time. The reliance on volunteer engagement therefore necessitates the current strategy - to tackle complex topics in sub-committees and bring their work to the full Sustainability Council to consider, aggregate, and incorporate into a Plan.