

To: Dr. Danielle Ripich—President
Cc: Dr. Jacque Carter—Provost

From: Mike Daley—Co-Chair UNE Environmental Council
Richard Peterson—Co-Chair UNE Environmental Council

Purpose: Report on UNE Environmental Council Activity — 2007–2008 Academic Year
Date: July 15, 2008

End-of-Year Report on UNE Environmental Council Activity 2007 - 2008 Academic Year

The UNE Environmental Council was active during the 2007 – 2008 academic year and continued to gain visibility and standing in the UNE community. Rick Peterson and Michael Daley served as Co-Chairs on the UNE Environmental Council. Per the bylaws, the UNE Environmental Council (EC) meets at least once a month during the academic year. During this academic year, the EC met bi-weekly starting on September 12 and ending on May 15, 2008. Important activities of the EC are listed below.

To start the year the EC welcomed COM students Walter Sussman and Kate Lewis and CAS students Steve Boughton and Jenn Cranshaw as new members. In addition, Bill Bola, Director of Contract Services, and David Callins, Director of Facilities, joined the EC. At the end of the fall semester, the EC welcomed three faculty members from the College of Health Professions. Regi Robnett, Associate Professor and Director of the Department of Occupational Therapy, Eileen Dunfey, Clinical Instructor with the Department of Dental Hygiene, and Carol MacLeod, Assistant Professor of Nursing became members of the Environmental Council. Also, Daniel Sheps and Lindsey Wilhelm, graduate students from COM; John Zannino, an Environmental Studies major; and Mike Appel, a Political Science major, joined the Council.

Sustainability Coordinator

In April 2008, the University hired Alethea Cariddi as its first Sustainability Coordinator. Ms. Cariddi will become a member of the Environmental Council and work through the office of Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) in Campus Services. She is responsible for coordinating and performing environmental projects, such as a carbon footprint analysis, and promoting environmental stewardship at UNE. Earlier in the year, the EC had entered its final stage of discussion with consulting firm Woodard & Curran (W&C) regarding a planned sustainability audit of our campuses. The purpose of the audit would have been to provide benchmark data on UNE's current ecological footprint and to help us identify campus greening projects that can provide immediate returns. However, prior to hiring the consultant, members of the EC determined that much of the data and in-house knowledge to conduct such an audit already existed. Also, it was determined that with the addition of a sustainability coordinator the audit and other important environmentally related tasks could be more effectively accomplished over a longer period of time and at about the same cost. The Council recommended to President Ripich that UNE hire a part-time Sustainability Coordinator, who would report to the EH&S group and work closely with the Environmental Council. After a discussion with the EC, the President accepted this recommendation. The EC acknowledges the importance of this position within the institution and is prepared to work closely with this person to identify, promote and develop specific projects that could bring cost savings through energy efficiencies and waste reductions and demonstrate environmental stewardship on the part of the institution.

Presidents' Climate Commitment

Presently, UNE is poised to become a signatory of the Presidents' Climate Commitment. On November 6, 2007, President Ripich met with the EC and discussed the nationwide effort to encourage universities and colleges to sign onto the Presidents' Climate Commitment. The Presidents' Climate Commitment (PPC) provides a framework and support for America's colleges and universities to obtain climate neutrality. It recognizes the unique role of presidents and chancellors in providing leadership and guidance within their institutions and to society. Participating presidents are leading their institutions in developing a comprehensive plan of action that

will ultimately lead to campus climate neutrality, and provide the critical education and research necessary to help society re-stabilize the world's climate. Through the PPC's flexible program of conservation, renewable energy, offsets and other creative strategies, campuses can go carbon neutral in a timely and efficient manner. This framework will put UNE in a community of like-minded campuses and provide resources that will guide us and help us decide where to go forward from this point. President Ripich indicated her interest in using this commitment as a guide for our efforts and noted that UNE has already fulfilled several of the actions specified by the Commitment. Together with the President, the EC agreed that the first step toward participating in this initiative is to hire a part-time, limited-term Sustainability Coordinator (see above). The EC plans to work closely with this person to implement more of the steps recommended by the Presidents' Climate Commitment and to continue exploring the opportunity of President Ripich formally joining the 558 other college and university presidents in signing this institutional commitment to campus sustainability.

Strategic Planning Process

The EC continued to be involved in the university's strategic planning process with members working through their representatives to the SPC to advocate for environmental stewardship to feature prominently in the university's future. The EC encouraged action and disseminated information about best practices in materials usage and recycling at various levels of the University. This continued during the spring semester and was enhanced with the focused attention of a Sustainability Coordinator.

Focus the Nation

The EC continued to support the Department of Environmental Studies and the efforts of Richard Peterson to develop and coordinate the UNE Community's participation in Focus the Nation. Focus the Nation is an initiative, led by universities, high schools, churches, various civic groups, and corporations from around the country, to educate citizens about global climate change and apply political pressure through activities nationwide. At the recommendation of the Council, President Ripich endorsed UNE's participation in the Focus the Nation event, which took place with a host of activities involving faculty, students, and prominent guest speakers from January 24 – February 1.

Shuttle Bus

On October 24, members of the Environmental Council showed support for the shuttle bus service by holding the Council's regularly scheduled meeting on the bus. During the 30-minute roundtrip between the UC and in-town Biddeford, participants had a lively conversation concerning a range of campus environmental successes and challenges. The EC continues to work with Barbara Hazard and others in Student Services to further the EC-endorsed plan to link UNE to Biddeford with the adoption of a shuttle service. The shuttle service is one element of a comprehensive parking and transportation strategy to avoid future construction of parking lots, as well as develop deeper community relations with Biddeford. The EC continues to support the Shuttle Bus as one of several initiatives that must remain in place and be further developed in order to avoid further construction of on-grade parking lots at the University Campus. In addition, it is potentially a key component to linking the student population with the cities of Biddeford and Saco and offering an alternative means of transportation should it become necessary to limit the number of automobiles the student population is allowed to have on campus.

