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***President's Advisory Committee on Sustainability (PACS)  
Report 2014—2017***

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This report describes the major activities undertaken by the President's Advisory Committee on Sustainability (PACS) during the period 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2017.

"The intent of the President's Advisory Committee on Sustainability (PACS) is to support the vision of the Strategic Plan and help guide the University of Regina in ensuring that the best insight, knowledge, and leadership, as well as high ethical standards regarding sustainability, are brought to decisions around sustainability in the areas of operations, education, research, performance evaluation and community service." *PACS Terms of Reference*

This report is organized according to the areas of focus in the University of Regina's Sustainability Strategic Plan.

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***Leadership***

*BE MINDFUL OF WHERE WE ARE GOING... LEADERSHIP ON SUSTAINABILITY*

*Leadership is essential to transition the campus to a living lab model of sustainability and community engagement*

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**Sustainability Strategic Plan**

In 2012 PACS initiated the creation of a *U of R Sustainability Strategic Plan (SSP)* and after much hard work and consultation the SSP sub-committee along with PACS presented the plan to the President for approval. In November 2015 the President endorsed the SSP and in January 2016 the *2015-2020 Sustainability Strategic Plan* was launched publicly.

The plan presents a vision and mission for sustainability with five strategic areas of focus (leadership, waste, energy, transportation, and communication and engagement).

**Terms of Reference**

PACS updated its Terms of Reference to ensure alignment with the University's Strategic Plan, *peyak aski kikawinaw*. The President approved the updates in October 2016 and the updated version is available on the PACS website.

**Terms of Members**

PACS welcomed the term renewal of four of its members: Jocelyn Crivea as the Consortium for Global Change Management representative,

Roger Petry as the RCE Saskatchewan representative (Carol Reyda as an alternate), Stephanie Young as the academic representative, and Darren Cherwaty as an administrative representative.

**Theme Years**

The theme for 2014-2015 was Water but with the creation of the SSP, PACS had not been able to focus or promote this theme as intended.

**Sustainability Policy**

PACS determined that the Sustainability Policy would arise from the current *Sustainability Strategic Plan* and align with the University of Regina Strategic Plan, *peyak aski kikawinaw*.

**Sustainability Metrics**

The University of Regina is able to measure its broad institutional performance using STARS. As an official STARS Reporter, the University's results can be accessed publicly.

**AASHE & STARS**

The *Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)*

officially recognized the University of Regina as a *Sustainability Tracking and Rating System (STARS)* Reporter in November 2015. This certification is valid for three years and was awarded based on the U of R's accomplishments in campus sustainability. As an official Reporter, the University's results are publicly available on the STARS website.

### **Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development – Saskatchewan**

U of R is a founding partner in RCE-SK ([www.saskrce.ca](http://www.saskrce.ca)). Several joint RCE-UR events were held in conjunction with PACS including visits from other RCEs under the UN University initiative.

### **RCE-SK Recognition Awards**

The RCE Saskatchewan Education for Sustainable Development Recognition Event recognized five projects from the University of Regina in 2015, four in 2016 including the *Sustainability Strategic Plan* and *Sustainability and Community Engagement Fund (SCEF)*, and three in 2017 including the UR Sustainability Certificate and the UR Print Optimization Program.

The role universities play globally is an important one and this event highlights the post-secondary education sector.

In May 2015 student Minsoo Cho represented RCE Saskatchewan at the official opening of Sejahtera Centre in the Asia-Pacific. Her representation generated recognition among international RCEs, formed a link for future projects and promoted sustainability initiatives.

### **Fair Trade Campus**

Maria Aman, an Engineers Without Borders and Canadian Fair Trade Network Saskatchewan representative and Damien Bolingbroke, an Engineers Without Borders member joined PACS

to ask for support in making the U of R a Fair Trade Campus.

After much discussion, PACS determined that a full fair trade campus certification is pre-mature at this time but certainly something to work toward. Though the requirements are achievable, the cost increase is not something the University Community is prepared for. University vendors have been encouraged to offer more fair trade options and the Communications sub-committee will work on communicating the benefits of fair trade options. As fair trade options become more popular, PACS will re-visit the option of becoming a fully certified fair trade campus.

### **Sustainability Leadership**

With the College Avenue Campus Renewal Project in full force Facilities Management no longer had the capacity to support the Sustainability Coordinator position. This position has been vacant since April 2016 and will remain so until a funding solution is found.

