

Mount Royal Sustainability Committee

Annual Report

2009-2010



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRS



Eily Sweeney, VP Student Life, SAMRU



Terry Dowsett, Program Coordinator, CE

We have been very excited to participate in the development and growth of the Mount Royal University Sustainability Committee. As co-chairs working together, representing students and staff, it has been extremely rewarding as the committee welcomed members of the university community to collaborate together and create a culture of sustainability on campus.

Massachusetts-based Sustainable Endowments Institute, a non-profit research organization that produces a College Sustainability Report Card found that for 2010, 69% of Colleges and Universities are incorporating a message of sustainability during their admissions and orientation processes. Up from 27% just one year ago. (USA Today, July 10th, 2010)

As Mount Royal transitioned to a University, it is encouraging to us that we are recognizing and moving forward with new sustainability initiatives that are being embraced by the campus community. Momentum continued to build throughout the year as we saw individuals and departments take on new projects such as the community garden, student water and waste audits, blue box programs, and bottle water-free days. Each small step adds energy and enthusiasm to the process.

We have included short reports on the outstanding work that the members of our committee have achieved within their area this year. We are grateful for the dedication and commitment of this great group of individuals who have taken the extra step to make a difference.

INTRODUCTION

It has been a very exciting year for the Mount Royal Sustainability Committee (MRSC) with many of our annual goals accomplished or in progress. The purpose of this report is to provide an update of the Committee's progress and sustainability successes. This year was built off of the achievements of 2008-2009, in which the Mount Royal Sustainability Policy was approved (included in this report), a comprehensive baseline survey was completed, and the committee's first strategic plan was drafted.

OUR MISSION

The creation of an institutional culture of sustainability, the promotion of best practices and the dissemination of resources within the community, are at the core of our mission. Our overarching goal is to foster environmentally, socially and economically responsible citizens.

OUR VISION

Mount Royal is a catalyst in engaging its communities to make environmentally, economically and socially sustainable choices.

OUR VALUES

Education	Environment
Awareness	Social Responsibility
Collaboration	Stewardship

OUR DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABILITY

“Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

OUR COMMITTEE

The Mount Royal Sustainability Committee (MRSC) facilitates and promotes professional development, education and the coordination of expertise to strategically position Mount Royal as a sustainable institution. We support and encourage collaborative research in this field among faculty, students and staff, as well as the dissemination of methods and findings.

MRSC encourages the inclusion of sustainability principles and content into existing and new courses. This includes integrating projects and assignments into coursework campus-wide, the promotion of related learning opportunities and the encouragement of sustainable learning and teaching methods.

Promoting and reviewing best policies, programs and practices, the Committee encourages community members and experts to contribute their knowledge in overcoming barriers to implementation.

By encouraging the community to participate in and contribute to discussions and initiatives, MRSC increases society's awareness of sustainability.

This committee is sponsored by Brian Fleming, Vice-President, Student Affairs and Campus Life.

OUR HISTORY

The official Mount Royal Sustainability Committee was formed in November 2007 after a proposal was developed and presented to MRU by two students; Tami Rothery, Bachelor of Applied Policy Studies and Alla Guelber, Bachelor of Applied Communications.

Their proposal recommended that the formation of a campus sustainability initiative would be consistent with an international trend toward the creation of campus sustainability programs and practices within educational institutions, summarized by the Talloires Declaration:

"Sustainability" implies that the critical activities of a higher education institution are (at a minimum) ecologically sound, socially just and economically viable, and that they will continue to be so for future generations. A truly sustainable university would emphasize these concepts in its curriculum and research, preparing students to contribute as working citizens to an environmentally sound and socially just society. The institution would function as a sustainable community, embodying responsible consumption of food and energy, treating its diverse members with respect, and supporting these values in the surrounding community" (University Leaders for a Sustainable Future, n.d.)

The role of the committee was to act in an advisory capacity under Brian Fleming, Vice-President of Student Affairs and Campus Life. Membership was geared to reflect four key elements necessary to ensure successful creation of campus sustainability. These key areas were; Operations, Community Development, Research and Curriculum. The multi-stakeholder committee was created and initially was comprised of individuals from the following areas:

- Faculty members (two);
- Student members (two);
- SAMRC representatives (two); and
- Support staff representing different departments on campus (four).

Using a multi-stakeholder approach provides cohesion between campus sustainability initiatives, an opportunity to share information and provide feedback and direction on new ideas.

Today we have representation from fifteen (15) Departments and Faculties on campus.

CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY POLICY STATEMENT & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Campus Sustainability Policy Statement & Guiding Principles was approved by the Board of Governors, February 9th, 2009. The policy sponsor and office of administrative responsibility is the Vice-President, Student Affairs & Campus Life.

A. OVERVIEW

Acting sustainably means the critical activities of this higher education institution are (at a minimum) ecologically sound, socially just, and economically viable and that they will continue to be so for future generations. A truly sustainable university would emphasize these concepts in its curriculum and research, preparing students to contribute as working citizens to an environmentally sound and socially just society.

B. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1) Mount Royal University provides a mix of educational programs including liberal arts and professional studies in order to develop informed and thoughtful citizens and the development of the whole person. Nurturing an awareness of the effects of our institution and of human activity on the physical, economic, and social environments of which we are a part enhances this development.
- 2) Further, as an educational institution, an employer, a corporate citizen, and a property owner, Mount Royal University realizes that its diverse academic and operational activities have significant impacts, both positive and negative, on these environments. Mount Royal University also recognizes it is possible for the negative impacts to be eliminated or substantially mitigated through mindful process, operations, and behaviours.
- 3) Mount Royal University give a high priority to integrating sustainability awareness and responsibility into the daily life of our institution. Mount Royal University will pursue sustainability through research, teaching and learning, operations, and relationships with our communities and to instilling sustainability principles in our students, employees, and communities.

C. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 1) Decision making and procedures at Mount Royal University will be guided by respect and care for the environment, sustainable living, and fiscal responsibility. To be sustainable, solutions should meet all four of these criteria.
 - a. Environmentally responsible
 - b. Socially responsible
 - c. Long lasting
 - d. Cost effective
- 2) Decision-making processes, policies, and procedures for sustainability include participation by all those affected by the decisions made. Specific targets, priorities, and timetable for achieving objective are developed in a consultative process involving faculty, staff, and students.
- 3) As technology, energy costs, and knowledge related to sustainability are dynamic, sustainability ideas and programs will be evaluated on an ongoing basis.
- 4) Mount Royal University will communicate all policies and programs relating to sustainability to the Mount Royal community. Accomplishments are to be acknowledged, externally as well as internally, giving life to programs through publicly celebrated steps forward.
- 5) All members of the Mount Royal community are encouraged to individually and collectively play a role in fulfilling the institution's commitment to sustainability.

2009-2010 COMMITTEE GOALS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Although our role is to act primarily in an advisory capacity, we have taken a hands-on approach with the development of three annual initiatives that aide to moving sustainability forward. We determined to identify initiatives that are manageable and achievable by a volunteer committee.

PROPOSAL FOR A FULL-TIME SUSTAINABILITY DIRECTOR

A proposal was presented to the Presidents Direct Report Group (PDRG) in January 2010 for a full-time Sustainability Director We recognized that requesting funding for a new staff position would be difficult during a period of government cut-backs. Included in our proposal was an alternative option of providing a \$25,000 budget for the Sustainable MRU Committee for the advancement of sustainability. This option was approved.

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

An initiative to develop a Sustainable MRU website is under development which will link with the campus community.

The purpose of the website is to:

- promote sustainable initiatives on campus
- enhance our image and increase visibility
- create awareness and interest
- connect to the community
- create dialogue

We expect to see completion of the website in 2010-2011.

WASTE MANAGEMENT-RECYCLING

Mount Royal has been collecting returnable bottles for recycling for a number of years. Approximately 296,000 returnable bottles were collected for recycling in 2009-2010.

In order for us to design a more comprehensive waste management program we recognized that we need to assess the environmental profile of our waste stream.

We submitted a Sustainability Assessment Project Proposal in March 2010 to begin this process. The first phase of the proposal was approved. This phase will begin with the characterization of the municipal waste stream generated on campus. We will collect data on the various types of wastes generated, the amount of each category, how the amounts vary with the time of year, and how much of each type of waste is reused, recycled, and landfilled.

The project will run from October 2010 – March 2011.

Data collected will be used to make recommendations for the development of best management practices for waste.

OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The committee also participated in a number of other activities which included:

Proposal for a Centennial Garden

A proposal for a Centennial Garden submitted to the Centennial MRU Committee.

Formation of a Community Garden Sub-committee

The Community Garden initiative was started by three Social Work Students in the fall semester of 2009. After consultation with grounds, a plot at East Residence was given to start the garden in April, 2010. Members from the MRU Daycare were also involved, and had several planters for the children to watch grow. The Community Garden Sub-Committee of the MRSC was created to formalize the Universities commitment to the initiative. A well attended Garden Party on September 22nd in Wyckham House ended the year off.



