

GREEN UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE
UNBC Green Strategy, Phase 1 (2009-2011)
26 March 2009

PURPOSE

The vision, objectives, and strategies contained in the UNBC Green Strategy, Phase 1 (2009-2011) are designed to guide all UNBC activities relative to sustainability over the two-year period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2011.

A Phase 1 progress report will be prepared by 1 September 2011.

BACKGROUND

Development of the UNBC Green Strategy, Phase 1 (2009-2011) was based primarily on “UNBC’s Green Strategy Discussion Paper” adopted by the Green University Committee on 28 November 2008 and feedback received from the UNBC community at UNBC’s 2nd Annual Green Day held on 21 January 2009 and synthesized and summarized in “Report on Green Day Feedback” prepared by Jamie Biggar.

PREAMBLE

UNBC is located in one of the world’s most magnificent natural settings – naturally beautiful British Columbia. It is also situated in the midst of one of Canada’s major centers of resource extraction – timber, minerals, oil & gas, and fish. It is also situated in an area experiencing environmental degradation – local air quality, water pollution, solid waste disposal, ecosystem degradation, and climate change. As a result of the confluence of natural setting, resource extraction, and environmental degradation, UNBC has naturally emerged as a small but powerful leader in teaching and researching the full scope of human-environment interaction, and putting what we learn into practice to achieve sustainability. This is the foundation upon which we, as Canada’s Green University, will continue to build.

UNBC’S GREEN UNIVERSITY VISION

Our vision is:

- To make UNBC a sustainable campus
- To engender a ‘spirit of sustainability’ in the UNBC community
- To make the UNBC campuses models of sustainability for communities and organizations in Northern British Columbia
- To improve on our national and international reputation for excellence in teaching and research in the area of sustainability.

UNBC'S GREEN OBJECTIVES/STRATEGIES

Note:

- = objectives (to achieve the vision)
- = *strategies (to achieve the objectives)*

WHOLE CAMPUS

- To define, measure, and report on “sustainability for UNBC”
 - *Engage in a process of defining sustainability (inclusive of its social, economic, environmental, and ecological dimensions)*
 - *Develop sustainability measures and indicators*
 - *Develop and maintain a comprehensive, publicly accessible sustainability inventory/database*
 - *Deliver reports on progress toward sustainability*
- To create a Green University Fund with a consistent revenue stream
- To create a Green University Coordinator position
- To foster links between UNBC and governments, organizations, and the people of northern British Columbia
- To lead, solicit, formulate, foster, coordinate, and communicate activities that promote sustainability in three spheres
 - Green teaching
 - Green research
 - Green living.

GREEN TEACHING

- To facilitate, encourage, and coordinate sustainability instruction and learning opportunities at UNBC
 - *Document sustainability-related courses and academic programs and identify gaps/opportunities*
 - *Compile and archive in a publicly accessible location course assignments that tackle ‘green university’ issues*
 - *Investigate developing a required sustainability 101 type of course.*

GREEN RESEARCH

- To become an internationally recognized research leader in sustainability, and a magnet for graduate students, postdocs, and visiting scholars in this area
 - *Document current sustainability research and identify gaps/opportunities*
 - *Identify opportunities for increasing the number of sustainability-related scholarships and fellowships for undergraduate and graduate students*
 - *Investigate mechanisms for providing funding for student “green projects,” and for innovative student-led research initiatives, both applied and theoretical.*

- To conduct sustainability research relevant to Northern BC
 - *Engage with regional communities, businesses, and research funders to identify and address gaps in knowledge and determine research needs aimed at sustainability in the North*
- To become a center of excellence for “climate solutions in the North”
 - *Work closely with the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS) in developing research and funding opportunities relevant to Northern BC.*

GREEN LIVING

- To make “living” at UNBC sustainable for the entire UNBC community
 - *Specific green living objectives are contained throughout this document.*
- To achieve carbon neutrality
 - *Conduct a greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory and develop GHG reduction targets that are consistent with provincial government legislation*
 - *Develop a UNBC Climate Action Plan that is publicly available for review and comment.*

CAMPUS OPERATIONS

ADMINISTRATION/FINANCE

- To incorporate sustainability principles in all university operations (specifically, campus planning, procurement, investments, decision-making, assessment, and reporting)
- To compile, acknowledge, and support current initiatives undertaken by various administrative units and offer support for future initiatives.

FACILITIES

- To incorporate sustainability principles in all facilities decisions and operations
- To ensure all future UNBC buildings meet and exceed the LEED Gold standard
- To become a showcase for wood and local building materials.

