

EnviroAlums  
Steering Committee Meeting  
Lewis Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room  
20 Sept 2014: 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

**Attendance:** Walt Galloway, Carl McDaniel (in Lewis Center); Susan Bernat, Andrew deCoriolis, Meredith Dowling, Lewis Gilbert, Abe Kruger, Paul Safyan, John Schaefer; **Absent:** Timothy Ballard, Andy Barnett, Kristin Braziunas, Anders Ferguson, John Petersen

**Election of Chair and Vice-Chair:**

Andrew deCoriolis and Kristin Braziunas were unanimously elected as Chair and Vice Chair for one year terms. McDaniel said he would work with Andrew as needed and continue to be an active EnviroAlum in Oberlin.

**Election of E SC members:**

Kristin Braziunas and John Petersen were elected to serve on the SC from September 2014 to September 2017. McDaniel said he had not sought to have a full slate of 5 or 6 SC members for the class of 2017 to allow deCoriolis and current SC to recruit alums for vacant seats.

Lewis Gilbert, Carl McDaniel, John Schaefer, and Maggie Zimmer decided not to remain on the SC. We thank them for their many contributions to E: Lewis for 6 years service on the SC and 2 years as E's representative on Alumni Council's Executive Board, Carl for his 12 years as chair of the SC, John for 9 years service on the SC, and Maggie for 2 years service as a student representative and 3 years as a regular SC member.

**Student professional development:**

Unanimously approved providing ENV Department with \$1,000 for student professional development in the 2014-15 academic year.

**Support for E alumni speaker program:**

Unanimously approved \$500 for E's alumni speaker program in the 2014-15 academic year.

**E internship:**

Braziunas, chair of the Student Internship ad hoc committee, provided the SC with penultimate drafts of internship statement and application form for consideration. SC agreed that the statement and application form needed only minor edits. deCoriolis and Gilbert volunteered to finalize, in the next few weeks, the statement and application so that an intern can be sought for the 2014-15 academic year. They also agreed to work together to review applications and develop procedures for selecting the intern.

**New business:**

1. Chuck Spitulnik, President of Alumni Council Executive Board, asked McDaniel (E's representative on the Alumni Council's Executive Board) in July 2014 to make a proposal for a lead-off action program for consideration by the new Alumni Leadership Council (ALC) on September 21, 2014. Because E's SC would not meet until September 20, 2014, an ad hoc committee of Bernat, deCoriolis, McDaniel, Petersen, and Safyan provided E's response to Spitulnik's request: Have a several hour session at the March 2015 meeting of the ALC for which ALC members would read at least one

article in preparation for a brief discussion of climate change followed by a discussion of an action for the ALC to take. E's response also included 5 initiatives to stimulate ALC deliberations in March 2015. See below a copy of E's response to Spitulnik's request.

2. Galloway indicated that about half of the Oberlin Inn is currently being demolished with the Gateway Building (new hotel, convention center, space for a few businesses) to be in construction soon, with completion in about 18 months. The Friends of the Oberlin Project has been waiting for the Gateway project to begin and may be involved in convention center programming. More details in March 2015.

**Current Steering Committee Members:**

Susan Bernat, Meredith Dowling, Anders Ferguson, Paul Safyan (expire in 2015); Timothy Ballard; Andy Barnett, Andrew deCoriolis, Walter Galloway, Abe Kruger (expire in 2016); Kristin Braziunas, John Petersen (expire in 2014);

**2015 SC meetings:**

Saturday, March 7, 2015 and September 19, 2015, Lewis Center Conference Room, times TBA.

Respectively submitted,  
Andrew deCoriolis, Chair

## Action Program for the ALC to Champion

### Chuck Spitulnik's charge to EnviroAlums:

"If you and your colleagues in the EnviroAlums could spend some time – and really, I hope you will do this – to come up with some ideas as to how our Association can become more engaged on this issue [climate change, causes and consequences], I think that a discussion of those kinds of ideas would be an appropriate and welcome addition to the work of the newly energized Alumni Leadership Council. Finding ways to reach out to more alumni and engage them with each other, with the College and with the broader community is what our change efforts are all about. I think it would be terrific if the issues you raise could be a flagship initiative for our new ALC to undertake. ... I'm hopeful that after your meeting in September, you'll be in a position to bring some thoughts to the new ALC -- a proposal for readings for us to do coupled with some initiatives or actions that the EnviroAlums can propose would, as I said, be a great lead-off action program for the new Leadership to champion."

### EnviroAlums Response:

#### 1A. Reading all ALC members should read prior to its next meeting:

Bill McKibben's 2012 *Rolling Stone* article entitled "Global Warming's Terrifying New Math: Three Simple Numbers that Add up to Global Catastrophe – and that Make Clear who the Real Enemy Is".

#### 1B. Two supporting readings that ALC members could read if time permits:

- a. John Petersen's 2008 *Chronicle of Higher Education* article entitled: "Accounting 101 for the 21st Century: A Liberal Arts Education in Carbon".
- b. Carl McDaniel's 2014 book chapter from *At the Mercy of Nature*, "Climate Change".

#### 2. Five initiatives to stimulate ALC discussion of what "action program the new Leadership" might elect to champion."

- a. Proposed that the Alumni Leadership Council collaborate with regional alumni clubs to educate alumni on what the College is committed to and is doing about becoming environmentally sustainable (e.g., becoming climate positive, serving locally grown food, changing from a central coal-fired power plant to a distributive system powered by renewable energy sources, energy efficiency programs, The Oberlin Project, etc.) as well as improve alumni understanding of the mega environmental issues (i.e., climate change, loss of biodiversity and associated life support, over population and associated over consumption of resources, economic system and political leadership that is not grounded in evidence based reality).
- b. Proposed that the ALC champion environmental class gifts for major class reunions (e.g. 5th, 10th, 25th and 50th) by identifying specific programs of merit. For example: increase the College's \$1 million annual endowment contribution to responsible investment (a commitment made in 2014), a specific aspect in the Green Arts District project, or a specific energy efficiency endeavor such as the LED relamping a particular building.
- c. Proposed that the ALC foster the development and maintenance of data bases of alumni who are doing work that is relevant to various environmental concerns (climate change, sustainable food systems, energy efficiency, environmental education, behavior change,

etc.) and make these data bases available to alumni and the College (staff, faculty) for the purpose of networking and improving the College's environmental initiatives as well as the environmental education of its students. That is, no student should graduate from Oberlin, or any college/university, without the basic knowledge of how the biophysical world works and the College itself needs to rapidly move to being powered and supplied by renewable resources and in the process discharge negligible or no waste.

- d. Proposed that the ALC work with the College to use the new Gateway Project conference center to bring world class programming to discuss in a systemic way the mega environmental problems and ways in which they might be resolved.
- e. Proposed that the ALC collaborate with regional alumni groups or individuals to adopt a climate change initiative as part of their programming for the next 5 years. For example: Individual alums, an alumni group, or a local group could pursue actions that support and advocate for local, state, or federal EPA requirements (e.g., closing coal-fired plants, limiting heat-trapping-gas emissions) or encourage sustainable industries (e.g., those that run on solar energy, eliminate waste, and promote energy and resource saving practices to the greatest extent possible). This could also include such things as participation in, or financial support of, The Oberlin Project and the American University and College Presidents' Climate Commitment to be climate positive (Oberlin College signed in 2006 and is committed to be climate positive by 2025).