Environmental Caucus Agenda
Monday, September 12, 2011, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.
ARD Large Pod (Building 56)

Attendees: Shelley Silbert, Kristen Bullard, Nate Cairney, Kevin Ordean, Paul Gazda, Jarret Childers, Jason Lowry, Cori Cusker, Nolan Bade, Alison Adams, Kathiee Rose, Maggie McKeever, Harvey Charles, Rom Coles, Rod Parnell, Abe Springer, Tim Clark, Jan Bowers, Cynthia Kosso, David Bousquet, Carl Ramsey, Laura Hueneke, Marielle Cody, Liz Grobsmith, Moldy Hartke, Mesham Elnagar, Agnes Drogi, Rob Dutton, Luis Fernandez, Andrea Houchard, Katherine Amara

I. Introductions, and Brief Individual Announcements
   a. NAU is currently hosting a Fulbright Scholar from the Czech Republic, Petr Patka. Petr will have an office in suite 120 in the ARD building. He is interested in understanding the work of NGOs and universities in environmental education, organic farming, and conservation in northern Arizona – if anyone is interested in having him speak in their classes or elsewhere, please contact him.
   b. The Environmental Caucus Potluck will be September 21 from 6-8 pm at Carl Ramsey’s LEED certified house.
      i. A carpool is currently being organized and would leave from the ARD building at 5:35 pm. Please contact Rod if you are interested in participating either as a driver or passenger.
      ii. Because winter is coming and it is getting darker earlier, Carl suggest that you drive carefully and safely – in addition to night-driving risks, there may be cows wandering near the road, so please travel safely!
      iii. There will be tours of the home at 6 pm and 6:30 pm. Please be prompt in order to enjoy the entire tour.
      iv. The potluck will likely be outside, so please bring a jacket. There will be dishes and drinks supplied.
   c. On September 22, Car-Free Flagstaff will be returning. Sign-up at http://carfreeflag.com and pledge to spend your day traveling without a car. The organization hopes to have 1000 pledges by September 22.
   d. Cline Library has a new resource – a room designated to house information and media relating to the three global learning initiatives as well as media celebrating various world cultures. This room is located near the front entrance to the library, on the way to the Media Check-Out Center. For more information, please contact Kathiee Rose at library.health@nau.edu
   e. NAU Reads has lots of information related to its book selection this year, No Impact Man. Be sure to visit the NAU website at http://nau.edu/naureads.
   f. The WACBAT action team recently received money to hire four interns for the upcoming 2011-2012 school year. Since these interns include NAU students, WACBAT hopes to spend more time working with other NAU initiatives.
   g. Funding has been secured to hire a graduate assistant to help with the Environmental Caucus. Since the caucus meeting, hiring was finalized and we are pleased to announce that Liz Wiggen will be the EC GA for this academic year.
   h. The Green Fund needs more applicants for their selection committee, especially graduate student applicants. Applications are on the Green Fund website – http://green.nau.edu/greenfund. For more information, please contact Melody Hartke at greenfund@nau.edu
II. Environmental Caucus Short Business Items
   a. Update on Student Environmental Caucus and on GreenJacks: Nolan Bade
      i. GreenJacks was developed to create a more cultural base for students to identify as environmentally-aware students and to involve those students who want to participate in campus sustainability but don’t know where to start.
      ii. Goals:
          1. Create an inclusive identity for GreenJacks – emphasize that all NAU students can subscribe to this identity and recruit lots of students.
          2. See each member participate in at least one other environmental student group connected to Environmental Caucus as well as participate on a GreenJacks committee.
          3. Sustain student leadership and energy on campus.
          4. Recruit through newsletters, a blog, and social media outreach in addition to increasing visibility at incoming and transfer student orientation.
          5. Reach out to students who are not traditionally an environmental student and encourage them to participate.
      iii. Meetings are every other Friday – 3rd floor of the HLC in the café.

III. Discussion item: Coordinating Committee for Sustainability
   a. Potential goals suggested by EC steering committee include transforming the campus (education, research, operations) and connecting campus and community
   b. Update on Committee – Liz Grobsmith will be heading this committee commissioned by NAU President Haeger.
      i. Current members include: Eva Putzova, Bryan Chase, David Bousquet, Rod Parnell, Bryan McLaren, Shelley Silbert, Blase Codgin,
      ii. Possible additions might include Laura Huenneke and a community member
      iii. The main goal of this committee is to facilitate communication between the many sectors on campus and the smaller sustainability initiatives within them to build a strong, interconnected web of sustainability work.
      iv. Although this project needs time to become fully functioning, NAU needs to start working towards carbon neutrality in all sectors through teamwork
      v. Also, this group will also be able to build a comprehensive look at sustainability on campus
      vi. Rod notes that this type of organization is common on other college campuses.
   c. What can be the Environmental Caucus’s role in helping this committee?
      i. Paul asked what kind of communication will there be with the community.
         1. Liz said that there will be a staff person to help keep notes for the committee, which will be widely disseminated.
      ii. A suggestion was made to bring in people from student, faculty and staff senates.
         1. Liz attends most of these types of meetings and councils, and could possibly share this information at these types of meetings. Depending on what needs are identified for communication
between groups, sub-groups in these senates can be created to work on specific issues.

