

University of New Mexico Draft Sustainability Five Year Plan

Responsible Party

Mary Clark

Purpose

In 2007, President David Schmidly formalized UNM's commitment to sustainability by signing the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (now called Second Nature) agreement. This put UNM on a timeline to conduct a greenhouse gas inventory and write a Climate Action Plan and both were completed by 2009. In 2010, UNM opened the Office of Sustainability and hired a Sustainability Manager. UNM has defined the areas of sustainability to include energy usage, renewable energy, new building construction and remodel, transportation, recycling, purchasing, water usage, and food.

Status

The Sustainability Strategic Plan has four goals that outline how to enhance awareness about sustainability at UNM, connect stakeholders, invest a collective effort into increasing sustainability on campus, and reimagine UNM sustainability. However, increased reporting requirements to Second Nature will now require a great deal of the Sustainability Manager's time and will limit the opportunity for outreach to the campus community. These changes will not make UNM more sustainable.

Funding

- Increase funding by ending membership in Second Nature (\$4000), AASHE (\$1770), and USGBC (1500) – see attached memo
- Use additional funding to hire student sustainability coordinator and increase sustainability awareness on campus and increase greater campus participation in sustainability planning and activities.

Introduction

The term “sustainability” was first used in the late 1970s and referred to sustainable development, which is defined as “... the kind of development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” The University of New Mexico (UNM) has been practicing sustainability for many decades prior to using the term. As the primary research university in the state, UNM always made prudent use of both its own and the state’s resources to meet its academic, research, health care, and community service purpose. In 2005, UNM approved one of the first Sustainability Studies minors in the country. In 2006, Provost Reed Dasenbrok established the Sustainability Task Force and charged it with writing a sustainability policy for the university. In 2007, President David Schmidly made UNM a signatory institute with the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment. UNM then conducted its first greenhouse gas inventory and in 2009 a Sustainability Studies class wrote UNM’s Climate Action Plan as a capstone project with input from the Physical Plant Department’s Utilities Division and Engineering and Energy Services. In 2010 UNM opened the Office of Sustainability.

Vision

UNM as a leader in statewide research and application of sustainability principles and providing the campus, Albuquerque, and New Mexico with informed, sustainability minded leaders.

Tagline: Love red. Live green.

Mission

The mission at the University of New Mexico is to develop the campus as a hub of sustainability in Albuquerque and New Mexico and to implement sustainability into the learning outcomes and consciousness of the UNM community.

The University’s two-fold commitment

- Facilities Sustainability
- Academic Sustainability

Definition

Sustainability establishes a system of behavior that allows current and future generations to enjoy the same quality of social, environmental, and economic wellbeing.

Stakeholders

To gain input from the stakeholders of sustainability at UNM, the Office of Sustainability held focus groups with faculty, deans, staff, students, Eco-Reps from student housing, and residents of surrounding neighborhood associations. We also met with the president of the Graduate and Professional Students Association, the director of the Physical Plant Department, the supervisor of UNM Recycling, members of the Lobo Gardens club, the University Architect, the director of Parking and Transportation Services, the president of Lobo Energy, Inc., faculty and staff in Sustainability Studies.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

UNM has many strengths in sustainability including outstanding research faculty, staff who work directly on energy conservation, an efficient utility distribution system, award winning energy engineers, and an aggressive recycling program.

Weaknesses

As with many publicly funded universities, dedicated funding for sustainability is limited. The administration does not use sustainability as a recruiting tool and a mostly commuter student body lacks commitment to participating in sustainable practices.

Opportunities

Increased solar on campus makes UNM's commitment to sustainability more visible. Support of student groups such as the Sustainability Club, Lobo Gardens Club, sustainability internships give students with an interest in sustainability the opportunity to share their interest and knowledge with their peers.

Threats

The administration does not see sustainability as a priority. Student body turns over every four years and resources must be reinvested constantly to engage students in sustainable practices and make them aware of UNM's sustainability achievements.

Strategic Goals

Strategic Goal 1: Enhance awareness about sustainability and sustainability brand

Objective 1.1: Increase knowledge about sustainability within the UNM community

1) Improve student, faculty, and staff knowledge about past, current, and ongoing sustainability projects and their recognition of these projects. Members of the UNM community should be able to quickly point to the applicable efforts of UNM sustainability as it impacts them and their daily endeavors.

2) Advertise and improve marketing for courses that include sustainability in the learning outcomes. Students interested in sustainability should be able to quickly select courses that meet this interest and that also all under their field of study.

Process – Use social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube), Daily Lobo, UNM Today to announce awards, projects, internships, accomplishments, and news.

Owners – Office of Sustainability, ISS Communications Specialist, University Communications and Marketing

Objective 1.2: Increase knowledge about sustainability outside the UNM community

1) Market sustainability curriculum and sustainable facilities as a valued part of the UNM brand. Efforts should include online and print material as well as playing a marked role in verbal marketing efforts on behalf of UNM

2) Communicate sustainability projects via UNM news, the Albuquerque Journal, and other news media. Sustainability stakeholders should work to build relationships to promote sustainability efforts relating to facilities and academic performance in the media.

Process – Use social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube), Daily Lobo, UNM Today to announce sustainability classes, awards, projects, internships, latest news.

Owners – Office of Sustainability, Sustainability Studies, Enrollment Management, ISS Communications Specialist, University Communications

Objective 1.3: Increase knowledge about sustainability to perspective students

1) Develop marketing material specific to sustainability in the classroom and on campus to share with perspective students interested in sustainability. Material should be developed to specifically target students interested in sustainability studies, environmental science, and other programs with a specific emphasis on sustainability.

