Environmental Sustainability Committee Meeting Discussion Notes - November 22

Breakout Room 1

Moderator: Candy Ho

Attendees: Dan Jackson, Rebecca Harbut, Karen Terblanche, Iain Hunter, Todd Mundle, David Stewart

Note taking: Chani Joseph

KPU has just been awarded five million dollars by an anonymous donor to support its efforts toward the SDGs. Make a pitch on a project(s) you'd like to see funded. [Dream question; priority setting]

- Dan: EV charging!
- Rebecca: Food. Touches on so many aspects – curriculum & learning, how our institution operates/logistics, access to food, can touch many different aspects of SDGs. Looking at food sovereignty, food access, how does our cafeteria source, what is the affordability, how do students access, assessment of the current state/deep dive on that.
- Dan: work w/ Chartwells & other PSIs re trying to find local food sources
- Karen: re. fleet, current agreement expiring in 2024, students would really like to see more green options, maybe a portion to offset initial capital cost of purchasing green fleet
- Iain: develop specifications & guidelines around carbon-neutral building, and apply the rest of the funding towards looking at our current buildings and how they can better serve programs like the community food initiative, looking at revenue generation & community partnerships, experiential learning – if you don't have a great building to do that in, then can't do it. Daycare that's coming is a great example. The library is an opportunity as well.
- Todd: $5M is not a lot, but are there related projects we haven't been able to do yet?
- Iain: doing some studies – e.g. Climate Adaptation study – gives us information on pathways to follow.
- Todd: removing asphalt & planting instead. Rarely see the need for all the parking/vehicle space that we have right now.
- David: $5M would go a long way from an Accessibility standpoint. We would get Rick Hansen to do an audit of all our buildings, and then we would action those recommendations.

What trends and changes are you seeing in your role and professional contexts (i.e., conferences) that make you think of possibilities for sustainability at KPU and how we could better serve our community? [Environmental scan; best practice]

- Iain: Establishment of ESC and EDI cmt – KPU is taking on & facilitating open discussions. Design up front instead of redoing later.

- Todd: campus planning has been really helpful in the past 4 years in reflecting on what our community could be. More inclusive. Reflecting on KPU's role within the broader community & how KPU better integrates with, the broader community over time.
- Rebecca: KPU is quite unique as PSI due to community embeddedness. Great relationship with City Council, Richmond Food Bank, Disability Society of Richmond, etc. – do lots with outside partners. University is not Ivory Tower. SDGs are very cross-cutting across depts. Academics work closely with Facilities – unusual for a PSI. This is one of KPU's assets. Other institutions struggling with how to break down these silos.

What is the most significant positive outcome we could ever hope to achieve with respect to sustainability at KPU? What do you imagine your own role might be in helping to make this happen? [Priority setting; ownership]

- Rebecca: Most significant outcome would be to model sustainability in our community, and making sure we're messaging that to the broader community. *importance of communication*
- Karen: other unis have great storytelling re their sustainability initiatives (on website/etc.). KPU has so many of those initiatives on the go, but we're not necessarily showcasing.
- David: once sustainability stops being a special project and it's part of our DNA, then we're getting closer to where we need to be.
- Iain: KPU used to be more a whim of Exec in place. But now we have more of an ingrained plan that supercedes that sidelining by personal ambition. We need 100% active participation and ensuring each of our own individual depts are contributing.
- David: everyone needs to be a leader in this, so that it can't keep getting kicked down the line when a new leader comes in.
- Todd: we need to continue to challenge when others try to push us off of that route.
- David: we need to build ourselves up so we're more resilient to government change.
- Candy: sustaining sustainability. The way you talk, share, the day-to-day.
- Iain: lots of overlap between social justice & sustainability, etc.
- Candy: yes – definitions.
- Rebecca: empowering everyone in the org to understand the definitions and empowering them to act on them. Sense of ownership & accountability.

Breakout Room 2
>Moderator: Brent Elliott
>Attendees: Brett Favaro, Thomas Kwadzovia, David Stewart
>Note Taking: Gurmanpreet Kaur, Alexandra Taylor

KPU has just been awarded five million dollars by an anonymous donor to support its efforts toward the SDGs. Make a pitch on a project(s) you'd like to see funded. [Dream question; priority setting]

- Release 30% faculty with the research background self-directed research towards SDGs
- Projects that would speed up our 2050 goals campus planning - carbon neutral goals
- Carbon neutral projects -invest in technology/ research that would promote carbon neutrality
- Focus on current projects that we want to take care of and timelines - before taking on anything big, what do we need to take care of now. Identify projects under certain SDGs and use the SDG as a way to interpret them.

