CREATING CONSENSUS:
LESSONS FROM JHU’S GREEN EVENTS TASK FORCE

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OUTLOOK

• Introductions
• Setting the Stage
  • Asking the Right Questions
• Methodology
  • Identifying the Right Process
• Outcome
  • Results and Next Steps
• Applicability
  • Mapping your Success
An event doesn’t need to have a sustainability focus, for it to be a sustainable event.
INTEGRATE RATHER THAN CREATE

- Frequency and Format
- Resource Intensive
- Progressive Process
- Expand Audience
- Cultural Connection
LEVERAGING YOUR LANDSCAPE

Event
Education
Experience
LEGACY OF CHANGE

Coordination

Cultural Impact

Transformation
WHAT MAKES AN EVENT GREEN?
AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

Waste Reduction

Waste Diversion

Energy & Water Use

Food

Other Materials
ESTABLISHING EXPECTATIONS

Defining criteria based on feasibility, agreeability, and sustainability.

At JHU:

• Waste reduction efforts at all planning stages
• All waste can be recycled or composted
• Locally sourced food with Veg/Vegan options
• Attendee engagement
WHERE TO START?

• Targeting Events
• Initiating Conversation
• Scaling Up
## Determining Your Approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Type</th>
<th>Using Metrics</th>
<th>Outlining Priorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large vs. small</td>
<td>Size</td>
<td>Cost impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>Control-ability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural Context</td>
<td>Scale of impact</td>
<td>Low hanging fruit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regularity</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Degree of difficulty</td>
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CONSIDERATIONS

For regular event planners
• Provide feedback on *existing event support process* to inform improvements.

For operations
• Provide guidance on the *nuances of planning* a sustainable waste event.

For everyone
• Examine the opportunities to *transmit standards* and successes to students.

The key is: it’s not asking people to do more, just do differently.
LOGICAL LOGISTICS

Joining the Table
Started with events that had a direct connection with Facilities

Capitalizing on Inclusive Impact
Embedding sustainability into the shared student story

Cultivating Connections
Establishing and nurturing relationships
ORIENTING FRESHMEN

Challenges and Opportunities

• Food and serve-ware
• Unused programs
• Balloon Arches
• Bottled Water
• Throwaway giveaways
• Student’s first impression
PROGRESSIVE SUCCESSES
SENDING OFF SENIORS

Challenges and opportunities
• Catering
• Commencement Programs
• Bottled Water
• Regalia
• Unfamiliar visitors
• Students Lasting Impression
COMMENCEMENT IMPROVEMENTS

- Conversion to compostables
- Gown recycling drop boxes
- Recycled-content programs
- Fewer Programs
- Pre-event information shared electronically
- Manned waste stations
WHY A TASK FORCE?
ECONOMY OF INCLUSION

• Multiple event planners
• Separate efforts
• Common goals
• Lack of consistency in coordination
GROUP GOAL

To collaboratively define sustainable event planning and identify best practices for consistent coordination and implementation.
KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- Event Planners
  - Administration
  - Student Affairs
  - Athletics

- Support Staff
  - Facilities
  - Dining

One Conversation

Consistent Application
TIMELINE

Meeting 1
• Initial introduction of concept and consensus building

Meeting 2
• Draft mission statement, set specific goal(s), share feedback on focus areas

Meeting 3
• Finalize group goals and recommendations into formal best practices report
COMPARTMENTALIZING CHANGE

- Resources
- Infrastructure
- Logistics
- Day of Needs
- Accountability / Recognition
MEETING MECHANICS

JHU Green Events Task Force

Focus Areas Feedback Sheet

Logistics

Resources

Infrastructure

Day of Support

Recognition/Accountability

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JHU Green Events Task Force

**Vision:** For university events of any scale to consciously consider and integrate principles of resource conservation, responsible sourcing and disposal of materials, and pursue low impact operations, so campus programming comprehensively supports a culture of sustainability.

**Mission Statement:** As a task force, our mission is to represent the various perspectives and processes that make up the tapestry of event planning and programming, and set institutional goals around sustainability and campus events.

**Strategic goals:**
- Goal 1: Ensure all namesake university events are zero waste by 2020.
- Goal 2: Strive for 75% of student-planned programs to be zero waste by 2025.
- Goal 3: Bottled water free events by...
- Goal 4: All event materials and giveaways are sustainably sourced by...

**Goal Drafting:**
CHALLENGE #1: THE GREEN CATERER

They aren’t as elusive or expensive as you think

- Use a phased approach (JHU Spring Fair)
  - Phase 1: OoS provide funding for first year
  - Phase 2: JHU preferred pricing extended to caterers for second year
  - Phase 3: Caterers establish their own supply chain and pricing
CHALLENGE #2: ONE EVENT, MANY PLANNERS

Control is limited, but Influence is possible

Be like Nike and “Just Do It”
- Set the example
- Share resources

Demonstrate support of JHU’s commitment
- Current staff/faculty/students
- Prospective
- Alumni

Encourage a consistent experience for the guests
- A bin is a bin is a bin
KEY TAKEAWAYS

For participants:

- This is an iterative process
- Trial and error doesn’t have to be disastrous
- Think hard about real vs. perceived barriers
- Use your nexus of influence
- You are not alone
- Overcoming operational challenges

For sustainability staff:

- Clear “ask” critical
- Be sensitive to fear and risk aversion
- Realistic expectations for execution
WHAT WAS THE RESULT?

- Acceptance and Optimism
- Formal and Informal Team Work
- Clearly defined:
  1. Goal
  2. Best Practices
  3. Short/Long Term Action Items
SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY

All namesake university events are zero waste by 2020.

- **Timeline:** enough time for action, without delaying progress indefinitely
- **Scope:** umbrella for various facets of event planning, coordination, and promotion
- **Feasibility:** not starting at ground zero; with a conjoined effort, more is possible.
CONTINUED ACTION

• Three Working Groups
  • Outreach & Education
  • Resources & Infrastructure
  • Planning & Coordination

• Task Force co-chair on each group
  • Meet periodically to create implementation plan to begin in Fall 2015

• Full Task Force Reconvene 2-3 times per year

• Replicate Model on other campuses
APPLYING BROADLY

Form your own Task Force!

- Invitees
- Timeline
- Desired Outcome(s)
QUESTIONS?

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