

Sustainability Committee Annual Report May 2011

Submitted by Brian Obach, Chair, Sustainability Committee

The Sustainability Committee held its first meeting in September of 2010 after having been created through a faculty resolution in December of 2009 and following the election of members. Brian Obach, the LA&S representative and chair of the Department of Sociology, was elected to chair the committee.

The mission outlined in the faculty resolution includes a broad set of responsibilities involving campus education, curriculum, and operations management as they relate to sustainability issues. The committee initially considered some short term campus environmental initiatives. However, it was soon decided that the primary and most urgent responsibility of the committee in its first year should be to develop a Sustainability Plan, which would bring the college into compliance with the terms of the American College and University President's Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), a national agreement signed by President Poskanzer in 2008. The Sustainability Plan is designed to serve as a guide for the college to achieve climate neutrality, the central focus of the ACUPCC.

The committee met eight times throughout the year and shared correspondence between meetings. Initial meetings were focused on identifying the scope of the Sustainability Plan and reviewing models from other campuses. A basic set of environmental issue areas was established in accordance with ACUPCC guidelines (transportation, building infrastructure, energy use, curriculum etc.). The committee decided upon developing a 60 year plan to achieve full carbon neutrality with interim goals for every five to ten years starting from a baseline year of 2010. The committee then sought to create specific measureable goals for each environmental issue area.

Much of the spring 2011 semester was spent gathering baseline measures and developing measurement protocols for the various goals identified for the plan. A great deal of data was collected and protocols have been developed for a number of measurements, however some will require more time and greater technical expertise than is readily available to the committee. The committee will not have a completed plan prepared in time for the deadline of May 2011, thus the designated campus Sustainability Officer (Director of Facilities Operations and Maintenance, Brian Pine) will seek an additional extension from the ACUPCC. The committee hopes to complete the Plan in the coming months.