

## Procedure for Formulating & Evaluating Campus Sustainability Policies & Initiatives: Illinois Climate Action Plan (iCAP) Process

Approval Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Dr. Robert J. Jones, Chancellor

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Date

*Originally Approved by Chancellor Wise on June 4, 2014*

*Revised by Dr. Ximing Cai, Morgan White, and Meredith Moore in Spring 2020*

*Reviewed by Dr. Evan DeLucia, Dr. Mohamed Attalla, and Matthew Tomaszewski in Spring 2020*

**Background:** With the formation of the Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and the Environment (iSEE), the campus made comprehensive plans for how it will meet the Climate Leadership Commitments and the objectives established in the Illinois Climate Action Plan (iCAP). In the short term, we must determine what actions are needed to meet the incremental iCAP objectives and take those actions; in the longer term, plans are needed to meet future targets and ultimately reach our goal of being carbon neutral and building resilience within our local community. This procedure provides a framework for developing and evaluating new policies and initiatives for campus sustainability.

**Overview:** Recommended policies and initiatives will be developed by topical Sustainability Working Advisory Teams (SWATeams), convened by iSEE and consisting of faculty, staff, and students. With the new Resilience Commitment, signed in 2016, there is also a Resilience SWATeam, which includes off-campus community representatives. The recommendations made by SWATeams for campus improvements and actions are transmitted to the co-chairs of the iCAP Working Group (iWG) comprised of mid-level administrators and faculty and student representatives. These recommendations are classified into small-, mid-, and large-scale according to the policy and/or financial implications and authority needed for implementation.

- Small-scale recommendations will be transmitted by the iWG chairs directly to impacted units.
- Mid-scale recommendations are evaluated by the iWG and the iWG assessments are transmitted as formal recommendations to the appropriate campus units.
- Large-scale recommendations (with major policy and/or financial implications or impacting multiple units) are evaluated by the iWG and then reviewed and by the Sustainability Council's task force. This task force is responsible for evaluating the large-scale recommendation assessments and addressing uncertainties before forwarding the recommendation to the full Sustainability Council for approval. The Sustainability Council will approve the recommendation, modify it, reject it, or request further study.

These groups will also be responsible for the five-year updates to the iCAP plan. Initial inputs for updated iCAP objectives will be submitted by SWATeams to the iWG. The iWG will provide guidance to iSEE for seeking public input to the draft iCAP objectives, and the iWG will adjust and integrate the collected information for review and approval. This is often managed by a small drafting team representing iSEE, F&S, students, and the iWG. The draft iCAP will be reviewed by iWG members, the units they represent, and key campus stakeholders, then forwarded to the Sustainability Council for approval by the Chancellor.

An overview of this process is shown below in Figure 1, the iCAP SWATeam Process flowchart.