2. Rod suggested that the EC could help plan how the committee would work with the faculty senate and the various advisory councils.

iii. Rod emphasized the importance of moving forward aggressively with contacts in the community. He cited AASHE’s Oberlin link as an example: [http://www.aashe.org/blog/sneak-peek-david-orrs-vision-next-frontier-campus-sustainability](http://www.aashe.org/blog/sneak-peek-david-orrs-vision-next-frontier-campus-sustainability)

d. EC feedback on potential goals (see previous list serve attachment “final prioritizing Envi Caucus Strategic tasks.docx):

i. Task list has been organized from highest to lowest importance with prioritize sub-tasks to accomplish main goals.

ii. Abe noted that goals might be more easily completed with student participation – STARS done for classes, etc. – which would also relate to a goal to enhance student engagement.
   1. Rod clarified that the listed goals are not necessarily independent from each, and that they will likely end up closely related in action.
   2. Rom added that success can only happen when all of the many people on campus are involved. Many leaders have stepped up to the plate on campus and if we are able to tap into this commitment we can do a lot of serious transformative work – more than what small groups scattered around campus could do.

iii. Carl mentioned that indoor air quality issues such as spores and radon could be a big issue with new construction on campus.
   1. Shelley agreed and suggested that this issue could be turned into a student project – monitoring air quality in buildings on campus, for example. What type of structure does NAU need to prompt student participation in this type of group? How can the EC help facilitate and streamline this and to inspire faculty to bring in this work to their students?

iv. Rod said that the EC Steering Committee feels as if it hasn’t tied in as well with the GLI despite attempts to do to. How can this be accomplished? How can sustainability curriculum be truly brought into course programs?
   1. Laura asserted that this should be the highest priority for NAU. A lot of energy is coming from the GLI and the action teams, and this strength should be utilized without wasting it. In order to create a truly sustainable campaign we need a way to keep track of the success of projects or how things are not replicated or failed multiple times despite students cycling in and out. EC perhaps would be better at managing this over the CoCoSus group.

v. Laura also noted that she felt that Goal 5 and Goal 4 seem nearly the same – especially due to the financial state of NAU, there needs to be a lot of reallotment of resources. This committee, CoCoSus, might be a good place to strategize for resource usage based on Caucus ideas. How can we make sure the very best ideas do end up going somewhere?
1. Luis felt that Goals 4 and 5 were very different but connected goals. Because students leave after graduation, memory and history of projects can be lost. However, new ideas will continue to come along as students are a renewable source of them.

2. Kathee agreed with this concept, and added that this could be used to our advantage – showcasing alumni sustainability work might inspire future students.

3. Rom wondered how to make the resource that is NAU students less vulnerable and more renewable and suggested starting with residence life. Mentoring in this setting can help create a structured history of what work is going on in order to support one goal despite the coming and going of students.

vi. Rod said that we need to work on cultivating a rigorous and well-designed approach for a dispersed effort in sustainability across university units, academic, and co-curricular activities. Courses themselves can end too soon to foster long-term dedication to sustainability. Is there another approach that would create some kind of long-term participation?

1. Liz suggested developing a more systematic way ensuring the statement that all NAU graduates will be familiar with sustainability principles and notions.

   a. Harvey noted that the GLI aims to use the majors as a principle sight for doing this work by fostering accountability in students. We need to be relentless in showing this is the way to advance sustainability. We need to push this in liberal studies, in FYS, with NAU Reads to encourage these concepts. This may take a few years and multiple and sustained approaches to get this to work.

   b. Liz added that creating a role for a possible Vice-Provost of Sustainability could help manage and tackle long-term projects like this.

vii. Abe posed the question of creating student/faculty liaisons to foster communication between the groups. He also suggested improving and expanding the EnvironMentors program at NAU.

viii. Rom suggested working harder to bring these projects to CEFNS, specifically. Perhaps discussions could be facilitated to improve sustainability communication in CEFNS.

   a. Abe wondered if this disconnection with CEFNS could be a pedagogy issue – teamwork isn’t fostered as much. Apprenticeship/Internships

      i. Laura noted that faculty numbers have decreased drastically in CEFNS in the past two years, so it may be harder to get high quality results with fewer faculty.

   b. Rod also observed that CEFNS faculty may not be able to bring in as many different sustainability-related disciplines into the classroom due to history of the fields.

ix. Liz wanted to make a final comment about the Associate Vice-Provost for Sustainability position – due to big budget cuts and lost of faculty across the board, it would be impossible to create an administration
position to fill this role. An alternative being worked on would be to hire someone part-time to start tackling the work so it can at least be started even if a full-time position would be created later. A position description will need to be modified for these changed but will likely be open for applicants in the fall to be hired in the spring. Please contact Liz about this application.

IV. Action Team Check-ins: Although Action Team check-ins were not a part of the main meeting, action teams are still open for participation. Please contact those involved with the action team you are interested in for more information.

a. ACUP Climate Commitment (Lindsay Wagner)
b. NAU's Environmental Identity
c. Student Environmental Caucus (Nolan Bade)
d. Transportation Action Team (Kristen Bullard)
e. Water Action Team
f. Sustainable Environmental Practices (Paul Gazda, Patrick Pynes)
g. Curriculum and the Environment (Blase Scarnati, Rom Coles)

Next Meeting:
Wednesday, October 12, 2011, 12:00-1:30
ARD Large Pod