

President's Sustainability Council

Effective February 2022

Charge

The President's Sustainability Council advises the President, via the Provost and the Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs, on sustainability and resilience at Western Washington University. The Council coordinates the work of the Climate Commitment signed in 2007. The Climate Commitment requires three simultaneous efforts organized under three tracks: academic, resilience, and carbon. The academic track of the Climate Commitment focuses on integrating sustainability into the curriculum and research. The resilience track of the Climate Commitment focuses on climate adaptation and community capacity-building to deal with a changing climate and resulting extremes. The carbon track of the Climate Commitment focuses on reducing Greenhouse Gas emissions and achieving carbon neutrality as soon as possible.

The Council also leads campus efforts to engage the campus in implementation of the 2017 Sustainability Action Plan. This includes collaborating with surrounding communities on issues related to sustainability and resilience. The Council will ensure WWU complies with the Climate Commitment and oversees the implementation of the 2017 Sustainability Plan over time. The Sustainability Action Plan is a living document which will change over the course of the next twenty years and requires regular reporting mechanisms to keep the campus informed of progress made and to inform future iterations of each chapter. All recommendations shall be made to the Provost and the Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs who will share such with the President. They will also develop an annual reporting and public communication structure to ensure the entire community is aware of the progress and accomplishments of the Council.

The President's Sustainability Council will be the body charged with expressing, upholding, and advancing the institution's full commitment to sustainability, resilience, and adaptability.

Background

Western has been a leader in many areas of sustainability since it established the nation's first College of the Environment in 1969. Our students voted to collectively fund the purchase of Renewable Energy Credits in 2005, making Western the first campus in the U.S. to offset 100% of its carbon emissions from electricity usage with a self-imposed student fee. In 2007 Western became one of the first 50 signatories to the American College and University President's Climate Commitment. In 2005 Western established the Institute for Energy Studies, an interdisciplinary program that brings together science, technology, public policy, business, and economics to prepare graduates to address the complex issues in sustainable energy. In 2017 the Sierra Club recognized Western as one of the top 30 sustainable schools in the U.S. In 2018,

WWU students launched one of the first residence hall compost programs in the country. Western continues to innovate through its academic programs, student programs, and staff enterprises to create innovative solutions to antiquated practices. Western remains committed to the vision of every member of the Western community assisting with putting sustainable practices into action on campus and in our community. We recognize sustainability is interconnected with our core values of social and economic justice. A global and informed perspective clearly shows that a truly sustainable world must be as just as it is green.

Membership

President's Sustainability Council membership is representative of all campus units and includes students, faculty, and staff. Membership votes are representative of their constituencies. Members gather input and report back to identified constituencies and are required to serve on a sub-council. Participation by non-Council faculty, students, staff, and community members is encouraged as needed to fulfill the responsibilities of the Council. Meetings of the PSC are open.

Chair

Director, Sustainability Engagement Institute (<https://sustain.wvu.edu/>)

Faculty

Recommended by Faculty Senate for three-year staggered terms

- Two faculty from different colleges with expertise, experience, and/or commitment to sustainability and resilience

Students

Appointed by Associated Students for one-year terms

- Two students with expertise, experience, and/or commitment to sustainability and resilience

Staff

Appointed by Vice President for University Relations & Marketing

- Relations & Marketing designee

Appointed by Provost

- Library designee
- Dean designee
- IT designee

Appointed by Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs

- Purchasing/Contracts designee
- Transportation Services designee
- Facilities Operations designee
- Space Management designee

Appointed by Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services

- University Residences designee
- Student Engagement designee
- Dining Services designee

Appointed by Vice President for University Advancement

- Development designee

Sustainability Staff – individuals who by nature of their position should serve on the council and help support the work

Student terms are for one year. All other appointed terms are for three years, with half of the initial appointed terms being for two years to ensure staggered membership terms over time. No more than two consecutive terms may be served by members. After a one-year hiatus, a member may request to be recommended again by the relevant body.

Meeting Schedule

The full Council meets up to six times during the academic year. Sub-councils are expected to work outside of the regular meetings. For groups whose work occurs year-round, meetings will occur during the summer as needed and desired.

First-Year Goals/Tasks

In the first year of existence, the Council will:

1. Establish a vision and mission that informs the work of the Council and Western.
2. Establish a governance structure guiding attendance, member expectations, communication mechanisms, and other procedural matters.
3. Develop and execute a plan to create the three required sub-councils that form the pillars for the Climate Commitment: carbon, resilience, and academic, as well as a sub-council for marketing and outreach in support of the Council.
4. Develop and submit a report on the Sustainability Action Plan 2017 which includes progress made on existing goals in the plan and steps necessary to update the plan to identify the relevant goals for the coming two years, expected completion by June 2022.
5. Review the Greenhouse Gas inventory and ensure it is completed and maintained.