**SWATeam Recommendation**

Name of SWATeam: Zero Waste

SWATeam chair(s): Tim Stark Date submitted to iWG: 3/2/22

Recommendation title: Drinking Water Behavior Survey

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*For internal use only*: Date reviewed by iCAP Working Group:

Specific actions/policy recommendation: The Zero Waste Team recommends that a campus-wide survey be administered to gain a better understanding of drinking water behavior on campus.

Suggested unit/department to address implementation: Most likely iSEE

Rationale for recommendation: The team hopes to utilize this survey as the first step in an ongoing drinking water behavior change campaign. Currently, over 2,000 cases of water are sold through vending machines annually (reference 2020 data appended). Given the fact that we have several water filter stations on campus, we hope that this study will help us to reveal why exactly people choose plastic bottles, barriers to other (reusable) alternatives, and other trends that can be useful to guide our campaign. Additionally, over the past couple of years several other universities with similar contracts and sustainability priorities have begun to implement programs to reduce plastic bottles, and many of them began with a similar surveying process. Therefore we think it would be in the university’s interest to replicate these best practices.

Connection to iCAP goals:

5.2 Reduce the total campus waste going to landfills from 5,049 tons in FY19 to 4,544 tons or less in FY24, which is a decrease of at least 10%.

5.3 Establish a culture of reuse, with two major campuswide zero-waste events using durable goods and composting in FY22, four in FY23, six in FY24, and eight in FY25.

Perceived challenges: This will most likely be a time-consuming process. Besides the fact that it will take a significant amount of time to analyze the results, it could also take a while to accumulate sufficient responses to our survey such that they are reflective of the university community as a whole. Additionally, the formatting and wording of questions will be critical to obtain the information we are seeking.

Anticipated timeline of implementation: Ideally, this survey could be rolled out at the start of the Fall 2022 semester, or as soon as possible considering the progress of the iWG. The team also recommends 3-4 weekly blasts through university list-servs (I.e. iNews, iSEE, F&S, ACES, etc.) to encourage faculty, staff and students to fill out the survey and collect as much data as possible.

Anticipated budget (identify if cost is up-front or continuous): Other than staffing to execute this survey, no additional costs are required. Potentially, posters could be printed and hung up around campus to encourage participation, which may incur marginal costs.

Individual comments are required from each SWATeam member (one or two sentences):

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| --- | --- |
| Team Member Name | Team Member’s Comments |
| Tim Stark (chair) | I think this would be a good survey to understand water usage on campus. |
| Jenna Schaefer | I support this recommendation. Single-use water bottles are a big problem on campus but it’s important to understand why people are using them rather than more sustainable alternatives in order to effectively develop a behavior change campaign. |
| Clara  Bosak-Schroeder | I support this recommendation. If the recommendation is taken up, I would like to see iSEE consult with other teams on campus who have executed such surveys before finalizing questions and designing rollout. Designing surveys like this is its own area of expertise. |
| Sarah Shoaff | No comment |
| Avery Maloto | I support this recommendation. A supplemental suggestion I found when discussing this recommendation would be to complete an analysis of water-related vocabulary and what language community members are more receptive/withdrawn from, if any. (EX: Purified vs Filtered) |
| Syd Trimble | I support this recommendation. It is important to understand the cause of behaviors before you start trying to change them. On a campus as large as U of IL, a well-advertised survey can do that. |
| Mike Olinger | I support this recommendation. |
| Aaron Finder | I support this recommendation. I agree with Tim. Until we understand the habits we won’t know how to proceed. |
| Tim Knox | I support this recommendation. |
| Yuanhui Zhang | N/A |
| Shawn Patterson | N/A |

Further explanation and background (can be supplied in an attachment):

* Plastic Water Bottle Data (2020) & Other University Initiatives: <https://uofi.app.box.com/integrations/officeonline/openOfficeOnline?fileId=882969603492>
* List of suggested survey questions:
  + Demographic information-year, age, gender, race, residence hall/campus location
  + If a student, where are your classes usually located?
  + How much water do you consume on a daily basis?
  + What is your preferred type of drinking water (rank several methods)?
  + If you had the option to choose bottled or tap water, which would you choose?
  + Why do you prefer this type of drinking water?
  + How would you describe the taste of tap water?
  + What problems are you most concerned about compromising the quality of your drinking water?
  + Do you have access to a reusable bottle?
  + If no, why is this the case?
  + How often do you use your reusable bottle (I.e. at least once a day, 5-6 days a week, 3-4 times a week, 1-2 times a week, 3-4 times a month, 1-2 times a month, I don’t use a reusable bottle)?
  + Would you be willing to switch to reusable water bottles?

Comments from consultation group (if any; these can be anonymous):