# Illinois Climate Action Plan (iCAP)

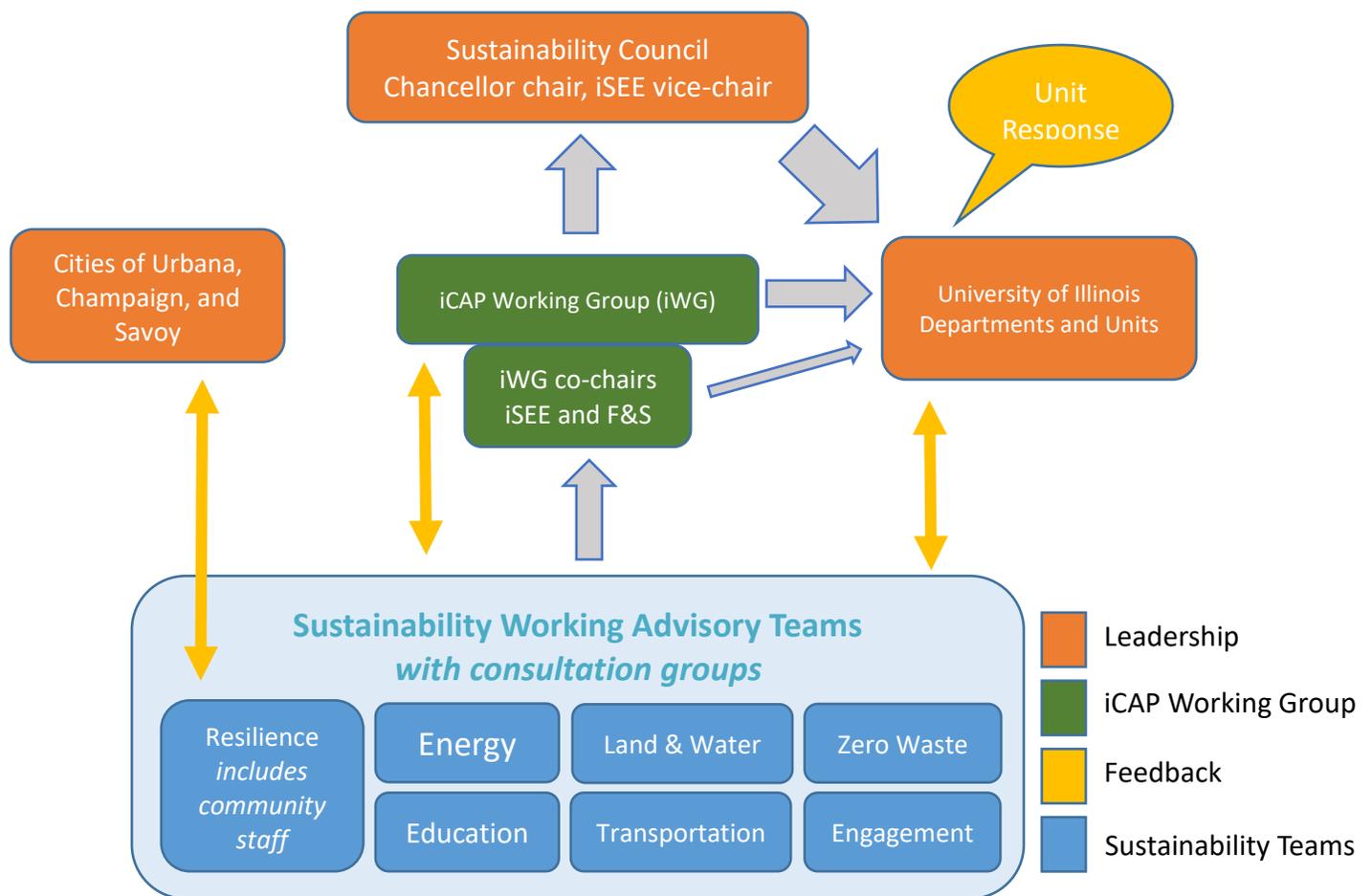


Figure 1: iCAP SWATeam Process flowchart

## **I. Sustainability Working Advisory Teams (SWATeams)**

**A. Teams & Topics:** iSEE, in consultation with the iWG, will identify the SWATeams and their topics. Starting in FY21, the teams will be named for Energy, Land & Water, Zero Waste, Transportation, Education, Engagement, and Resilience topics.

**B. Structure & Composition:** The SWATeams will require (a) focused and detailed study and analysis to formulate recommendations, (b) consultation with subject matter experts across campus, and (c) input and advice from the broader community. Each team has faculty members, staff members, and students. The Resilience SWATeam also includes members from local government and other pertinent entities. SWATeam members will gather information, synthesize data, and formulate recommendations in support of achieving the goals and objectives in iCAP. The SWATeam members will be identified by the iWG co-chairs and iSEE, in consultation with other stakeholders, and the teams will be formally charged by the Director of iSEE.

Each SWATeam will select a chair or co-chairs to preside over its meetings. Generally, the chairs will be faculty members, and the charge letter will be copied to their respective deans, to recognize their efforts for this important campus service.

Each SWATeam will also be provided with an iSEE intern as a clerk to help schedule meetings and prepare minutes and related reports, which will be made publicly available on the iCAP Portal. The interns are selected and supervised by the iSEE Sustainability Programs Coordinator. Each SWATeam is also expected to call upon larger consultation groups for input, consisting of faculty, researchers, staff, students, and community members with expertise in areas encompassed by the SWATeam's topic. The SWATeam recommendations will be finalized by each SWATeam voting-member making a formal comment on the recommendation form, and submitting it to the iWG co-chairs via email for iWG review.