COMMUNICATION

- To achieve high level of sustainability awareness, networking, and communication throughout the UNBC community
 - *Create a “Sustainable UNBC” communication strategy that increases dissemination of information on what university has and has not done and that increase the profile of the Green University Committee*
 - *Create a “green space” on the Prince George campus to serve as a hub of sustainability information and activity*
 - *Incorporate sustainability education into student/employee orientation programs and student residence programming*

- *Install a “green monitor” (or display of some sort) at the Student Union entrance.*
- *Institute green education/awareness programs for occupants of residence halls and for the UNBC community in general.*

CAMPUS SECTORS

ENERGY

- To maximize energy efficiencies of present UNBC energy systems
 - *Conduct an energy audit, and identify areas of energy efficiency improvement and cost savings*
- To replace fossil fuel sources with renewable energy sources
 - *Explore the potential for development and deployment of alternative energy*
- To develop a northern sustainable energy demonstration and research facility.

FOOD

- To maximize local and organic food, and increase offerings of ‘ethical foods’ and vegetarian and vegan options
 - *Undertake a “Sustainable Foods at UNBC” study that includes identification of ways to increase the offerings of sustainable foods on campus, development of an ethical purchasing policy for food that emphasizes fair trade products and local producers, and raising awareness among the UNBC community of choosing these foods*
 - *Explore the potential for constructing an on-campus greenhouse, and expanding the student garden and composting on campus*
- To minimize food waste, packaging, and throw-away service items
 - *Include in the “Sustainable Food at UNBC” study ways to minimize the processing, provisioning, and disposal of food*
 - *Explore instituting consumption taxes on unsustainable food and food service items.*

GREENSPACE AND ECOSYSTEMS

- To keep our campuses clean
 - *Implement measures to reduce unaccounted waste in buildings, parking lots, and campus grounds*
- To value local ecosystem services and promote natural areas in decision making process
 - *Integrate green space and conservation planning for sustainable ecosystems in UNBC landscapes, endowment lands, research forests, and reserve lands*
 - *Maximize and conserve native landscaping*
 - *Develop a plan for protecting green spaces at UNBC campuses*
 - *Promote awareness of local ecosystems, and their benefits including local educational, scientific research, and outdoor recreation in campus natural areas*

- To conserve, manage and sustain water resources
 - *Perform a water efficiency audit of the campus to find opportunities to increase efficiency, improve maintenance, and recycle water*
 - *Explore the feasibility of installing additional water fountains on campus.*

TRANSPORTATION

- To reduce the number of single-occupancy vehicles traveling to and from UNBC
 - *Conduct a comprehensive transportation survey*
 - *Develop more “village” services on campus that improve on-campus community life and give people reasons to stay on campus longer and make fewer trips*
- To achieve carbon neutrality for non-public transportation to and from UNBC
 - *Investigate options such as instituting higher parking fees; extending the U-Pass to all UNBC students, staff, faculty; facilitating carpooling; creating and promoting better and more accessible Ride Share program, for holidays as well as carpooling networks for everyday activities; and promoting bicycling*
- To achieve carbon neutrality for work-related travel by UNBC staff and faculty
 - *Conduct a survey of work-related travel and investigate the cost of buying carbon offsets, of UNBC generating its own carbon offset projects where possible, promoting teleconferencing, etc.*

WASTE MANAGEMENT

- To strive toward building a campus-wide system of reducing, reusing, recycling that achieves a zero waste circular system modeled after nature
 - *Develop a waste management system, including energy waste, that institutes meaningful incentives and disincentives to alter wasteful behavior*
 - *Develop waste management policies that include expectations of waste management for janitorial staff, laboratories, and food services contractors*
 - *Institutionalize the current compost program on the Prince George campus and divert compostable organics from the campus waste stream*
 - *Increase opportunities for reducing, recycling, and reusing materials*
 - *Eliminate plastic bags and reduce other packaging*
 - *Emphasize maintenance and longevity increasing the lifespan and utility of infrastructure to reduce the flow of materials into landfill (e.g., e-waste)*
 - *Institute education/awareness programs to promote waste management in residence halls and in the university in general*
- To reduce, reuse, and recycle in a sustainable context
 - *Continue efforts to move forms online and host green meetings and conferences*
 - *Develop and maintain visual indicators of waste generation on campuses*
 - *Form relations with and preferred transactions with green business focused on waste reduction during transport & delivery*
 - *Document current reuse and consider extending to other areas*
 - *Improve current recycling efforts*

- *Explore paper waste reduction measures such as making double-sided printing default for all copy machines and computer printing; making the double-sided option cheaper for students; using 100% post-consumer paper or a combination of recycled content with fiber from northern BC; and, in the classroom, increased use of, for example, electronic provision of course materials, electronic submission and grading of student papers, and electronic technology.*