Environmental Caucus Meeting
Monday, September 10th, 2012, 12:30 – 1:45 p.m.
ARD Large Pod (Building 56)

Attendees: Eva Putzova, Kevin Ordean, Melody Hartke, Liz Wiggen, Rod Parnell, Nolan Bade, Scott Perelstein, Kim Curtis, Sarah Johnson, Lauren Berutich, John Morris, Jim Allen, Cat Sullivan, Cynthia Kosso, David Bousquet, Ron Hubert, Cori Cusker, Susan Williams, Karin Wadsack, David McCain, Laura Hueneke, Lindsay Wagner, Nick Koressel, Luis Fernandez, Susan Thompson, Nate Cairney, Casey Fisher, Shodi, Abe Springer

- The EC will use re-usable name taps to replace long introductions at the beginning of each meeting.

Announcement: “GIVE” Volunteer abroad: trips to Nicaragua and Tanzania to build and construct new schools using 'eco' techniques. Academic credit is available. Meeting this week- Thursday at Oak Creek 11am-5pm for an informational meeting. Contact: amy_Mackenzie13@hotmail.com

I. Communication & Coordination within Institutional Hierarchy. (Rod)
   a. Mission vs. Function (Using the EC mission statement and strategic plan)
   b. EC accomplishments went out. If you have anything to add or change, please let us know! Announcements will go out once a week. If you have any to add, you can email: environmentalcaucus@nau.edu, ecw52@nau.edu, or rod.parnell@nau.edu
   c. Relationship to CoCo Sus
   d. What can we implement; what’s our scope?

- Look at how we operate, not what we aspire to do. Strategic initiatives include: curricular, co-curricular (internships, clubs, Green NAU website), Carbon Neutrality/Climate Action Plan, Support for EC Action Teams, and Public Relations and Outreach.
- Caucus is more of a process than it is a thing. Collaboration, working with people is the focus. The EC is non-hierarchal, not officially part of the University structure.
  o What direction does/should the info flow? Up? (to CoCoSUS, President) or more mutual relationships. What does this look like? What would we like to see? Information, collaboration and process needs to be going both ways.
  o How does the Green Fund, an independent source of sustainability initiatives, affect what EC does?
  o How should the Office of Sustainability interact with EC (currently as partner in Green NAU)
  o What is the significance of institutional partners like the Office of Sustainability and CoCoSus versus, others that are not part of the institutional framework (like action teams)?
o If we want a reliable campus network for sustainability, need to think about dynamic systems- build feedback loops for the group and for the learning. It’s dysfunctional unless we have feedback.

o What’s the problem we are trying to solve? Communication, slow action, the Climate Action Plan? What can we take “up the chain” fast and collaborate on?

o Who makes up CoCo SUS? Does CoCo SUS a sharing mechanism or an advocacy on the ground? Answer: President appointed Liz Grobsmith to form a committee to look at sustainability and climate action activities on the ground in action, and to communicate about what’s going on in different divisions. Includes VP’s from different departments. Goal- an executive body with authority that could get things done.

o So, what are the relative roles and what can the interaction be?

o If CoCoSus serves a more executive function, should the EC focus on education, dissemination & advocacy roles. Example- assist in comprehensive marketing and action for waste systems (e.g. recycling and composting) across campus. This has come up repeatedly, but EC lacks the resources to enact a campaign; CoCoSus could help.

o Make a solid case for the value of CoCoSus.

o CoCo Sus- better communicate via Green NAU to students/others.

o What kinds of messages would you like to send to CoCoSus and what would you like to hear back?

II. Updates:

a. Caryn Massey- New Green Fund Chair!
   - Faculty nominations for Green Fund (Caryn): two positions available- administration and faculty seat. You can email Caryn if you are interested. cm749@nau.edu

b. Nominations for EC Steering Committee:
   - Send to: Rod.Parnell@nau.edu

III. Strategic Plan Revision brainstorm: (led by Eva)

   • One of the Seven Goals is: “Vibrant Sustainability.”
   • Need help thinking about questions (both internal and externally) about sustainability to get engaged in discussion around sustainability topics.
   • Compare what the questions are to what the current plan says.
   • How do we assess sustainability learning outcomes?
   • Looking for reoccurring themes.
   • Look for more information on Green NAU/FB
   • Reflect on the University Mission. What themes to include:
     o Enhancing community
     o Engaged citizens, engaged learning
     o Increase health and wellness
     o Residential education
Questions we came up with include:

- What are the best practices involving students, faculty and staff in co-creation (enhanced sustainability practices).
- How do we better manage the most impressive projects/experiences that impact students and community? How do we find out about these projects? (Communication).
- Introduce GLI and ask: “how will that help you in the future or with your professional goals?”
- Ask ideas on how to link University and Community region? What are the ways we can strengthen those links?
- How do we connect student’s priorities with sustainability and the administration?
- How do we link university and community organizations together that provide key pedagogical opportunities for students and enhance the capacity for organizations?
- How do you win the ‘hearts and minds’ of people that are on ‘the fence?’ (large scale progress)
- How will resources for sustainability be sustained? (build initiatives/priorities)
- How can the University landscape design and practices better reflect it’s commitment to sustainability?

Next meeting: Wednesday, October 24th, 2012.
Agenda items include:
- AASHE, report back