

Institutionalizing Sustainability Education at UBC

PAST, PRESENT and FUTURE

Jean Marcus and Nicholas Coops

UBC Sustainability Initiative

Teaching & Learning Office



PAST (1990 – 2008): UBC Policies, Plans & Actions

Year	Event
1990	UBC signed the Talloires Declaration
1991	UBC signed the Halifax Declaration
Early 1990s	Committee formed to discuss the role of sustainable development at UBC (SDRI managed process)
1997	UBC Sustainable Development Policy No. 5 adopted
1998	Campus Sustainability Office created
2000	TREK 2000 (operations focus), UBC SEEDS Program
2005	TREK 2010 (included focus on social awareness and global responsibility)
2008	President's Advisory Council on Sustainability (APWG)



Committees, Reports, Proposals & Actions

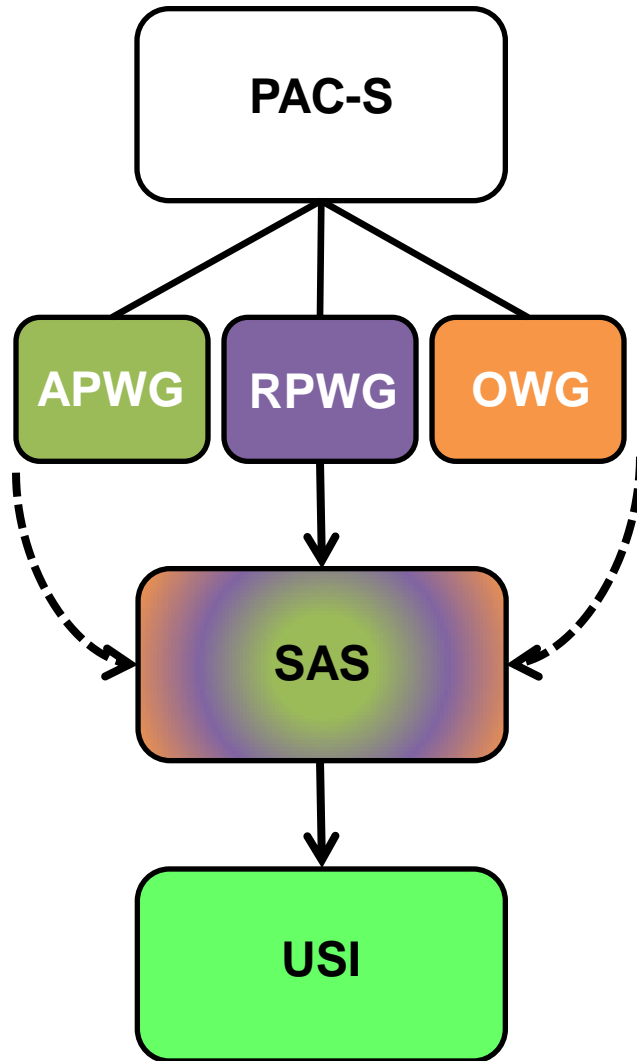
Year	Event
1990s	Environmental Programs Review Committee (EPRC)
1997	EPRC proposal for a new <i>University College of Sustainability</i> to coordinate “sustainability & environment” courses & programs, and proposed a mandatory course entitled “Sustainability 101”
1999	New EPRC report: Rethinking Environmental Education at UBC
2001	SENSE webpage completed
2002	New EPRC report by request of Provost, proposal for an Interfaculty Program in Sustainability
2004	Smaller EPRC Committee redrafted the 2002 proposal: “The Undergraduate Interfaculty Sustainability Studies Program”
2007	Forestry, LFS and CFIS proposal for “Environmental & Sustainability Education” strategic project
2008/9	TAG’s Sustainability Across the Curriculum CoP, 2009 SEI



Lessons Learned from past proposals and consultations with UBC community

- 1) Belief that sustainability is a “cross-cutting” endeavor, but lack of integration & coordination across Faculties is a huge barrier to creating programs. (Lack of incentives, plus budgetary and administrative constraints)
- 2) Need “buy-in” from all levels (faculty members, departments, Deans and the President’s Office) for any new program/initiative to fly.
- 3) Necessity of long-term funding and having an “administrative home” for any new program.
- 4) Student frustration with current barriers that impede finding/taking sustainability courses in different departments/faculties (i.e. prerequisites, course not accepted for credit in their home Faculty).
- 5) Little or no appetite for a mandatory course on sustainability.

