Planning, not Purchasing:

Significant Sustainability Solutions Using Existing Infrastructure

Froggi VanRiper
Knox College
Paradigms for Creating Sustainable Systems

- Building infrastructure that makes life “more sustainable” despite our effort (or knowledge!)

- Enforcing laws or incentives that affect user behavior

- Infrastructure that guides our behavior to create sustainable habits
  - (at its best, this also increases sustainable motivations, and involves all in progress and innovation)
Why focus on Behavior?

- Education is not resource-intensive

- Once established, sustainable behavior becomes a culture; it is passed on to incoming campus community members, reducing your effort over time

- The effects of learned sustainable behavior extend beyond spatial and temporal bounds of the campus experience
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Educate and improve diversion with "waste stations"

Rochester University
https://www.rochester.edu/sustainability/gogreen/MCoutdoor.html

Knox College
Embrace creative opportunities for affordable receptacles

City of St. Helens Arts & Cultural Commission

Ontario's West Park Secondary School students (grade 11 and 12)

Sculpture Center, Long Island, NY

Ontario Monoqui Park, Chapala, Mexico
Improve diversion and cleanliness with educational signage

Marketing students impact campus recycling efforts

University of Washington
Increase diversion and reduce contamination with volunteer waste station ambassadors
Minimize capital cost of new receptacles by harnessing employee creativity

deskside paper collection box competition!
Maximize move-in cardboard recovery with collection pens

University of Vermont

Georgia Tech
Monetize Recyclables
Stock a designated printer with one-sided paper
Institutionalize reuse while embracing employee originality

Personal Office Mug Competition!

- most creative
- most school pride
- ugliest
- most personally appropriate...
Reduce waste and expenditures with an office supply sharing program

Since August 2013, we found new homes for over $30k of office supplies!

The Swap Shop is where you can find University owned office supplies for free! The Swap Shop is intended for University personnel (faculty and staff) to exchange office supplies in new or good condition that are no longer needed amongst departments. The Office of Sustainability & Recycling Center stores all Swap Shop supplies.
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Reduce energy consumption with mini-educational campaigns

**Did you know?**

Our school wastes 800,000 kWh ($96,000) a year, from "vampire power".

Fight vampire power – unplug or use a power strip to disconnect your computers, speakers, microwaves, etc. when they aren't in use.

Learn more: knox.edu/sustainability
Reduce energy and water consumption through meter competitions
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Grow local, healthy food for the school or community

Knox College Farm, IL

Dickinson College Farm, PA

Paul Quinn College, TX
Offer community garden space for individuals to grow food

Manhattanville College community garden, NY
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Compost Pre-Consumer waste on campus

Lawrence U, Appleton WI
Compost post-consumer waste on campus

Upper West Side Public Schools, Manhattan

Knox College, Galesburg IL
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Reduce fertilizer use with leguminous turf blends
Reduce mowed areas with native plantings
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Increase community collaboration and reduce waste with "share zones"

Knox College Share Shop

Principia College "share box"
Build a loaner bicycle fleet from abandoned bikes

Indiana U "crimson cruisers"

Knox College bike share
Create a sustainable office certification program

Invest in save at the Gold level. These actions will help you embed sustainable practices in your office. A higher level comes with larger commitments, both in terms of time and money. We are up for the challenge! Review the actions below and select a minimum of 5 Green Office actions that your office would like to achieve.

**Participation category:**
1. We reviewed our Bronze and Silver checklist to reduce behavior loops.
2. We report on our sustainability initiatives and progress in our department/unit/section’s annual report.
3. We follow all aspects of the University of Maryland’s Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy: Policy VIII-210(X).
4. Our office incorporates sustainability into its projects and programs (PDGs).
5. We aim to perform a minimum of five Green Office actions (from Bronze, Silver, and Gold) at home.

**Energy and technology category:**
6. We use vegetable-based ink and 100 percent PCC for all printed materials and publications.
7. When we replace or update appliances and equipment, we purchase those that are ENERGY STAR, EPEAT, or CEE qualified.

**Kitchen and lunch room category:**
8. We provide kitchen facilities so that our employees can more easily eat at work.

**Transportation category:**
13. Our office has reduced our greenhouse gas footprint by 20 percent identified in Bronze.
14. We purchase travel accommodations for our members of our office.
15. We do not idle vehicles that would otherwise be idled.
16. We support sustainable transportation initiatives.
17. Our office provides a variety of non-fossil fuel for our use.
18. When travel is required, we choose the most environmentally-friendly option.

**Waste and recycling category:**
19. We compost our food waste.
20. We collect e-waste and other hazardous waste for disposal.

**Write your own action:**

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*Source: GreenOfficeCertification.org*
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Transferable Strategies

• Invite enthusiastic student groups to serve as limbs of the Sustainability Office (labor, coordination, promotion)

• Harness the power of competition

• Foster a sense of ownership of sustainability initiatives by leveraging community effort and talents

• Employ bite-sized and visual info campaigns
Do you have any of these assets?
How can you leverage them for successful campus sustainability initiatives?

SYSTEM RESOURCES
- Internally managed dining services
- Internally managed grounds department
- Internally managed bookstore
- Campus-wide purchasing department
- Sustainability director or coordinator
- Administration committed to pursuing sustainability initiatives
- Office or department managers
- A small campus (1500 students or fewer)
- A very large campus
- Proximity to a major urban area
- Campus public transit system or proximity to local public transit
- Strong art program

PHYSICAL RESOURCES
- Individual building meters for water or electricity
- Sinks for dishwashing in office areas
- Undeveloped campus area
- Groundskeeping equipment
- Existing waste containers
- 55 gallon drums
- Showers for cycle commuters

COMMUNICATION and COLLABORATION
- Student clubs committed to sustainability
- Flexible curriculum, creative instructors (opportunities to capitalize on student labor and ingenuity)
- Incentivised “collaborative curriculum design”
- A communication path, or "tree" for sharing important news, policies, and information
Group Discussion

Divide into groups containing a mix of students, facilities representatives, educators, and sustainability professionals.

1. Identify campus resources you haven't capitalized on yet. Add to the base list, as ideas come to the surface.

2. Choose one high-priority sustainability issue on your campus. How can use your existing resources to address this issue with minimal resource expenditure?

3. What challenges will you face? How can you overcome these challenges?

4. Individually write a brief prioritized action plan for one initiative you plan to implement on your campus