All faculty, staff, students, and community members are welcome to join the community garden sub-committee.

Guest Presentations

Two guest presentations on sustainability were presented by EnMax Energy and Waste Management (WM).

AD-HOC COMMITTEE MEMBERS



***Jondrea DeRuyter, Communications Officer,
University Advancement***



***Lori Gray, Coordinator, ETOL DRS
Placements, Physical Education and Recreation***



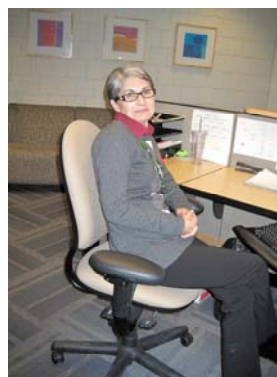
***Susan Isherwood, Facilitator/grants Officer,
Research Services***



***Israel Dunmade, Associate Professor,
Environmental Sciences Department***



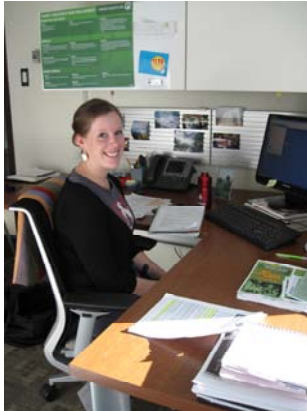
***Sandra Rever, Associate Professor, Bissett
School of Business***



***Charlotte Tutt, Administration Assistant, Office
of Student Affairs and Campus Life***

COMMITTEE MEMBER ACHIEVEMENTS

STUDENTS ASSOCIATION - SUSTAINABILITY CENTRE



Alana-Dawn Erickson, Sustainability Centre Coordinator

Events

- **Where to Find Community Festival:** an event that celebrated community, SAMRU and sustainability.
- **Bottled Water Free Day events:** water bottle giveaways combined with an educational campaign on bottled water issues.
- **Green Holiday Party**
- **SAMRU World of Water:** a world of water day event.
- **Oil Sands Panel Discussion:** on the impacts of the industry on Aboriginal Communities in Alberta. Panelists included:
 - George Poitras, former chief of the Mikisew Cree;
 - Terra Simieritsch Oil Sands Policy Analyst, Pembina Institute;
 - Janet Annesley (MRU graduate), Vice-President Communications, CAPP;
 - Brenda Erskine, Director, Stakeholder Relations Suncor Energy Inc.; and
 - Moderator: Murray Cunningham
- **Oct. 24 International Day of Action for Climate Change:** participation with Step It Up Alberta and the Arusha Centre get students involved in their event called Nightmare before Copenhagen.
- **Recycled Funk:** collaboration with this event that is spearheaded by the student sustainability club.

Programs

- **Global Café:** Sustainability intertwines with environmental, health or social justice issues. The purpose of the café is to initiate discussion that addresses complex problems in a positive way and help build sustainable communities.
- **Sustainability Centre bi-weekly workshop series:** topics included - green cleaners, permaculture with Big Sky Permaculture, eco-food choices & cooking tips with a chef from The District, and Water Matters: Share the Water Campaign, Alberta Water Allocation Policy.
- **Eco-Residence Leaders Program:** Eco-Residence Leaders is part of a community of leaders who are working to help MRU become a more sustainable and environmentally responsible campus. Last year Kaylene McTavish worked with Gary Crebo to improve recycling services in residence.
- **Janet Hamnett's Public Relations Class project:** Alana-Dawn worked with Janet Hamnett and Roger Saint-Fort to create a class project that focused on a sustainable waste management system for the MRU campus.
- **Movie Mondays: year long program from SAMRU:** During the month of October, the Sustainability Centre put on documentaries focused on sustainability and environmental topics.

Services

- Eco store
- Cell phone recycling
- Free-cycle
- Collect and giveaway reusable school supplies
- Resource library
- Reused cardboard boxes for moving

Volunteers

- Eliese Watson
- Kaylene McTavish
- Shreya Shah
- Andrea Clarke
- Andrea Kittler
- Lauren Emily Barrie
- Chantal Eves
- Chris D'Entremont

Green Wyckham House Committee

- Waste Audit
- Composting & Recycling Proposal for SAMRU
- Polystyrene replacement

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION



Amy Tai, Sustainable Transportation Coordinator

- Took over the administration of the U-Pass program and distributed over 8000 U-Passes in Fall 2009 and over 6000 U-Passes in Winter 2010.
- Green Your Ride event in September to promote sustainable transportation options, especially for new students.
- New bike racks for the EC building and at the north end of the EA building.
- 14 new bike lockers.
- New bike shelter to be in place by Fall 2010 (West Gate, 40-bike capacity).
- Began to offer CAN-BIKE cycling courses (ran the first one in June 2010).
- Bike to Campus Day in May to coincide with the City of Calgary's Bike to Work Day.
- Increased the number of carpool parking stalls from 14 to 55.
- New carpool-only lot reserved for carpoolers at all times.
- Published 2 issues of The Journey, an electronic newsletter about sustainable transportation initiatives at MRU and will continue to publish a Fall and a Winter issue each year.