PRESENT (2008 - 2010)

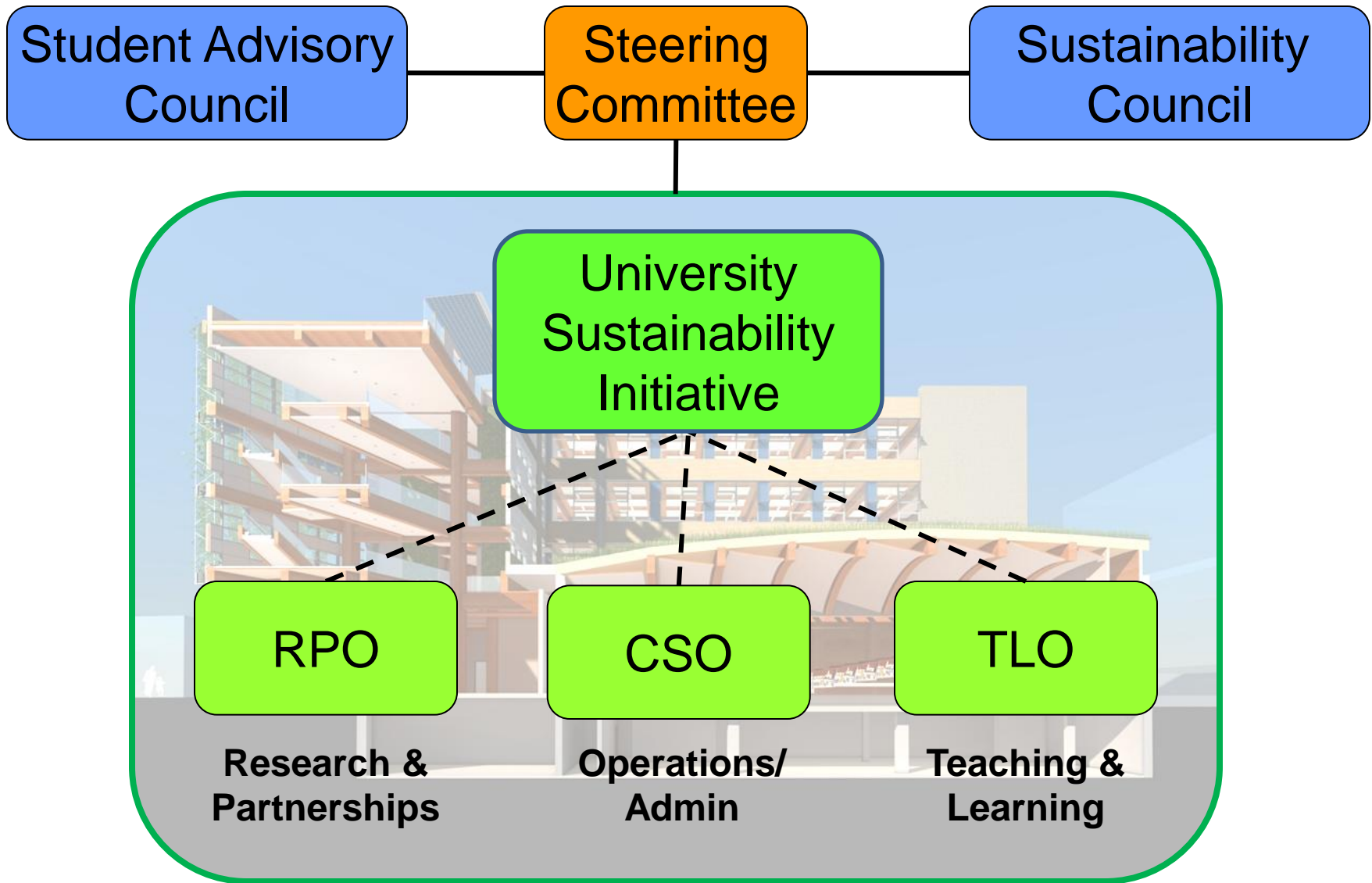


Summer 2008: President's Advisory Council on Sustainability (PAC-S) formed with 6 WGs

PAC-S Academic Programs Working Group (APWG); From Sept 2008 – March 2010, APWG worked on strategic project goals

