

Building a Sustainability Effort at a Regional Public University

A Five Year Retrospective

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Sustainability at a Regional Public University

- **Western Illinois University Overview**
 - **Two campuses**
 - Macomb, Residential Campus, ~10,500 students
 - Quad Cities, Commuter Campus, ~ 2000 students
 - **Students**
 - Primarily first and second generation college
 - Largely employment oriented, little activism history
 - Predominantly undergraduate
 - From Chicago area, western Illinois, eastern Iowa
 - **Resources**
 - State support essentially flat for past 5 years
 - No capital budget in last five Years
 - Deferred maintenance backlog of \$174 .8 Million Critical

Sustainability at a Regional Public University

- **Gestation Phase**

- **Recycling, Mid 1990's**
- **Environmental Studies Minor Created, 1997**
- **Several Environmentally Concerned Faculty Join WIU in Various Departments, 1998-2003+**
 - **Began Building A Social Network**
 - **One Began Attending Greening The Campus**
- **Horn Field Campus Director Proposes Green Sustainability Center & Planning Begins, 2003**
- **First WIU Environmental Summit Held, 2004**
- **Institute of Environmental Studies Revived, New Director With Campus Sustainability Interest Hired, 2005**

Sustainability at a Regional Public University

- **Leadership Phase**
 - **President Communicates Importance of Strategic Planning Initiative to the University Community in Key Addresses 2003**
 - **Strategic Planning Sub-Committee Sustainability Recommendations Adopted by President, 2004**
 - **President Signs Talloires Declaration, 2005**
 - **WIU Creates Sustainability Committee and Joins AASHE, 2006**
 - **University Pledges to Lt. Governor 's Illinois Sustainable University Compact, 2006**
 - **WIU Joins US EPA Energy Star Partnership, 2006**

Sustainability at a Regional Public University

- Mobilization
 - Cross-functional Sustainability Committee Created
 - Membership mostly Faculty and Staff - Student Involvement increasing in 2009 (membership open to all)
 - Identify Key Priorities and Initiatives, 2007
 - Energy Management
 - Design Standards
 - Procurement
 - Transportation
 - Recycling, Composting, Reuse
 - Curriculum, Education & Awareness
 - Landscaping
 - Integrated Pest Management

Sustainability at a Regional Public University

- Implementation

- Energy Strategy Adopted By WIU Board of Trustees, 2007
- Green Purchasing Standard Adopted by WIU, 2007
- Changed to Sustainable Take-out Dining Utensils, 2007
- Energy Star Vending Machines Mandated, 2007
- Committed to LEED Silver Minimum Building Standard, 2007
- Invested \$620,000 in Sustainable Initiatives in FY08 – (FY09)
- Last 10 WIU Vehicles Purchased or Leased are Hybrids
- Participate in Recyclemania, 2007, 2008, 2009
- Web Site Creation, 2008 (www.wiu.edu/sustainability)
- Established 1-1/2 Acre Thompson Prairie, 2007
- Installed Earth Tub Composter, 2009
- Governor's grant for a Campus Rain Garden 4/2009

Sustainability at a Regional Public University

- Implementation
 - Over \$1 Million in Lighting Upgrades with 50% Grants
 - Design Grant for LEED Design at Multi Cultural Center
 - Geothermal System
 - Sedum (green roof system)
 - Grant, Second System in Design for Quad Cities Campus
 - Sustainability Declared Campus Theme for 2007 – 2008
 - Over 45 Different Events
 - Uses Low Mercury Lamps - Recycles Used Lamps
 - Initiating Programmed Lighting Maintenance (PLM)
 - LED Exit Sign Replacement Program
 - Using Sugar Beet Deicer Supplements to Salt

Sustainability at a Regional Public University

- Self Assessment
 - Strong Response with Limited Resources
 - University Support Significant
 - Top Leadership Continues to Communicate Importance
 - State Leadership Support (very “Green” Governor)
 - Greater Resources Needed Across the Board
 - More Student Involvement Desired
 - Sustainability Coordinator Approved
- Key Lessons
 - Importance of Building Networks
 - Critical Significance of Being In the Strategic Plan
 - Progress Possible But Difficult Without Active Student or Sustainability Coordinator Role

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Discussion

www.wiu.edu/sustainability