C. Charge: Each SWATeam is expected to:

- 1) Perform an annual evaluation of the campus's progress in meeting iCAP objectives in the SWATeam's topical area. These annual evaluations should be prepared after the end of the fiscal year, and a report should be provided to the iWG by September 30. The iWG will review these reports to ensure consistency and accuracy, and iSEE will work with the SWATEams to prepare visuals reflecting the progress reports to be presented to the public during Sustainability Week each October.
- 2) Develop recommendations for specific actions or studies the campus should initiate to meet iCAP objectives. On an ongoing basis, the SWATeam should submit recommendations to the iCAP Working Group (iWG). The SWATeam should also assist the iWG with identifying units, groups, or individuals who might be well positioned to undertake those projects or guide the studies. Formal recommendations should be submitted to the iWG chairs using the Recommendation Template, available online at: <https://icap.sustainability.illinois.edu/project/sustainability-working-advisory-teams-swateams>.
- 3) Every five years starting in 2014, re-assess the current sustainability targets, develop strategies that can be realistically used to reach those targets, and prepare recommendations for the revisions to the iCAP. This should include the development of a recommended long-range pathway for meeting the 2050 iCAP goals. This process should begin in the spring, with a full draft of each SWATeam's suggested objectives transmitted to the iCAP Working Group on the schedule provided by the iWG.

D. Term: SWATeam members are appointed for a term of one academic year, and they may be reappointed.

E. Meetings: At a minimum, the SWATEams will meet for at least one hour as a whole team once per month in September, October, November each fall and in February, March, and April each spring. SWATEams may elect to hold additional meetings on a more frequent basis, to work on a specific recommendation, but it is not expected that all team members be available at the interim meetings. The iWG co-chairs and iSEE Sustainability Programs Coordinator will attend the monthly full committee meetings whenever possible, to provide support and guidance, and the meeting scheduling will be managed by the iSEE interns assigned to each team.

SWATEams will consult with consultation groups in formal meetings and/or informally as they deem appropriate. The consultation group participants can be invited to SWATeam meetings as non-voting members and/or added to the SWATeam email list, at the discretion of the SWATeam and/or the iWG co-chairs. They will also participate in or coordinate public input meetings at least once per year.

## **II. iCAP Working Group (iWG)**

**A. Composition:** The iWG is co-chaired by the iSEE Associate Director for Campus Sustainability and the F&S Associate Director for Sustainability. The other members of the iWG include at least a representative from the Office of the Provost, the chair of the Senate Committee on Campus Operations, the chair of the Illinois Student Government's Committee on Environmental Sustainability, the chair of the Student Sustainability Committee or designee, a representative from the Office of Business and Financial Services (identified by the Special Advisor to the President and Deputy Comptroller), a college-level facility manager (identified by the Executive Director of Facilities & Services), and a representative from Student Affairs/Auxiliaries (identified by the Associate Vice Chancellor for Auxiliary, Health & Wellbeing). Additional student, faculty, or staff may also be invited by iSEE as voting members. All iWG members should attend the meetings, or send a proxy if they have an unavoidable conflict.

This is intended to be a small working group comprised mainly of mid-level administrators and representing various stakeholders on campus. No members of the iWG can concurrently be a voting member on a SWATeam, with the exception of the Resilience SWATeam. The iWG will also call upon experts from across campus for input, in a manner analogous to the consultation groups for the SWATeams.

The iSEE Sustainability Programs Coordinator will serve as an ex-officio member, to schedule the iWG meetings and prepare minutes and related reports, which will be made publicly available on the iCAP Portal.

**B. Handling SWATeam Recommendations:** The iWG does not have authority to make policy changes. It is intended to make recommendations to campus units and the Sustainability Council and to support the implementation of those recommendations. It receives recommendations from the SWATeams, evaluates and synthesizes them, and handles them as follows:

