



The Development of an Institute for Sustainability at Fresno State



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Introduction & Background

As part of a university-wide innovation initiative, Fresno State has developed a mission, an organizational structure, and proposals for action for a campus Sustainability Institute. Once in place, this institute will serve as *a central hub for promoting synergies among sustainability-related learning, scholarship, teaching, and practice.*

Our core team is comprised of members from Fresno State's Facilities Management, Auxiliary Services, faculty, and student body. This interdisciplinary and interdepartmental team presented a detailed *recommendation for the development of a Sustainability Institute* to the university President and his Cabinet in May 2015. The presentation was well-received and the *President has committed to developing the proposed institute.*

Fresno State Campus Culture and Context



- Regional University with students drawn primarily from agriculturally-rich San Joaquin Valley
- 23,000 undergraduate, graduate and post-baccalaureate
- **Hispanic Serving Institution** (40% Hispanic students)
- **Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution** (15% Asian American, of whom half are Hmong)
- Student body includes large proportions of under-represented minorities (50% in 2011), First-Generation Students (72% in 2011) and Pell Grant eligible students (63% in 2011)
- 94% students live off-campus



Project Milestones from 2013-2015

2013 - 2014

- Campus as a Living Lab (CALL) award from the CSU Chancellor's Office
- Created **Sustainability Learning Community**
- Funding used to hire **Student Sustainability Ambassadors**
- Learned about existing efforts while hosting **Earth Week, Green Bag Lunches**, etc. to promote campus sustainability projects
- Developed partnerships with campus staff, students, faculty, & administrators

Fall 2014

- Learning community continued as student club with faculty advisors
- Submitted the development of a campus-wide sustainability institute in response to **President's Bold Ideas Challenge**
- **Hosted a summit** to inform campus community about ongoing projects and bring together key stakeholders to work on an action plan for the creation of the institute
- Bold idea selected to participate in a campus-wide **Creativity and Innovation for Effectiveness program** (CAIFE) providing structural, educational, and financial support from the President's Office.

Spring 2015

- CAIFE Program:
 - **Formation of core team** with valuable partners and stakeholders
 - **Formal guidance and training on change management**, support for the successful implementation of our project
- **Met regularly and presented project proposal to President and his Cabinet**
- **CALL awarded** for course redesign aligned with campus planning initiatives
- Continued meetings over the summer to develop plans for the institute
- Team member promoted to **Sustainability and Special Projects Manager**

Core Team Members: Creation of Campus Partnerships



Executive Sponsor: Associate Vice President for Facilities Management

- Demonstrated commitment from the President's cabinet
- Served as project champion
- Involved in critical decision making across campus



Team Facilitator: Associate Director of Facilities Management

- Facilitated meetings and guides discussions
- Served as liaison with other project teams and administration
- Prepared project charter (with input from Sponsor and Team)



Team Members: Faculty from Earth & Environmental Sciences and Psychology (Applied Behavior Analysis), a **Grounds Crew employee** who is pursuing a masters' degree in Sustainability Management, **Auxiliary Accounting staff**, and a **Student Leader**



- Empowered by engaged supervisors
- Made recommendations on feasibility of potential projects
- Mapped current state and design proposed future state
- Directly involved in execution of plans and recommendations proposed by this team



Student Involvement & Engagement



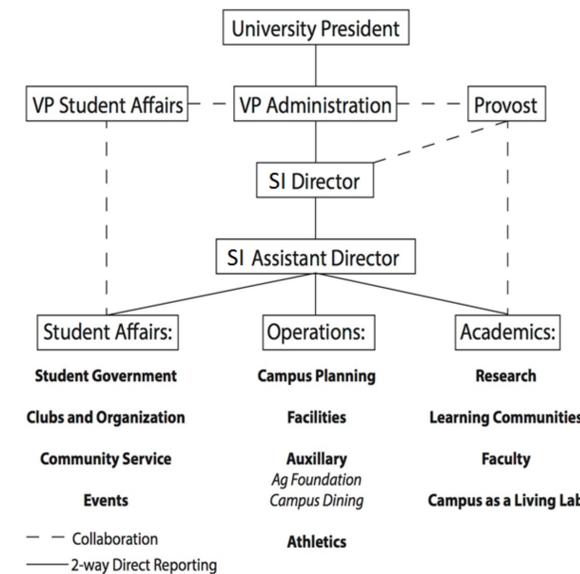
Bringing Sustainability to the Classroom: CALL 2015-2016

Faculty, staff, and students are working to carry out our mission as the Sustainability Institute continues to develop. In addition to leading ongoing projects and a new sustainability-themed first-year experience for incoming STEM students, faculty from across the campus will be redesigning their courses with support from the CSU Chancellor's Office.

Goal: Campus-wide coordination of students collecting AASHE STARS data

- CALL Champion + Key Faculty Partners + Student Leaders = **Sustainability Action Team**
- Courses: CSM Intro, Industrial Technology, Psychology, Biology, & Ornamental Horticulture
- **Learning outcomes aligned with campus assessment, planning, and improvement efforts**
- Students will make recommendations based on their research in these areas:
 - **Water Use:** *Analyze water use data in dorms*, comparing September (high use) to February (low use) data.
 - **Building Energy Consumption:** Investigate *energy distribution and consumption* in these campus dorms, identify areas of improvement.
 - **Landscape Management & Biodiversity:** Conduct *ecological footprint analysis* to serve as *baseline* of how current landscape management practices impact campus water use and quality, energy consumption, carbon emissions, nutrients, heat budgets, and biodiversity.

Proposed Institute Organizational Structure



Mission Statement

The Sustainability Institute (SI) will promote solutions via *learning, scholarship, engagement, and practice.* SI creates a central hub for interdisciplinary work among faculty, staff, students, administrators, and the community to:

- **Empower** student leadership and success through sustainability education and engagement
- **Collaborate** across campus and the community to foster sustainable environmental, social, and economic resources
- **Promote** scholarly research and creative work that provides sustainable solutions to regional issues with global significance
- **Communicate** sustainable practices that improve the campus and community
- **Build** an inclusive campus culture for all members to participate and create a sustainable campus, community, and future

Proposals for Action & Commitment

We presented these recommendations to the President's Cabinet:

- Create a **Sustainability Institute Director** and **Assistant Director** to coordinate cross-campus and align campus sustainability goals across academics, operations, student affairs, and athletics
- Sign the American College & University **Presidents' Climate Commitment** and join AASHE and STARS program.
- Create a sustainability committee to support and coordinate with Director and Assistant Director
- Create an academic degree pathway for sustainability

Acknowledgements

- CSU Chancellor's Office Campus as a Living Lab Awards (2014, 2015)
- Fresno State Creativity and Innovation for Effectiveness Program
- Additional Team Members: Bob Boyd, Rick Finden, Michelle Gaither, Beth Weinman, and Criss Wilhite