Endorsement of Dr. Morgan's Class Project

As an initial step in the ongoing UNE arboretum project, the EC endorsed a proposal for the coastal restoration of UNE's Saco River waterfront, including construction of a new trail leading from the new Welcome Cottage (old Security office) to the kiosk. The proposal was the final product of Dr. Pam Morgan's course, *Restoration of Coastal Habitats of Maine*. The EC was very impressed by the students' presentation to the EC and by their more developed presentation at the CAS Arts and Sciences Symposium, which earned first prize. We feel confident that following through with the project would be a good way for UNE to begin its commitment to the UNE Arboretum Project.

UNE Recycling Program

When UNE took back facilities management from Sohdxo in February, it was determined that the recycling program was failing. The EC formed a Recycling Subcommittee to enhance and streamline recycling efforts. The EC created a job description for a summer work-study position to revamp the program. Senior officer, Seth Alcorn approved the work-study assignment and EH&S is currently overseeing the daily management of the position. Since June the EH&S department has been working on a business plan for the recycling program, which addresses infrastructure, inventory, communication, education, cost-savings in waste disposal and re-investment of the bottle and can income to offset costs.

Out Reach & Webpage

With the help of Neal Jandreau with University Relations, the Environmental Council upgraded its website this semester. The link to the web site is <http://www.une.edu/envcouncil/>. Jeff Denoncour, a CAS student member on the Council, published an article in the Nor'Easter discussing the role and history of the Environmental Council. A follow-up article by Jeff focused on the benefits of riding the Shuttle Bus. Members of the EC reached out to the first-year students in the Environmental E-pod and asked these students to participate in a community event during the spring semester aimed at promoting student/alumni relations and relations between UNE and the Biddeford/Saco community. On April 15 about 12 students and faculty from UNE joined the Saco Bay Trails Association in cleaning up Biddeford's Clifford Park. The EC plans on continuing and further developing the relationship between the University and Saco Bay Trails. The EC observed increased participation in the activities of the Council coming from COM students and CHP faculty this semester. The Council believes this is due to its increased visibility and out reach to students, faculty and staff. We hope to continue to draw in new members.

Status of Previously EC Endorsed Campus Greening Projects

- **Green Cleaning Pilot Project:** This EC-endorsed project is still on hold due to the departure of Jerry Beekman, project initiator. Initial and informal conversations with Lisa Liston, the new Housekeeping Director, indicate an interest in the project. The EC and Sustainability Coordinator will be exploring implementation and logistics with Housekeeping during the upcoming year.
- **Biofuel Project:** The EC-endorsed pilot project to burn biofuel in the furnace in the Admissions building and certain vehicles in the UC "fleet" has been successful to the point that we are now working with Alan Thibeault and Rick Gavin to extend the use of biofuels to heat additional buildings on both the UC and WCC.
- **Parking Policy Recommendation:** The EC continues its advocacy and education effort surrounding its endorsed policy stance that construction of on-grade parking lots should be an option of last resort.
- **Shuttle Service:** (see above).
- **Focus the Nation:** (see above)
- **Local Food Purchase:** the EC endorsed a research project proposal presented by Dr. Ian Meng to study the feasibility of purchasing more locally grown food for the cafeteria.

Conclusion

The Environmental Council realized important successes in 2007-2008 academic year; however, it continues to face challenges to its mission. First, it must secure a stable source of funding for endorsed projects. The EC believes that hiring a permanent Sustainability Coordinator will greatly help to transition the UNE community to a culture of sustainability. The Council is looking forward to working closely with the Sustainability Coordinator to prioritize opportunities and embark on projects that will generate cost-saving, environmental projects and develop UNE's potential as a leader in environmental health and stewardship. Overall, the Environmental Council remains active, energetic, and on-task in developing its message of environmental stewardship at UNE.

Respectfully submitted:

Michael Daley and Rick Peterson
Co-chairs UNE Environmental Council

EC Members: Academic Year 2007/2008

Rick Peterson (Co-Chair)—Associate Professor Environmental Studies
Mike Daley (Co-Chair)—Assistant Professor Business Administration
Elisabeth Haase—EH&S Coordinator
Bill Bola—Campus Services Director of Contract Management
Neal Jandreau—University Relations Web Manager
Joel Pelletier—WCC Student Affairs
Ian Meng—Assistant Professor Physiology
Eileen Dunfey—CHP Faculty - Dental Hygiene Department
Regi Robnett—Associate Professor Occupational Therapy
Carol MacLeod—Assistant Professor Nursing
Tim Kinne—Business Office
Daniel Sheps—Student COM
Jeff Denoncour—Student CAS Environmental Studies & Earths ECO
Chelsea Amaio—CAS Student, Environmental Studies
John Zannino—Student CAS Environmental Studies
Lindsey Wilhelm—COM Student
Mike Appel—Student CAS Political Science & Environmental Studies
Walter Sussman—Student COM
Kate Lewis—Student COM
Laurie Mathes—WCC Library Circulation Coordinator
Connie Goulatis—University Relations
Nichol Connelly—Institutional Advancement
Alan Thibeault— (Ex-officio) Campus Planner
David Callins— (Ex-officio) General Manager of Facilities