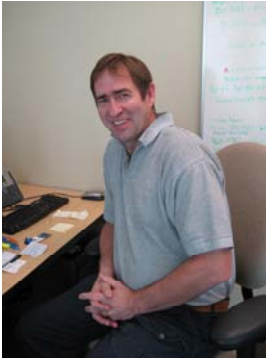
GREEN TEAM, FACULTY OF CONTINUING EDUCATION AND EXTENSION



Terry Dowsett, Program Coordinator

- Set up blue box recycling for the lunch room and Deans area.
- Set all computers to print both sides as default.
- Provided a Green Thumb Lunch & Learn series to staff.
- Collected business wear for Women-in-Need (WIN) store.
- Collected coats, mittens, hats for the Drop-in-Centre.
- Offered free-cycle Christmas ornament and decoration exchange.
- Annual sustainable awareness team building activities.

RESIDENCE



Gary Crebo, Facilities Coordinator

- Blue box recycling program for Fall 2010.
- Recycling containers for students in residence.
- Donations to Calgary Drop-in and Women in Need Society.
- Recycle lamps and ballasts.
- Motion light switches installed in all common areas and janitor rooms.
- Cleaning products are biodegradable.
- Paper products manufactured from recycled paper.
- Conference services towels washed once/week.

GROUNDS DEPARTMENT



Shane Williams, Grounds Manager

Administrative Strategies

- Set all computers to print both sides as default.
- Installed programmable thermostats.
- Installed motion sensors in washrooms.
- Shut off lights when rooms not in use.
- Post one copy of memo's.

Water Use Strategies

- Installed water metres on all points of access to city water (2009).
- Tested ‘no water’ practice in East Residence.
- Tracking reduced water usage for irrigation.

Landscaping Practices

- Introduction of organic fertilizers.
- Following Best Management Practices for fertilizer and herbicide use.
- Composting or mulching all grass clippings.
- Reusing or composting loam removed from construction on campus.

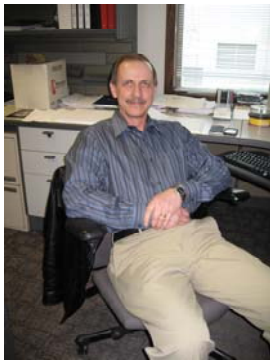
Vehicles Use Strategies

- Using small utility vehicles rather than one ton trucks.

Recycling and Reuse

- Reuse priority before new purchases.
- Collecting wood pallets from custodial resulting in 2400 pallets not being send to landfill.

FACILITIES



Jim Dyck, Physical Resources Technologist

- We have acquired a utility accounting software package called Metrix 4. One of the features of this software is for monitoring and verification of energy consumption of our new buildings, which also qualifies for LEED certification points. All the electric and natural gas meters for the campus and imported weather data run into the system. Once the imported historical consumption and cost data are collected into the program, it will be able to produce reports that will give us initial baseline data. From there we can set targets for energy savings and monitor building performance on an ongoing basis.
- Engineering Services hired a new automation technician to monitor and control the building management systems on campus. We have been working together to monitor energy consumption and initiate various energy saving strategies and fine-tune equipment operation.
- The mandate for any expansion project is to achieve a minimum of LEED Silver certification and LEED Gold where possible, depending on the building type and usage. Architects and consultants involved in the design of any projects are LEED certified and are committed to implement as many sustainable elements as current technology and construction methods permit.

SODEXO



Brent Mann, General Manager

- Conversion of all polystyrene containers to biodegradable products from GreenShift.
- Water audit by students.

STUDENTS ASSOCIATION



Christine Spyker, President, Sustainable MRU Club

- \$1000 donation to garden club.
- Speaker series.
- Green Halloween costume rental service.
- Special events.

GOALS FOR 2010-2011

- Completion of the website.
- Completion of the waste audit.
- Development of a marketing strategy and communication plan.
- Strategic plan revised and aligned with the Campus Master Plan.
- Additional recycling bins.