- 1) For small-scale recommendations with minimal policy or budget impacts, the iWG co-chairs will evaluate and transmit them directly to impacted units, to enable these recommendations to be considered quickly and efficiently. A hypothetical example of a small-scale recommendation is to add a web-link to a campus website. The iWG co-chairs will report to the full iWG about such recommendations at their regularly scheduled meetings, and this report will be incorporated into the iWG minutes.
- 2) SWATeam recommendations with moderate-to-large impacts on budget and/or policy will be considered by the full iWG. If the iWG feels that more detailed study is needed (for example, a formal feasibility study through F&S, or a detailed academic study by faculty and/or students), the iWG will transmit a request for such study to the appropriate units, and then re-consider the recommendations once the study is complete.
- 3) The iWG will assess each mid- or large-scale SWATeam recommendation and determine the routing direction. The recommendation may be returned to the SWATeam for further clarification, denied by the iWG, transmitted to the related unit(s), or forwarded to the Sustainability Council if large-scale. An example of a large-scale recommendation is the Solar Farm 2.0. The iWG may invite members of the SWATeam to iWG meetings when that SWATeam has a new recommendation to assess. The iWG will complete a written assessment of each supported SWATeam recommendation to accompany the original recommendation. The iWG co-chairs and the iSEE Sustainability Programs Coordinator will communicate the iWG decisions to the SWATeams and related units.
- 4) When forwarding a large-scale recommendation to the Sustainability Council, the iWG will complete the assessment and identify iWG members to participate in related discussions. The Sustainability Council task force will meet with the selected iWG representatives to review and clarify the large-scale recommendations

before the biannual Sustainability Council meeting. The iWG co-chairs will facilitate the implementation of the Sustainability Council's decisions (e.g., transmit the recommendation to the appropriate units, initiate more detailed studies, coordinate revision of the recommendation for re-evaluation by the Sustainability Council, etc.). Occasionally a SWATeam member may be invited to the Sustainability Council meetings to provide background information about major recommendations, at the discretion of the Council's vice-chair.

All recommendations are shared on the iCAP Portal, and feedback is given to the originating SWATeam(s). After the iWG discusses a recommendation, the SWATeam which submitted the original recommendation will be informed about the status of the recommendation. When a recommendation is transmitted to a campus unit, the SWATeam will also be given further updates about the implementation of the recommendation. All these will include reasons and explanations.

The iSEE Sustainability Programs Coordinator will track progress on each SWATeam recommendation, update the iCAP Portal, share feedback with the SWATeams, and work with the iWG and related units to facilitate the implementation of the successful recommendations. This may include coordinating task forces, following-up when there has been no action on a recommendation, and sharing status updates with the iWG co-chairs. This position is dedicated entirely to supporting the implementation of the iCAP and facilitating the implementation of the SWATeam recommendations.

C. iCAP Revisions: Every five years starting in 2014, the iWG will initiate a process for a revision to the iCAP. For each year ending in 4 or 9, the following typical timeline will be followed. Individual SWATeams will evaluate the sections relevant to their topic during the spring semester and send comments to the iWG by May. In September, the SWATeams will recommend new or revised iCAP objectives for their topic, and send them to the iWG. iSEE will hold public input sessions on the draft objectives during Campus Sustainability Week in October, and the iWG will synthesize the SWATeam recommendations and the public input into a complete iCAP revision in the fall. Monthly student input sessions will be held to incorporate the student perspective in the drafting process. The revised iCAP will be transmitted to the Sustainability Council before the end of the academic year for its evaluation. The Sustainability Council will review the draft iCAP update in the spring, and after any necessary revisions, the new iCAP draft will be submitted for Chancellor approval by October of years divisible by 5.

### **III. Sustainability Council**

A. Context: The Sustainability Council was established in 2008 as part of our campus's implementation of the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment, and it was intended to lead sustainability efforts on campus and provide strategic direction and oversight of the iCAP. The present policy does not attempt to define the entirety of the Sustainability Council's role, but merely to formalize its composition and its relationship with iCAP.

B. Composition: The Sustainability Council is composed of campus decision-makers at the highest level. It is chaired by the Chancellor, but its activities are coordinated by its vice-chair, the Director of iSEE. Its members include the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost; the Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation; the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs; the Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement; the Senior Associate Chancellor for Administration and Operations; the Executive Director of Facilities & Services; the Deans of the three largest colleges (currently ACES, Engineering, and LAS); the Dean of a smaller college (this position

rotates annually in alphabetical order); the Chair of the Senate Executive Committee; the Executive Associate Provost for Capital Planning; the Associate Vice Chancellor for Auxiliary, Health & Wellbeing; the President of the Illinois Student Government; the Chair of the Student Sustainability Committee; and the Chair of the Student Sustainability Leadership Council. The iWG co-chairs will participate as non-voting members to provide perspective on the iWG's recommendations. The iSEE Sustainability Programs Coordinator will help coordinate the Sustainability Council meetings and help prepare agendas and minutes, which will be made publicly available on the iCAP Portal.