Until a new Coordinator is in place, committee members agreed to hire a student who can provide PACS with the more basic, yet incredibly important functions the Sustainability Coordinator managed. The student has been tasked with maintaining an online Facebook and Twitter presence, updating and maintaining the Sustainability webpage with current and relevant information, organizing and maintaining the UR Sustainability email inbox, and where possible, participating in and supporting various sustainability projects and initiatives. Anything the student is unable to manage or answer will be sent to PACS for response.

Funding for a permanent Sustainability Coordinator position was requested in the 2017-18 budget but because of the budget reductions, the request could not be granted.

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## **Waste**

*BEING MINDFUL OF ALL WE USE...DECREASE WASTE*

*Waste in all its forms was the number one concern for students, faculty, and staff. Members of the community felt that reducing waste is the greatest opportunity for impact for the University of Regina.*

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### **Food Waste Management-Luther College**

In Fall 2012 Luther College Cafeteria improved its sustainability footprint by changing dish sizes and durability, moving the location of utensils and

desserts, and introducing trayless lunches. Along with cost reductions, Luther College has seen a reduction in food, water and chemical waste.

### **Composting Project**

In November 2015 third-year Biology student Atiyah Bagha presented on campus composting to PACS. She is part of an RPIRG working group on composting and challenged PACS to work with current students and faculty members to advance composting on our campus while reducing the amount of material taken to landfills.

Professor Chris Yost, in collaboration with UR Team Compost and UR Engineering students, generated and submitted a plan and proposal on how to fund an in-vessel composter on campus and the benefits it would provide the University. They highlighted how the University would become a leader in waste reduction and sustainability.

Though the benefits of this idea are sound and certainly worthy, the University is not able to fund this initiative under the current budgetary constraints. In order to advance this initiative and plan, this group of individuals is actively planning to submit funding applications for various grants to assist with this project.

### **Coffee Grounds Recycling Pilot Program**

Unlike the large scale Composting Project, the Coffee Grounds Recycling Pilot Program, which

began in January 2017, is a smaller composting program offering similar results but on a reduced scale. In the short period of 30 January to 30 March 2017 just over one ton of coffee grounds was composted.

UR Custodial Services and a UR composting team, made up of student volunteers, has partnered with Loraas Disposal who will provide the University a composting bin and regular disposal services. The start-up costs of this program have been covered by the SCEF and it is believed that the savings gained from less waste going to the landfill will offset any additional costs of this project. If this project is deemed successful the project team will explore funding on an on-going basis (if required).

As capacity allows, the UR composting team will look to include additional campus kitchens and vendors in this recycling program. This team has begun planning for the development of vegetable composition and hope to further explore this option as the campus community becomes more familiar with the coffee grounds recycling program.

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## **Energy**

*BEING MINDFUL OF HOW WE CONSUME ENERGY.... BE EFFICIENT, SUPPORT ALTERNATIVES*

*The challenge posed by climate change requires rethinking and retooling the manner in which the University makes decisions and provides opportunities for the University to explore alternative energy sources and practical applications. These include natural energy sources, such as wind, geothermal, and solar energy, which can be used directly for practical and applied uses on campus.*

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### **Print optimization project**

During the first five years of the project, the number of printer devices on campus were reduced from 1196 to 675 and this has saved the

University an estimated \$1.4M. The target number of devices on campus is 317 which, if reached, could bring potential savings of \$4.4M. The success of this program was formally recognized at the 2017 RCE Saskatchewan Recognition Awards.

### **Renovations and Construction**

Indigenization and sustainability are the main themes in the design of both the Kisik Towers and the College Avenue Campus Renewal.

The construction of the new residences, Kisik Towers, is now complete and the building was officially opened in September 2015.

Funds and Partnerships for the renovation of College Avenue campus, specifically the Darke Hall were confirmed in June 2016.

### **Geothermal Energy Heating**

PACS welcomed the idea of understanding more about geothermal energy. In May 2016 a group of experts presented PACS the advantages of geothermal energy and the benefits it could bring to the U of R.

Investing in Geothermal Energy Heating would put the University on the map as the first and only university in Canada to run this type of system. The long term benefits the University would garner are invaluable.

A working committee presented to the President and Executive Team and has begun exploring funding and partner opportunities.

