

iWG June Meeting

Friday June 7, 2024

Attendees: Sandra Yoo, Jamie Singson, Miriam Keep, Jennifer Fraterrigo, Carl Bernacchi, Jenna Schaefer, Stacey DeLorenzo, Bradley Klein, Katherine Bruce

iCAP Progress Update slides

- Energy
 - On the right path with emissions reductions – over 40% reduction since 2008
 - “Low hanging fruit” tackled, and that’s why emissions decreased initially so much
 - Blue Waters supercomputing impacted results: increased emissions when opened, decreased when closed
 - Would be interesting to update the graphic with more information about the key factors influencing emissions
 - Lots of progress on energy conservation due to re- and retro-commissioning, but starting to plateau
 - Increasing renewable energy power use, and solar farm 3 is being talked about
 - Could produce more energy than campus could even use - would need battery storage
 - Carl Bernacchi is concerned about taking prime agricultural land out of production for renewable energy. This is being discussed with ACES Dean Bollero and ACES is supportive
 - Solar farm 3 might not even be on our campus
 - Solar over parking lots is very expensive, unfortunately, and snowplows are another issue
 - Open space is preferable to rooftop solar, aside from farming, would be a good approach
 - Pollinator plantings around current solar farms (SCAPES project), but no ecosystem services are coming to fruition for solar farm 2.0 because it gets mowed every week. Need better communication and with solar company to ensure that land is managed to maximize ecosystem services
 - UES is developing a clean energy plan over the summer
 - Net-zero space policy to be revisited
- Resilience
 - We aren’t in a position to direct communities/local governments

- Education
 - o Gen ed requirement is in progress, moving ahead but taking a long time
 - o Environmental leadership program has a lot of interested students, hoping to expand to national policymakers in the future
- Land & Water
 - o Progress in reducing water consumption
 - o Could be challenges with changing rainfall patterns and irrigation needs
 - o Campus Landscape Master Plan will incorporate more native plants for resilience, drought tolerance
- Transportation
 - o Reviewing study commissioned by parking department to understand current and future EV charging
 - o The iCAP team has reviewed and analyzed this study – a Gies class separately analyzed it, both should produce interesting findings and recommendations
- Zero Waste
 - o Momentum now that there is a zero waste coordinator
 - o Successful in increasing the amount of recycled materials, especially at athletic events
 - o Working with DIA, asking them to make sustainable changes
 - o Working with housing to increase information about water safety (safe, high quality water) to reduce single use bottle consumption and encourage usage of bottle filling stations. Received funding from SSC to install more water bottle filling stations
- Engagement
 - o New staff in student affairs to increase engagement

iCAP 2025 Feedback and Next Steps

- Timeline for revising, strengthening, and publishing the iCAP objectives
 - o Revising over the summer by iCAP team chairs
 - o Reviewing and vetting by iWG in the fall, input from campus community
 - o Drafting in spring 2025
 - o Publishing in fall 2025
- Evaluating progress on 2020 objectives and thinking how to make them more actionable and focused
 - o Is there info about the relevant stakeholders and engaging them to make better, more realistic targets?
 - o What are the data needs? Targets don't account for campus growing. Consider normalizing targets per capita
 - o Outlining clear paths (actions, strategies) to reach objectives. Even if it changes, it's good to have actions in mind

- Teams used to be really focused on writing recommendations, but there was often no action. What can teams do to actually help us make progress on these objectives?
- Feedback for what to look for when reviewing objectives?
 - Sandra: good metrics and follow up to see what progress has been made
 - Jen: the iCAP portal can be difficult to distill information about progress. Maybe a different webpage to see what the progress is, and the action to support this? Or an annual progress report
 - Carl: less coal and more bioenergy should be a goal – we should be more proactive about this
 - Jen: Abbott doesn't have the right type of boiler for miscanthus, but this topic is going to be in the energy plan
 - Sandra: Abbott wants to have options to generate the power to allow for research
- Restructuring the iCAP
 - The 2020 version is too long!
 - Separate documents for objectives (short, streamlined), strategies and actions, and historical background
- May be a need for a new iCAP team: Space Utilization and Building Standards
 - Bradley: terrific idea! 95% of classrooms are booked 9-2, and the number of students is growing
- Divestment
 - It was in the previous iCAP, have been talking about how to address this and how to bring information to students via a presentation
 - Treating it differently in the next iCAP
 - Want to be transparent about it
 - Investment decisions are made at the system and foundation level and each is using a different investment approach. These are not campus-level decisions