Large-scale SWATeam recommendations that are forwarded to the Sustainability Council will first be discussed and clarified by a task force, which is a sub-committee of the Council. The task force will also discuss and make decisions on some mid-scale recommendations that need the coordination of multiple campus units and/or are subject to funding issues that cannot be resolved by corresponding unit(s). This task force will be led by the Senior Associate Chancellor for Administration and Operations. It will always include the iSEE Director, F&S Executive Director, Executive Associate Provost for Capital Planning, the Associate Vice Chancellor for Auxiliary, Health & Wellbeing, and the iWG co-chairs (standing members). Additional Sustainability Council members, iWG members, or other subject matter experts may be invited to participate as needed, depending on the recommendations to be discussed. The iSEE Sustainability Programs Coordinator will provide administrative support for the task force. It is anticipated that this task force will provide a forum to discuss more difficult sustainability challenges for campus.

C. iCAP Role: The Sustainability Council evaluates recommendations in the area of campus sustainability with major impacts on budget and/or policy, and bears the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the campus meets its iCAP targets.

Every five years, the iWG provides the Sustainability Council with a proposed revision to the iCAP, based on suggestions from the SWATeams. The Sustainability Council has the option to either endorse the revised iCAP as written, or to suggest that the iWG examine modifications and report back to the Sustainability Council with a new revision for endorsement. Once the revised iCAP is endorsed by the Sustainability Council, it will be forwarded to the Office of the Chancellor for formal approval and adoption.

D. Meetings: The full Sustainability Council meets at least once per semester, typically in November and April. All Council members should attend these biannual meetings, or send a proxy if they have an unavoidable conflict. The Council agendas will be set by the iSEE Director. Agendas include any recommendations forwarded by the iWG, iCAP revision updates every five years, and general overviews of campus sustainability strategies and challenges.

The Sustainability Council task force is expected to meet at least once per semester. In the fall, the task force will generally meet in early October to review the prior fiscal year's progress. In spring semesters, the task force will generally meet in early March to discuss major challenges and large-scale SWATeam recommendations.

E. Decisions: Unlike the SWATeams and iWG, the Sustainability Council and its task force has decision authority. After evaluating a recommendation brought forward from the iWG, the Sustainability Council may take one of the following actions:

- 1) The recommendation can be accepted, in which case the iWG co-chairs will transmit the approved recommendation to the appropriate units and will assist them with implementation as appropriate.

- 2) The recommendation can be accepted with minor revisions, in which case the iWG co-chairs will transmit the revised recommendation to the appropriate units and will assist them with implementation as appropriate.
- 3) The recommendation can be sent back to the iWG with a request for further information or for substantial modifications, in which case the iWG co-chairs will report back to the Sustainability Council with the requested information and/or a modified recommendation.
- 4) The recommendation can be rejected. In such cases the Sustainability Council will provide the iWG with directions on alternative approaches that should be investigated to achieve the sustainability goals in question.

#### **IV. The Role and Responsibility of Campus Units for Campus Sustainability**

**A. Context:** There are several units throughout campus that have contributed directly to the iCAP objectives, including iSEE, F&S, colleges and auxiliaries. As our iCAP efforts advance, more direct engagement is needed throughout campus. This section provides an overview of the role and responsibility of campus units, as it pertains to these procedures.

**B. Receiving SWATeam Recommendations:** When a campus unit receives a SWATeam recommendation, the leader of this unit is expected to support the approval of the recommendation or provide an explanation of why the recommendation is not being approved. This response should be sent in writing to the iWG co-chairs, and it will be posted on the iCAP Portal. Responses should describe any issues and forces related to the recommendation and identify a single point of contact who will be responsible for coordinating the implementation.

It is expected that responses to SWATeam recommendations will be sent back to the iWG co-chairs within two weeks of the transmittal to the unit. The iWG co-chairs will send two reminders within 3 months if no response occurs. After that the iWG co-chairs may bring the recommendation to the attention of the Sustainability Council's task force.

**C. Implementing SWATeam Recommendations:** When a SWATeam recommendation is supported by the unit leadership, there are often issues that need to be resolved for the recommendation to be successfully implemented. The campus unit is responsible for managing the implementation of the recommendation and providing regular updates. The updates will be requested at least twice per year by the iSEE Sustainability Programs Coordinator, and they will be shared on the iCAP Portal. iSEE and the iWG will provide support and work with the campus unit to resolve the identified issues.