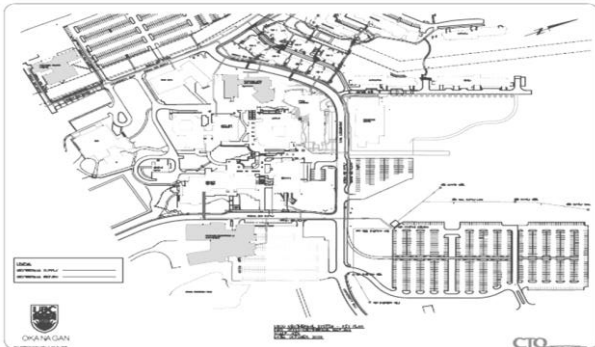
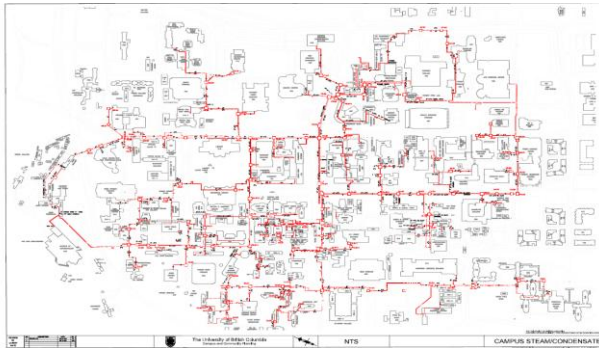
Summer 2009: UBC's Sustainability Academic Strategy (SAS) developed

January 2010: University Sustainability Initiative (USI) announced



SAS is a roadmap for the USI

Exploring and Exemplifying Sustainability
UBC's Sustainability Academic Strategy
October 17, 2009



UBC Vancouver's Steam Heating System (top) and UBC Okanagan's Geothermal Field (bottom): Treating both UBC's campuses as integrated energy, water and waste systems offers an unparalleled opportunity to link teaching and learning, research and partnerships, and operational activities through the Sustainability Academic Strategy

Presented to UBC Executive in
August 2009

Additional Public Comment in
September 2009

Final Submission in
October 2009

**Mid-level plan of Place &
Promise**

www.sustain.ubc.ca

SAS T&L Recommendations

#1 Student Access to Sustainability Learning Opportunities

- Online resources and student advising, 'sustainability pathways' through every degree program providing up to a minor

#2 Sustainability Curricula and Teaching Fellows

- 'Sustainability Teaching Fellows' will contribute to the development of sustainability themes and courses to help coordinate cross-faculty teaching of sustainability for all students

#3 Co-curricular Opportunities

- Formalize recognition of sustainability experiences outside the classroom and improve co-curricular sustainability learning options



Teaching & Learning Office

Mandate:

To coordinate, support and enhance undergraduate and graduate sustainability education at UBC's Vancouver campus.

People:

Nicholas Coops, Director

Jean Marcus, Associate Director

Andrew Riseman, UBC Farm Liaison

5 Faculty Fellows, TBD



Teaching & Learning Office

T&L Fellowship Program

- Cohort of 5 faculty Fellows per year; Fellows work to advance sustainability education at UBC (curriculum development, strategic planning etc.)

T&L Spotlight Program

- Financial support to instructors to expand, revise and/or retool an existing course and increase its relevance to sustainability issues

Pathways Project

- Build pathways for undergraduate students in any discipline to study sustainability

Sustainability Website

- Ongoing maintenance of Teaching & Learning section (hub of sustainability education resources, including the course inventory)



FUTURE (2010 →)

Student Advising

- In person student advising (in CIRS) and maintenance of online resources
- Development of a peer-to-peer mentoring program

Explore linkages and opportunities with existing programs

- SEEDS, TAG Sustainability, Community Learning Initiative etc.

Sustainability Teaching & Learning Seminar Series

- Under consideration



Questions

- What would you like UBC to achieve in terms of sustainability education? (short-term / long-term)
- What strategies are needed to create change (and “institutionalize” sustainability) in your course/unit?
- What partnerships do you need to support implementation your SEP (and contribute towards advancing SE at UBC)?
- How does the USI and the Teaching & Learning Office relate to your SEP?
- How does the USI and T&L Office relate to your interest in and commitment to SE in general?