2) Make sustainability at UNM a focal point in recruiting effort and tie it to President Frank's UNM 2020 goal of making UNM a destination university. Material from all facets of the University should have sustainability integrated as part of it.

Process – Provide annual summary of sustainability in academics and facilities and make it available to UNM recruiters and others on campus who communicate with prospective students.

Owners – Office of Sustainability, Dean of Students, Vice President of Student Affairs, Enrollment Management

Strategic Goal 2: Connect sustainability efforts and stakeholders

Objective 2.1: Establish stronger networks between sustainability stakeholders.

- 1) Organize regular meetings to keep sustainability stakeholders communicating their projects and engaging collaborators. Create an appropriate standing committee and subcommittees to communicate and share projects.
- 2) Create a stream of communication, through email and other, to share sustainability developments going on at UNM. Rely upon the above committee to organize content for said communication to decentralize the communication.
- 3) Creating a sustainability stakeholder directory for easy referencing. The directory should be updated regularly and should be organized in a usable manner so that the specific role relating to sustainability of those involved can be easily understood.

Process – Office of Sustainability to establish UNM Sustainability Committee and invite representatives from across campus to be a member. Use this committee to share information, collaborate, advise, and promote. This committee will produce an annual report on the state of sustainability at UNM.

Owner – Office of Sustainability

Objective 2.2: Create a UNM sustainability efforts clearinghouse

- 1) Organize a system to recognize the size and scope of sustainability efforts on campus or by sustainability stakeholders. This includes an objective scoring system that determines size and scope of impact rather than a subjective measure and creating this system should be used to help organize the sustainability committee.
- 2) Use a publication or other medium for the sake of recognizing positive, sustainable actions.
- 3) Determine methods to make any level of contribution by students, faculty and/or staff recognizable.

Process – Members of the UNM Sustainability Committee would be charged with collecting information on all sustainability efforts and individuals. This information would be posted on the Office of Sustainability website and social media. Regular informational stories would be written and sent to Daily Lobo, UNM News, and outside medial sources.

Owner – Office of Sustainability

Strategic Goal 3: Invest and reinvest into sustainability

Objective 3.1: Invest academically into sustainability

- 1) Create curriculum and student learning outcomes with sustainability in mind. Sustainability learning outcomes should be folded into all courses regardless of proximity to the specific field of sustainability.
- 2) Allow sustainability to de-centrally permeate the different colleges and courses within those colleges; academic sustainability needs to go beyond survey courses on the matter and needs to be covered across all fields of study
- 3) Evaluate individual courses based on the resilience of curriculum to climate changes and other sustainable considerations – is UNM providing a sustainable education?

Process – The Provost’s Office would encourage deans and departments to create curriculum and student learning outcomes with sustainability in mind. A database of these classes would be created so students would have the opportunity to choose sustainability-themed classes.

Owner – Provost

Objective 3.2: Make facilities investments in sustainability

- 1) Develop financial streams, whether they are institutional or donor based, that will enable long-term sustainable investment into facilities possible.
- 2) Prioritize sustainability projects with the fastest pay back periods in order to invest savings back into sustainability.
- 3) Strategically package facilities investment for mixed environmental and financial return on investment.

Process – the UNM Foundation would continue to match donor with specific sustainability and energy conservation projects.

Owner – UNM Foundation

Strategic Goal 4: Reimage Sustainability at UNM

Objective 4.1: Strategically hire a Sustainability Director with immediate report to the President who bridges academic and facilities sustainability

- 1) This person bridges academic and facility sustainability and should not fall under the organization of either the Provost or Chief Operating Officer
- 2) This person will have academic and facilities responsibilities having to do with environmental, social, and economic development at the University

Process – Post position of Sustainability Director.

Owner - President

Objective 4.2: Develop UNM to be a sustainability living learning laboratory

- 1) Look at the way the development of the institution's facilities are a part of the larger academic mission and how the larger academic mission is a part of the institution's facilities
- 2) The living learning laboratory model should be integrated into auxiliaries as a second phase of implementation

Process – Departments such as the Physical Plant Department and University Architect would allow student interns to work on specific projects so that the students gain real-world experience in making UNM more sustainable.

Owner – Departments in Institutional Support Services

Objective 4.3: Reevaluate and Aspire for a more sustainable University of New Mexico

- 1) Regularly, utilize the above described committee to adjust the UNM Sustainability Strategic Plan to address the needs of the University

Process – Office of Sustainability to make regular updates to strategic plan based on input from the Sustainability Council.

Owner – Office of Sustainability

Summary

As Julie Newman, Director of the Yale Office of Sustainability, wrote in her paper, “Strategic Planning to Implementation, there are four stages of sustainability strategic planning: awakening, transitioning, pioneering, and transforming. The first questions to ask when writing a sustainability strategic plan, Newman wrote, is to determine: (1) how would you classify your campus’ commitment to sustainability, (2) how is sustainability reflected in the culture of your university, and (3) is there a distributed responsibility and ownership of sustainability across campus? The University of New Mexico is still in the awakening stage despite its commitment to sustainability. Ownership of making UNM an institution recognized for sustainability lies primarily in facilities and some academic departments. There is no institution-wide commitment or knowledge of accomplishments. It is hoped that by following through with the objectives outlined in this strategic plan that UNM moves from awakening to transitioning and our achievements grow as part of our commitment.