Sustainability Committee

Education for Sustainability Steering Committee (ESSC)

Terms of Reference
1. Mandate

1.1. The ESSC will support the Office of Sustainability to review, revise, sponsor the implementation of, recommend, and report on the strategic actions outlined as Focus 1: Education for Sustainability of MacEwan University’s CSP.

2. Rationale

2.1. Focus Area 1: Education for Sustainability of MacEwan University’s Campus Sustainability Plan (CSP) outlines the following goals:

2.1.1. Education for Sustainability: Engage students with formal education programs and courses that address sustainability.

2.1.2. Participating in Sustainability: Provide students with sustainability learning experiences outside the curriculum.

2.1.3. Research for Sustainability: Develop opportunities to conduct research related to, or focused on, sustainability.

3. Definitions

3.1. The ESSC defines:

3.1.1. Sustainability is the practice of managing human and ecological systems in accordance with our global responsibility to conserve and restore the environment while advancing social equity. (Sustainability Policy D6000)

3.1.2. MacEwan University’s Campus Sustainability Plan (CSP) 2011-2014 signals our commitment to sustainability and provides a framework, which addresses our stewardship goals and performance. The CSP Strategic Framework outlines the university’s mission, scope, guiding principles and sustainability goals. The CSP Action Plan details the strategic actions, deliverables and measurements to reach the goals. This plan incorporates sustainability across three focus areas:

3.1.2.1. Education for Sustainable Development;

3.1.2.2. Sustainable Operations; and
3.1.3. **STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System™)** is a transparent, self--reporting framework for universities and colleges to measure their sustainability activities and performance.

3.1.4. **MacEwan University's Sustainability Fund** was approved by the University Board in 2008---2009 to support sustainability initiatives and its initial value was set at $CAN 500,000.

3.1.5. **Sustainability Committees** include the Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC), the Education for Sustainability Steering Committee (ESSC), the Sustainable Operations Steering Committee (SOSC), and the Planning, Administration and Engagement Steering Committee (PAESC).

3.1.6. **Sustainability Steering Committees** include the Education for Sustainability Steering Committee (ESSC), the Sustainable Operations Steering Committee (SOSC), and the Planning, Administration and Engagement Steering Committee (PAESC).

3.1.7. **Sustainability Nominations Committee** is made---up of the Co---Chairs of SAC, PAESC, ESSC, and SOSC.

3.1.8. **Sustainability---focused courses** concentrate on the concept of sustainability, including its social, economic, and environmental dimensions, or examine an issue or topic using sustainability as a lens.

3.1.8.1 **Social sustainability** is the capacity of a social system, such as a family, organization or country to function at an established level of social well--being and harmony indefinitely. Issues such as war, wealth distribution and poverty, population growth, health, inter---generational equality and justice, politics and legislation, fundamental beliefs, ethical principles and values and social equity are examples of social lenses of sustainability.

3.1.8.2 **Environmental sustainability** is the capacity of the environment to support an established level of environmental quality and natural resource extraction rates indefinitely. Issues such as air and water quality, soil and land biodiversity, climate change, ecosystems, energy and waste management are examples of environmental lenses of sustainability.

3.1.8.3 **Economic sustainability** is the capacity of an economy to support an established level of economic production indefinitely. Issues such as economic growth, consumption, natural capitalism, fair trade and ethical purchasing, employment, microfinance and impact investments are examples of economic lenses of sustainability.

3.1.9 **Sustainability---related courses** incorporate sustainability as a distinct course
component or module, or concentrate on a single sustainability principle or issue.

3.1.10 **Sustainability research** focuses on a key principle of sustainability (such as social equity or environmental stewardship); addresses a sustainability challenge (such as climate change or poverty); or furthers our understanding of the interconnectedness of societal and environmental challenges. Sustainability research leads toward solutions that support economic prosperity, social equity and well being, and ecological health.

4. **Accountability**

4.1. The ESSC will submit an annual report, work plan and recommendations to the PAESC.

4.2. The ESSC will submit relevant STARS workbooks as required to the PAESC.

5. **Responsibilities**

5.1. ESSC will be responsible for:

5.1.1. Reviewing, revising, sponsoring the implementation of, recommending and reporting on the strategic actions outlined as Focus Area 1: Education for Sustainability of the CSP;

5.1.2. Completing relevant STARS workbooks;

5.1.3. Developing and reviewing business case proposals for the use and replenishment of the Sustainability Fund; and

5.1.4. Sponsoring the implementation of approved business cases for the use and replenishment of the Sustainability Fund.

6. **Membership**

6.1. Elected Members – Up to eight members of the SAC.

6.2. Standing Members:

6.2.1. Provost and Vice---President Academic or designate (Co---Chair);

6.2.2. Head of Sustainability or designate (Co---chair);

6.2.3. Director Faculty Commons or designate;

6.2.4. Dean of Libraries or designate;

6.2.5. Dean of Arts and Science or designate;

6.2.6. Dean of Health and Community Studies or designate;

6.2.7. Dean of the Centre for the Arts and Communications or designate;

6.2.8. Dean of the School of Business or designate; and

6.2.9. Manager, Residence Services or designate.

6.3. Ex---officio members:
6.3.1. Co-Chairs of the Sustainability Committees

7. Terms of Office
7.1. Members shall serve a one or two-year term as selected by the Sustainability Nominations Committee except for student members who can serve one-year terms, and those by virtue of their positions. Terms may be renewed.

8. Operations
8.1. A resource package will be provided to members including but not limited to:
   8.1.1. MacEwan University’s CSP
   8.1.2. Sustainability Committees terms of reference
   8.1.3. Office of Sustainability Annual Report
8.2. The duties of the Co-Chairs will include:
   8.2.1. Drafting, revising and approving of agendas and minutes prior to distribution;
   8.2.2. Co-Chairing meetings;
   8.2.3. Coordinating timelines regarding feedback processes;
   8.2.4. Being a member of the Sustainability Advisory Nominations Committee;
   8.2.5. Presenting and disseminating the work and recommendations of the ESSC relevant committees.
8.3. Members who are not in attendance for more than two meetings without an excused absence may be retired.
8.4. Members are expected to review the agenda package in advance of the meeting.
8.5. Members may assign a designate in their absence; designates will be selected from the same category of membership. Designates are expected to review the agenda package in advance of the meeting and vote on the member’s behalf via Proxy.
8.6. The committee has discretion to invite resource persons to meetings as non-voting members.
8.7. Between meetings, focused discussions may occur via electronic means.
8.8. The committee will review these terms of reference annually and recommend changes to the PAESC.
8.9. The committee may establish taskforces, sub-committees and ad hoc committees as required to do its business.
8.10. The committee shall ensure a record of all decisions and discussions is maintained in good order.
8.11. University Services will provide administrative support to the committee.

9. Meetings
9.1. ESSC meets twice yearly in September and April.