Dear President Thomas:

We respectfully write to request your signature as endorsement of the attached formal charge for a campus sustainability committee at Western Illinois University. A campus sustainability committee was formed in spring 2006 but never officially charged. Establishing an official charge for the committee will help Western to pursue, achieve, and document initiatives that foster environmental sustainability, reduce our environmental impact, and result in energy and other cost savings for the campus.

Since 2006, Western has articulated several commitments to sustainability.

In AY 2006-2007, President Goldfarb signed the Illinois Campus Sustainability Compact with a gold-level commitment to integrate sustainability throughout Western’s campus and work toward measured improvement. By doing so, the campus committed to having a written statement, policy, or charge acknowledging support for sustainability, and to creating a focal point to lead sustainability work on campus such as a committee, board, or specific office.

In March 2007 the Western Illinois University Board of Trustees adopted a comprehensive energy management program for the WIU campus, the primary initiatives of which focus on 1) initiating capital projects that reduce energy consumption; 2) developing construction standards that promote energy efficiency and to attain at least LEED Silver ratings for new campus construction; 3) improving operational efficiencies in production and delivery of campus utilities; and 4) educating the campus community on energy issues and to market the energy program.

Additionally, Western is a signatory of the Talloires Declaration, agreeing to increase awareness of environmentally sustainable development; create an institutional culture of sustainability; educate for environmentally responsible citizenship; foster environmental literacy for all; practice institutional ecology; involve all stakeholders; collaborate for interdisciplinary approaches; establish partnerships with primary and secondary schools to help develop the capacity for interdisciplinary teaching about population, environment, and sustainable development; broaden service and outreach nationally and internationally; and establish a committee to continue this work and inform and support our community through our efforts.

Finally, in the University Strategic Plan for 2012-2022, under Goal 5: Social Responsibility, Western states that it will “reinforce institutional commitments to environmental sustainability” [Action 5] by:

a) striving to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification in new construction and major renovations [Physical Plant, Auxiliary Facilities System, Quad Cities Facilities];
b) supporting educational opportunities designed to raise awareness of social, environmental and sustainability issues [Faculty, Staff, Campus Sustainability Committee, University Libraries];

c) achieving statewide, regional, and national leadership in environmental sustainability within all aspects of University operations (e.g., the curriculum, community and co-curricular events, new construction, and administrative operations) [Faculty and Staff].

We welcome your questions and hope that you consider our proposal and request.

Sincerely,

Scott Coker, Director
Facilities Management

Amy Mossman, Interim Director
Liberal Arts and Sciences Program
Campus Sustainability Committee

The Campus Sustainability Committee is a university-wide, standing committee appointed by the President that will be advisory to the President and report to the Provost.

Rationale

The Campus Sustainability Committee is the leading university body for sustainability on campus. The Committee’s mission is to 1) collaboratively research and implement sustainable practices that reduce environmental impact from campus operations; 2) implement and track sustainable cost-saving measures in the areas of energy and resource consumption; and 3) promote sustainability among WIU students, faculty, and staff as well as throughout the broader community.

Scope

The committee is specifically charged with tasks in the following areas:

Goal Development

Annually review, develop, and prioritize short and long term actions for meeting the sustainability measures Western has committed to in the university strategic plan, the Talloires Declaration, and the Illinois Campus Sustainability Compact as appropriate within current budgetary, cultural, and legislative considerations.

Implement new sustainability best practices and foster continuing ones. [Illinois Campus Sustainability Compact, Silver Commitment]

Integrate sustainability broadly into campus operations and management. [Illinois Campus Sustainability Compact, Gold Commitment]

Communication, Education, and Awareness

Endorse or participate in at least one national or international program that recognizes and encourages progress toward sustainability in higher education. [Illinois Campus Sustainability Compact, Gold Commitment]

At least annually, notify the campus community at large on the progress the institution is making toward achieving sustainability goals. [Illinois Campus Sustainability Compact, Gold Commitment]

Conduct and promote campus events, workshops, showcases, and exhibits focused on enhancing sustainability efforts and practices so as to more fully engage students, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders (e.g., Environmental Summit, Sustainability Brownbaggers, Coneflower Project).

Promote and encourage the integration of sustainability into the curriculum where appropriate.

Maintain a website that raises awareness and generates interest about the institution’s sustainability efforts. [Illinois Campus Sustainability Compact, Bronze Commitment]
Create opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders to provide suggestions for advancing sustainability on campus. [Illinois Campus Sustainability Compact, Bronze Commitment]

Review, Tracking, and Assessment

Evaluate sustainability initiatives and projects based on an established schedule and indicators for tracking progress.

Track (with the aim of reducing) Western Illinois University’s impact on the environment in the areas of energy, water, waste, buildings, transportation, purchasing, grounds, food and dining, social equity, academics and research, and education and outreach.

Establish and maintain a recording process for the President and stakeholders that tracks sustainability initiatives that result in reduced environmental impact and cost savings to the university.

Research and review potential projects and initiatives brought forward from stakeholders that would enable Western to meet and exceed its sustainability commitments and goals. This committee will offer support to put the ideas into a format for review and decision by the President.

Set measurable sustainability objectives or targets and include a timeframe for meeting the objectives in areas such as energy consumption, water use, stormwater runoff, vehicle use, food purchases, paper use, habitat preservation, and greenhouse gas emissions. [Illinois Campus Sustainability Compact, Silver Commitment]

Membership

The committee will be co-chaired by the Director of Facilities Management or Sustainability Coordinator, and a member annually elected by the voting members. The committee will elect a secretary every year.

Membership shall consist of 13 voting members, including:

- the Director of Facilities Management
- the Sustainability Coordinator
- a representative from the Environmental Summit Planning Committee
- two faculty or staff recommended by the Office of the Provost and Academic Vice President
- two students, one recommended by the Inter-Hall Council and one recommended by the Office of Student Activities
- two staff members recommended by the Vice President of Advancement and Public Services
- two staff members recommended by the Vice President for Student Services
- one staff member recommended by the Vice President for Administrative Services
- one staff member recommended by the Vice President for Quad Cities and Planning

Others who are interested are welcome to serve as non-voting members.
Committee members will serve a three-year term on the committee, with the exception of the Sustainability Coordinator and Director of Facilities Management, who will continue on the committee, and the student members, who will each serve 1-year terms.

Sub-committees may be formed to focus on specific issues or initiatives that require research or substantial additional work.

**Procedures**

Meetings will be scheduled once per month unless otherwise decided by committee process. Committee members should be aware that there will be a time commitment to the process aside from monthly meetings (i.e., sub committees, work sessions).

Committee meetings will have formal structure that will include meeting agenda, announcements, old business, new business.

Robert’s Rules of Order will be followed during committee meetings.

Meeting minutes will be taken and posted to the sustainability website and the sustainability listserv within five working days of the meeting.

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Jack Thomas  
President  
Ken Hawkinson  
Provost and Academic Vice President

Julie DeWees  
Vice President Administrative Services