



People and Nature: Our Future is in the Balance

National Wildlife Federation

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**Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana
Spring 2002, Management**

BACKGROUND

Campus Profile

Ball State University, situated on 940 acres in Muncie, Indiana, serves approximately 19,000 students (45 percent male, 55 percent female). Seven academic colleges offer 120 undergraduate programs, 80 masters programs and 20 doctoral programs in 46 departments and schools. There are some 750 faculty, 550 professional staff and 1,500 support personnel.

Group/Class Profile

The Ball State University Council on the Environment (COTE) is a university-wide body whose membership comes from each of the university vice-presidential areas, college deans, student bodies, professional staff groups and nearby east-central Indiana communities. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs formally appoints COTE members. The Council was created on the recommendation of the Green-2 Committee Report submitted in March 2001. (Results of the yearlong effort can be seen at <http://www.bsue.edu/g2>.) The 2001-2002 academic year was COTE's first year.

The Green-2 Report also recommended hiring a Green Initiatives Coordinator (GIC) to facilitate and coordinate proposed greening initiatives. The Office of the Provost funds this ½-time faculty position.

Contacts

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GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The mission of COTE is to serve as a clearinghouse and to provide leadership for initiatives that promote the sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of ecological systems that sustain life at Ball State and the surrounding community.

The coordinator has responsibility to help others in all aspects of implementing initiatives, to publicize our efforts to the community and the media, to be aware of current sustainability developments and to help in curriculum development—Clustered Minors in Environmentally Sustainable Practices. (See <http://www.bsue.edu/cluster>.)

Accomplishments

In our first year, COTE facilitated the adoption and approval by senior administration, academic deans and the university senate of the *Ball State University Sustainability Statement*; the publication of *Healthy Arts, Healthy Planet: An Artist's Guide to Safe Studio Practices for Personal and Environmental Wellness*, edited by Amy Joyaux and Lina Rosengren; the publication of *Green Tips* by our GIC; proposals to support eight of the top-ten action items in the Green-2 Report; the campus Earth Day activities featuring a Council member's exhibit. Our Green Funding Specialist—another Green-2 innovation—helped individuals get funding for specific initiatives outlined in the Green-2 Report.

The Council *celebrated* the presentation of papers by COTE members at the recent International Think Tank on Education for Sustainability held at the Earth Center in Doncaster, England. Our efforts have received publicity in *Campus Sustainability Assessment Review Project*, *Campus Ecology Yearbook*, *Campus Environmental Report Card*, *International Encyclopedia of Environmental Politics*, and BSU's 2001 Annual Report.

We anticipated the plans to institute campus-wide green residence hall programs (This work was done by our GIC and the Green Funding Specialist.), the introduction of environmental considerations in the Freshman Connections program, the near-term ordering of hybrid electric fleet vehicles, the expansion of the campus-wide recycling program and a request to the State legislature for major capital improvements to the university's coal-fired central heating plant.

The position of Green Initiatives Coordinator (GIC) is intended to provide continuity in the functioning of the Green-2 Committee and to facilitate and coordinate the implementation of proposed greening initiatives generated by the committee. In carrying out this purpose, the person filling this position will be expected to perform the following functions.

1. Work with members of the Ball State Community to help them in securing information, contacts, and resources necessary to implement selected initiatives.
2. Identify individuals within the Ball State community with interest and expertise that matches that necessary to implement targeted initiatives.
3. Work with the Green Funding Specialist to coordinate the search for funding needed by those planning to implement Green-2 recommendations.
4. Assist individuals in drafting grant proposals seeking outside funding for Green-2 projects.
5. Work with the Ball State University Council on the Environment as a resource person and as a liaison to others in the broader Ball State Community.



John Vann, Current GIC, presenting during final report of the Green2 Committee

6. Continuously search for information to stay on the forefront of developments in the sustainability arena, and share this information with members of the Council and others for whom it is relevant.
7. Meet regularly with members of CERES and the Council.
8. Cultivate contacts in the media to help communicate Ball State's progress in implementing Green-2 initiatives.
9. Assist in drafting reports documenting progress in the implementation of Green-2 initiatives.
10. Make presentations and conduct workshops for members of the broader Ball State community regarding sustainability principles and Green-2 projects.
11. Work with the Webmaster to assist in design and content of Green-2 web sites.
12. Maintain contacts with NGO representatives and those at other universities focusing on campus sustainability initiatives.
13. Assist in the planning and operation of Greening of the Campus Conferences.
14. Foster the development of the Clustered Minors in Environmentally Sustainable Practices.
15. Regularly meet with those associated with the operation of the Clustered Minors in Environmentally Sustainable Practices.
16. Work directly on the implementation of selected Green-2 initiatives.

In addition to the efforts mentioned above, our GIC worked with fraternity house managers, Purchasing & Central Stores Department, Student Affairs, Chairs of all academic departments and with dining services regarding opportunities for greening their operations. As well as aiding in the founding of a new club, Students for a Sustainable Campus and serving as one of their coaches, he lectured on sustainability concepts in several relevant classes.

Challenges and Responses

COTE: Maintaining active participation by all members of COTE has required careful management of monthly meeting schedules; nonetheless, attendance has been high and e-mail exchange has been very good. Monthly meetings are limited to 90 minutes; the agendas for the meetings are quite full with reports by members and administrative staff. Even with this constraint, we have had a special program presentation at each meeting. Since the function of COTE is to be a clearinghouse, these gatherings are open forums where members and guests can learn more about activities campus-wide.

GIC: Since this position carries no organizational authority, the GIC's role is that of educator and persuader. Nevertheless, responses to efforts thus far have been favorable. The position has been funded for next year. If this were a full-time position, more could be accomplished.

ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Stakeholders Engagement

Both COTE and GIC been able to function because of the support of an existing administrative unit, the Center for Energy Research/Education/Service (CERES). Robert Koester, the Director of the Center, is COTE Chair; staff members of the Center provide website management and clerical support. Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Warren Vander Hill has provided financial and institutional support. The continuing funding for a GIC and a Green Funding Specialist has enabled COTE to operate smoothly.

Funding

The costs have been covered in several ways—through the CERES budget, by occasional use of the Bracken Environmental Fund (a special endowment provided to support green initiatives on campus) and by the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Policies

The most significant policy is the *Ball State University Sustainability Statement*, which we created and which was adopted by senior staff, academic deans and the university senate. It is available on the web and was distributed campus-wide.

National Wildlife Federation's Campus Ecology Program

In preparing the work of the Green-2 Committee and the follow-on work of COTE, three Campus Ecology publications were used extensively. These were *State of the Campus Environment*, *Green Investment/Green Return*, and *Ecodemia*. Julian Keniry was instrumental in the initial proposal for Green-2 that was presented to the Provost. She and Jessica Stine have provided moral and informational support throughout. In the coming year, we expect to use the on-line case studies and campus environmental yearbook reports.

OUTREACH, EDUCATION AND PRESS

Full documentation is available at the COTE website: <http://www.bsu.edu/cote>.

REVIEW AND REPORTING

We are in the throes of preparing an annual report, which will be distributed, to the campus community in the fall. COTE's work has been noted in the local paper and the *Ball State Alumnus*. The GIC reports monthly to COTE.

CLOSING REMARKS

Every action takes longer than you think it will. None of your constituents are as excited about your recommendations as you are. Top-down support is essential. Everywhere you look there are opportunities to make a difference. Success comes in small steps. A quote from a community member of COTE: "...the work of the Council is one of the most exciting activities in which I have been involved."