

Motion to the General Faculty to establish a *Committee on Environmental Sustainability*

Text of the Motion

The Environmental Sustainability Working Group hereby moves that a *Committee on Environmental Sustainability* (CES) be established as a standing committee of the General Faculty. The CES's principal duties will be to plan, oversee, and promote implementation of the *Oberlin College Environmental Policy*, as set forth by the President's *Environmental Policy Advisory Committee* (EPAC) in August of 2003 and approved by the Board of Trustees in March of 2004; to facilitate future environmental initiatives; and to foster an on-campus culture of environmental stewardship. The CES will also support and facilitate efforts by Oberlin College to publicize its role as a leader in campus sustainability and environmental citizenship in general. As such, it will be charged with ensuring that the campus and outside world are educated as to the progress Oberlin is making towards a green campus.

The CES membership will comprise:

- a) six (6) members of the teaching faculty, who will be appointed via standard procedures (i.e., Nominations Committee recommendation followed by General Faculty approval). Nominations Committee recommendations should be made with an eye toward college/conservatory and divisional representation.
- b) the following *ex officio* members, or their designates:
 - The Sustainability Coordinator
 - The Provost
 - The Vice President of Finance
 - The Director of Facilities Operations
 - The Director of Facilities Planning and Construction
 - The Vice President of Development and Alumni Affairs
- c) two (2) student members, appointed by the Student Senate
- d) a member or designate of Oberlin City Council (non-voting)

The CES will work closely with the Sustainability Coordinator to accomplish its goals. Its authority will derive from its status as a standing committee of the General Faculty; and, as such, it will report periodically to the General Faculty on the progress made towards sustainability objectives.

Rationale

The Environmental Policy Advisory Committee (EPAC), created by President Dye in 2001, delivered admirably on its charge to develop a comprehensive environmental policy for Oberlin College. EPAC's members served at the pleasure of the President, a situation which creates uncertainty about the EPAC's future role, influence, and, indeed, its continued existence beyond the term of the current administration. Under the *present* proposal, EPAC would cease to exist once the CES is established. In addition to promoting the policies established by EPAC, the CES would assume EPAC's remaining responsibility for the performance evaluation of the Sustainability Coordinator (as is stipulated in the Coordinator's job description). What is needed now is a standing committee whose members possess the will, the technical expertise and the administrative and budgetary authority to promote effectively the implementation of the existing environmental policy and to advance generally an agenda of environmental stewardship. A critical first task for the CES will be to translate the existing environmental policy into a prioritized set of specific goals and strategies, and to establish mechanisms for monitoring these against relevant timetables and budgets. Although such planning is necessarily an ongoing process, we believe that a meaningful "first draft" can be completed rapidly so that already-existing and time-sensitive opportunities to further "green" the campus are not missed.

We urge our colleagues to recognize the importance of the CES's charge to Oberlin College, to the local environs, and, indeed, to the world. The vital tasks of greening Oberlin's campus and of maintaining our reputation as a leader in institutional sustainability are worthy of the attentions of a standing committee of the faculty, rather than being left to a group appointed by the president, charged by the president, and reporting to the president.

Follow-on Motion

Should the motion to create the CES be passed at the meeting, it is our intention to introduce immediately a follow-on motion, the text of which appears below.

It is hereby moved that six (6) faculty self-selected from the membership of *Environmental Policy Advisory Committee* (EPAC) and the *Environmental Sustainability Working Group* (ESWG) will serve as the teaching faculty contingent of the newly-created *Committee on Environmental Sustainability* until such time as the Nominations Committee and GF can establish CES membership formally.

Our intention in this motion is simply to avoid delay in the CES beginning to formulate its agenda and establish its internal operating principles.