Presidents Climate Commitment
Meeting Notes
October 1, 2009

Present: Fabritius, Hamm, Hansen, Jamison, MacNabb, Messer, Miles, Noltemeyer, Nyerges, Perkins, Pratt, Werner

Mike pointed out an article in the recent Economist (Sept 26-Oct 2, p 93-95) that discusses the climate impact of land use changes.

Liz reported that the environmental costs of off-campus study have been discussed in the International Study committee. Course proposers are now asked about travel impact, and this criterion will be part of future process. That committee has also discussed including an offset purchase (by students) for air travel. Our committee has not yet recommended offsets. We discussed an approach that would serve as an “internal offset.” In this system, instead of purchasing offsets through a broker at market prices, the charges would go to an identified account to support energy efficiency and sustainability programs on campus (new windows, occupancy sensors, etc.).

Laura announced the Dave Cooper presentation on mountain-top removal will be October 13.

Preston reported conversation with Dean Brownley. The existing pumps/boiler were replaced 4 years ago. And leave no obvious place to connect solar thermal system. Replacement of pool is in the long-range campus master plan. These considerations make financial pay-off more difficult. The alternative of a floating blanket for pool surface was suggested.

Patrick presented the revised Sustainability Pledge. One change was made; last sentence, replace stewards with citizens. We discussed how and when this pledge would be used. One suggestion is all graduates take the pledge at commencement. Another approach would be new first-year student take the pledge as part of matriculation. This could be part of now customary green orientation program. Another alternative was to take the Sustainability Pledge to Student Government, College Council, Faculty, Staff Congress. We will look at all these opportunities. The existing HHP courses were suggested as a setting for first-year discussion of conservation practices.

The EPA Green Power Partnership agreement has been completed. This program recognizes the purchase of electricity REC’s. Centre is the only college in the state and only college in the ACS enrolled in program.

We discussed the draft Climate Action Plan. Preston reported an offer by Chris Chivetta of 8760 Engineering to review our GHG inventory and consult on our climate action plan. The committee was pleased to receive this help, particularly if it will give us additional guidance on specific conservation projects. We decided that Preston will incorporate the suggestions to CAP received up to this point, and then the committee will delay additional review until we get the report from Chris Chivetta.
Patrick reported that a survey has been distributed for employees to report business travel. Forty responses have been received at this point. A reminder notice will be sent in a week or so.

Endre suggested that student-athletes endorse President Roush’s efforts to re-align or restructure our athletic conference. Bethany said she would take this idea to the student athletics committee.

We discussed a graduation gown that is made from recycled materials. The additional charge is $3.40 each. The committee expressed interest, particularly if the entire event could be made more environmentally responsible. We do not favor additional charge to graduates. Steve Jamison and Mike Fabritius will follow up and if appropriate recommend to appropriate level.

Our most important, and enjoyable, activity was to brain-storm ideas for projects and priorities for the coming year. In no particular order:

- Training by CTL on how to set up electronic meetings.
- Study of “ghost load”, the plug load from idle devices
- Composting
- Eco-Reps
- Green Events Policy
- Attitudes Survey (coordinate with Werner winter term course)
- Meat-free Days (collaborate with APO)
- HHP (incorporating green campus into that course)
- Campus Garden
- Building Energy Competitions (between dorms, between campuses?)
- Visibility and Public Information (getting the word out, webpage)
- RecycleMania (more promotion)
- Trash Audit (dumpster diving)
- Green City Relationship
- AASHE survey of campus sustainability (STARS)

These topics will now become the agenda for our future meetings. Committee members will explore topics and present recommendations and/or plans for adoption.