What trends and changes are you seeing in your role and professional contexts (i.e., conferences) that make you think of possibilities for sustainability at KPU and how we could better serve our community? [Environmental scan; best practice]

- The Conference Board of Canada partnered with the Future Skills Centre to create reports on the labour market under decarbonization. https://fsc-ccf.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/FSC_from-low-mobility-to-rapid-growth-jobs.pdf
    - We are used to looking backwards and but need to embrace first principles and forecasting risks – be ok with taking risks
    - Need risk tolerance – we have to embrace these things (example: decarbonization)
    - Need to be ok with putting money down and making mistakes
    - Opportunities to meet with institutions that are becoming more acceptable of risk – address issues that are coming up that we may not know

- We have made great strides in the sustainability goals but restrictive policies in procurement are restrictive and prevent us from gaining advantages for vulnerable groups, first nations procurement .. opportunity for us to engage those groups (they are treated the same way as dominate groups
    - Improve (Indigenous) participation and providing an inclusive environment: Look for those partnerships opportunities
    - What can we suggest to the board of execs to work within the restrictions that we have with trade? Our policies around procurement are driven by KPU internal preference
    - Positive way to examine this going forward, building new ways of doing things

- Pandemic has made us realize how much carbon footprint we can save by not commuting to the office or the university
    - The waste generated is reduced but how to teach without in person classes is also difficult (teaching science lab online)

What is the most significant positive outcome we could ever hope to achieve with respect to sustainability at KPU? What do you imagine your own role might be in helping to make this happen? [Priority setting; ownership]

- Being carbon neutral - not just a responsibility as an institution but also as an individual correcting daily choices/actions
    - We need to be ok with doing things differently and being risk averse
- Raise the level of awareness at KPU so everyone is aware about those choices and targets/indicators… doing a lot of great things, but the awareness is very small
- It comes down to a personal responsibility as an individual about our personal choices that we make
- Individual choices are shaped by pressures and motivational factors around in the environment that are created by the leaders/ bigger institutions
    - We have opportunities to influence the outcomes by individualizing the climate response
- If KPU is carbon neutral, climate change will still happen but can:
    - Teaching everyone (other universities) how we did it – make it go viral
    - Look at what we are doing today, not waiting till 2050
        - The old way of framing is that we should be 5 % colder, so we will admit 5% less…not enough need to embrace new technologies
- As an institution of higher learning, can we teach everybody on how to do it by 2030? 2035? Personal choices are constrained by the environment we are in ..
    - We can make it easier for people to make those choices that lead to carbon neutrality

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Debrief: Moving Forward (all meeting attendees):

There will be an ongoing need to report out – will require a continuing connection with other faculty groups, with a continued interest to feed in what projects are happening.
- Keep the baseline that we are creating up to date – Will need to be a group effort to keep us up to date

What are the difficult things? High-level or interconnected projects
- Some get missed
    - Lot of projects are happening 'on the side' that isn't directly tied to our channel
- The way we inventory them
- Projects don't get told because they don't get tied to one group
- How do we capture what is going on at the university?
    - Is there a point person that could do extra digging?

To take this work to the next level: requires resources
- looks good and sounds good, and just because we signed on do we have the adequate resources– the resources means we are committed

Reporting out from the committees can be onerous.

- maybe part of the pathway as we map this out, identifying where that information is already being mapped out
- Identifying where committees are already to reporting out
- This info may already be reported out, where are the gaps?

We have been doing a lot of great work but need to pay attention to the social aspect of sustainability.

- Anytime you are talking about sustainability, there is a tendency to focus on green/environment: need to focus on vulnerable groups

One of the things we can do as a post-secondary is teach: when we do this projects and have a committee, how do we turn this into teaching material?

- There should always be a requirement for signage
- How can our projects go viral and help other institutions - not about tooting your own horn, but helping

Check-ins:

- All water filling stations are accessible, removing all broken filling stations and removing old water fountains
- Free menstrual products in all washrooms –launch in January
- Ev charging on all campuses - currently working on
- Success story: Utilizing the Richmond farm potatoes for poutines
- Success story: Feed bc organization 'Pitch and Plate – learn about locally produced products
- Select vending machines carrying exclusively local snacks and beverages