### **Energy Management with SaskPower**

In late 2015, the University of Regina Facilities Management partnered with SaskPower on energy management projects worth \$3M.

Over the next three years some of the various projects that will be worked on are:

- LED lighting;
- ventilation systems re-commissioning; and
- enhancements to FM's energy management information system

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## **Transportation**

*BEING MINDFUL OF HOW WE MOVE...SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION*

*With thousands of people going to and from the University of Regina on a given day, the University is responsible for supporting and using sustainable, multi-modal forms of transportation. This will not only reduce our carbon footprint but will enable the University to serve as a role model for the wider community.*

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### **Universal Bus Pass**

In September 2015 the Universal Bus Pass (U-Pass) was approved first by the student body then by Regina City Council.

Beginning September 2016, students will receive a U-Pass allowing them city-wide transportation at a reduced rate. This initiative will significantly reduce environmental footprints, air pollution and will contribute to less congestion on campus.

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## **Communication and Engagement**

*BEING MINDFUL OF HOW WE COMMUNICATE.... ENGAGE THE UNIVERSITY AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY*

*Participants of the survey and consultation sessions consistently commented that*

- *the University of Regina does great things that no one knows about.*
- *to change the culture, we need to celebrate and profile sustainability research, teaching, and action.*
- *the University of Regina needs to better engage with the wider community and illustrate how the University is a resource to help in solving community problems.*

*It is the responsibility of every student, faculty and staff member to spread the word – of their own work and that of their colleagues and friends.*

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### **Regina Farmers' Market**

In December 2015, the Board of the Regina Farmers' Market (RFM) decided to discontinue their on-campus market despite commitment from vendors. The main reasons the RFM decided to discontinue this market was due to a difficulty in advertising and maintaining a selection of fresh produce during the slower months. They also feared that their brand would suffer as they weren't able to maintain the consistency their customers expected of them. They hoped to see more of the outside community attend these

markets and wondered if the lack of parking and accessibility played into the overall lack in popularity.

This feedback will become valuable information as the U of R looks into future partnerships with various organizations.

### **Edible Campus Apiary**

An apiary located on the Classroom Building rooftop highlights the importance of bees and what they do for the environment.

### **Plant Health Care Model (PHCM)**

The PHCM is an all-natural lawn-care model and is being used in some areas of campus as an alternative to pesticide and chemical fertilizer treatment. The goal of PHCM is to expand the research and determine if it is a feasible lawn care model for the entire campus.

This lawn-care model was expanded to include the Academic Green. Student Andres Palma, who assisted in the maintenance from mid-May to late-September 2015, reported that it has shown signs of improved health. This project has come in under budget, and received positive feedback. Palma recommends the continued expansion of this model on campus.

### **Open Educational Resources (OERs) and Open Text Books**

In November 2014, the University began discussing OER and the potential it has to become a valuable support to the University community. OERs are any type of educational materials that are in the public domain or introduced with an open licence. The nature of these open materials means that anyone can legally and freely copy, use, adapt and re-share them. OERs range from textbooks to curricula, syllabi, lecture notes, assignments, tests, projects, audio, video and animation.

In November 2015, the province of Saskatchewan provided \$250,000 over three years for the preparation of Open Text Books. The Open Text Books initiative is being coordinated through the University of Regina Press office, under the leadership of Bruce Walsh.

### **Sustainability and Community Engagement Fund (SCEF)**

The SCEF has seen significant short and long-term impacts on campus and receives great interest from students and the University community. It continues to award funding to innovative sustainable projects and fosters positive impacts in our community.

In 2015 the SCEF awarded \$15,960 to five innovative projects on campus and in 2014, \$24,880 was distributed to nine.

In the absence of a Sustainability Coordinator, PACS agreed to update the SCEF guidelines and application form for the 2017 SCEF. These updated documents will be ready for the September call for applications.

### **Certificate in Sustainability**

PACS unanimously endorsed the Certificate in Sustainability, Faculty of Arts, proposal as being congruent with the University's sustainability initiatives.

The certificate was approved by Senate in June 2016 and becomes effective Fall 2016.

### **Communications sub-committee**

A sub-committee of PACS was formed to communicate campus sustainability initiatives, events, etc. and engage the campus in sustainability actions. This sub-committee is made up of PACS members, External Relations and Faculty.