

Sustainability Council Charter

Background

Each Penn State College and Commonwealth Campus is invited to create a Sustainability Council to strategically advance the University's sustainability¹ goals from within its college/campus. Each Sustainability Council is headed by a Chair and composed of faculty, staff, students, and stakeholders. Councils are established by the Dean or Chancellor to provide leadership and ensure their college/campus is sustainable in all efforts, including teaching, research, service, and operations. Currently, there are eight Sustainability Councils which play a key role in identifying short- and long-term goals and strategies, creating a sustainability charter for the college/campus, and aligning the college/campus's unique mission and goals with the sustainable development goals of UN Agenda 2030.

Vision

The College of Arts and Architecture Sustainability Council advocates forming a sustainability vision for the college to connect it to other strategic initiatives while creating efficiencies and enhancing impact. The Council will approach sustainability as a transformational concept that leads to innovation. It is anticipated that the Sustainability Council will develop action steps that advance the college's priorities and the university's sustainability vision and mission. <https://sustainability.psu.edu/>

Purpose

- The College of Arts and Architecture Sustainability Council is an administrative council reporting to the Dean's office.
- The council advocates for the integration of sustainability philosophy and practices of success into the college culture and into the college's strategic plan and promotes a commitment to sustainability in teaching, research, service, and operations.
- The Council shall plan activities that synergize sustainability efforts within the college, support diverse sustainability approaches of academic units, and foster collaboration with the Sustainability Institute, and other Colleges and Commonwealth Campuses.

Objectives

- Investigate practices that might enhance the College's sustainability profile and minimize its impact in terms of resource extraction and use.
- Work with College administrative leaders when recommending sustainability practices that require funding.
- Create and coordinate activities and events that advance sustainability efforts in the college and on campus.
- Foster a Cultural District environment compatible with the College's educational mission.

¹ Penn State University embraces sustainability broadly and defines it as *the simultaneous pursuit of human health and happiness, environmental quality, and economic well-being for current and future generations*. Penn State University' approach to sustainability is through the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development goals of the United Nations Agenda 2030, seeking to integrate sustainability in research, teaching, service/ outreach, student life and community engagement.

Membership

Composition: The Sustainability Council aims to include representatives from each of the college's academic, outreach, and support areas, and other members from the faculty, staff, and student ranks at the discretion of the chair. Typically, the chair will be the assistant director of sustainability for the College.

Term: The Council and working group membership are staggered one- and two-year appointments. Terms may be renewable for a maximum of 2 times. Terms run with the Penn State fiscal year and partial years will count as a full year unless otherwise specified.

Stakeholders: The Council will serve a diverse group of constituents, including students, faculty, staff, arts patrons, and other stakeholders.

Members: Each school director and department head may appoint one faculty or staff member from their unit. The council chair will solicit nominations from the directors and department heads for undergraduate and graduate student representation.

Initially, the Council will include:

- Chair appointed by the Dean: Assistant Director for Sustainability in the College of Arts and Architecture
- One faculty member from each of the Architecture, Art History, Graphic Design, Landscape Architecture, Music, Theatre, Visual Arts, and the A&A Faculty Council.
- Four staff or administrative representatives, to include the Palmer Museum of Art, the Center for the Performing Arts, the Office of Digital Learning, and the Dean's delegate.
- Two students (an undergraduate and a graduate student).

Council Operations

- As necessary, the Council may establish working groups to assist with specific tasks and activities.
- The Sustainability Council will provide an annual report on the college's sustainability activities to the Dean of the College of Arts and Architecture and to the Director of the Sustainability Institute.
- The Chair will consult with the College Academic Leadership Council at least once a year to review sustainability priorities for the College.

Meetings

- **Schedule:** The Council will meet at least four times per year
- **Attendance:** Members are expected to attend all meetings in person or by Zoom/video conference.
- **Agenda and Minutes:** The Chair will prepare and distribute an agenda one week prior to each meeting. Minutes will be recorded by the appointed staff support person, and will be reviewed by the Chair, and submitted to the Dean within one week of each meeting.
- Key decisions and action items will be sent out to the members within two weeks after a meeting and stored in an open online folder accessible to all members.

Budget

Proposals for work that require funding will be brought to the attention of the Dean, and sources of funding will be identified, if approved.

Decision-making

The Council will seek to make recommendations for actions where there is consensus among the group. Where consensus cannot be reached, the chair will act as tiebreaker, utilizing the perspectives of the group and working in the best interest of the college. Recommendations for actions will be made to the appropriate college office.

Transitions

Members who are absent without reasonable cause from three consecutive meetings of the Council will be assumed occupied by other priorities and unable to fulfill their duties as Sustainability Council members. Open positions on the Council or working groups will be refilled as soon as possible.