

Report to Staff Council

RISE Board Update

Ian Olson

October 17, 2014

The Sustainability Master Plan (SMP) is out in draft (<http://www.uaf.edu/sustainability/smp/>). Once final, the RISE Board and its subcommittees will begin work on implementation. The development of the SMP took place over the past year in consultation with the Brendle Group of Ft Collins, Colorado, a company that specifically works on campus sustainability master plans. The Plan process was steered by the Sustainability Master Plan Committee, and managed by the Office of Sustainability. It is anticipated that the Plan will be incorporated into the university Master Plan when the Master Planning Committee initiates its next master planning cycle within the next two years. As we move forward, workgroups and RISE Board subcommittees will do the work to implement and carry out the Sustainability Master Plan.

The Plan is composed of three main strategy components: Protect Resources (chapter 6), Support the Campus Community (chapter 7), and Close Loops and Conserve Materials (chapter 8). Each strategy component spells out recommended action for facilities (both maintenance and design), curricular and co-curricular objectives, waste management, food services, investment and development, and employee engagement. This latter aspect is of particular interest to Staff Council. Specifically addressed under section 7.1, the Plan calls for building employee engagement in sustainability through 1) the establishment of green teams which would be formed in localized areas to address specific issues such as building energy use, departmental waste management, or addressing transportation needs, 2) the development of employee orientation and supervisor training materials to highlight and communicate institutional sustainability goals, 3) the establishment of staff-oriented lunch-and-learn roundtable discussions, 4) the expansion of grant opportunities in sustainability-oriented staff projects, 5) staff awards and recognition for involvement in UAF sustainability objectives, and 6) the development of

few years ago, UAF received a Gold rating on its STARS assessment. Most recently, AASHE issued an update to STARS (2.0) that significantly increased the thresholds for campus sustainability evaluation. The Gold rating for UAF has expired and the institution must re-assess its campus environment for a new STARS ranking according to the new STARS 2.0 assessment. Though the RISE Board and the Office of Sustainability are interested in participating in another round of STARS assessment, given the workload implications of the SMP, it is unclear whether or not we will be able to participate in the STARS assessment in the near term. Still, the STARS 2.0 document is very useful in defining metrics and baseline

thresholds for assessment. It is anticipated that workgroups and subcommittees formed to implement the SMP will use STARS 2.0 for guidance and advice.

The RISE Board meets in the Office of Sustainability every other Thursday from 1 to 2 pm. Our next meeting is October 23. Staff members interested in campus sustainability are encouraged to attend.