Gustavson School of Business, University of Victoria
Victoria, British Columbia, Canada
Curriculum

SCHOOL
Gustavson School of Business, University of Victoria, Public, Bachelor of Commerce (intake 240 students per year for two-year general studies plus two years in the business school). There are currently 600 students enrolled at various stages of our BCom, MBA, MGB, and PhD degrees. Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.

ABSTRACT
Many business schools share the Peter B. Gustavson School of Business’s goal to be carbon neutral. Indeed the province of British Columbia has mandated that all universities in BC be carbon neutral. However, the Gustavson School of Business has a further green goal; that is, to incorporate an element of sustainability or corporate social responsibility (CSR) into all its core business classes and specializations by 2014. We are on our way to achieving that goal (94% achieved at the Bachelor of Commerce level in 2012) thanks to a strong vision from our dean and the demand from our students. This case outlines the past three years in our journey in the hopes that other schools might use this framework to enrich their curriculum with sustainability and CSR in every core area.

GOALS AND OUTCOMES
Goals
The project to integrate sustainability and CSR into the Gustavson curriculum is a recent extension of a long held belief by the dean and the entire faculty that awareness of sustainability and CSR issues is critical to business. Further, that the business case for sustainability is the way forward-thinking businesses can gain an upper hand and be more competitive in the marketplace. To achieve this goal the faculty created an intra-faculty Centre for Social and Sustainable Innovation (CSSI) in 2010. We have refreshed our strategic plan with a more concrete plan for 2012-2013, and we are certain that our goal to integrate sustainability and CSR into all the core courses offered in the four degrees offered at the Gustavson School of Business is on track for completion by summer 2013.

Accomplishments and Outcomes
Fifteen years ago, Ali Dastmalchian, dean of the (then) Faculty of Business at the University of Victoria hired Dr. Monika Winn as a professor of Strategy and Sustainability. The faculty was just six years old and had a visionary 17-month MBA program and a solid Bachelor of Commerce program with two cohorts (currently we have four cohorts and expect a fifth in 2013).

Dr. Winn’s presence increased the importance of sustainability to the school, and a number of other professors joined the faculty over the course of 10 years to share the teaching load of required sustainability courses in both the BCom and MBA programs. The dean’s vision to be ahead of the trend
and incorporate sustainability into the classroom started to become a strong cultural aspect of the school.

Other supports grew organically from individual professors’ interests. First, Dr. Michael Valente introduced the faculty to the United Nations Global Compact and the Principles for Responsible Management Education. In 2009 he began the annual exercise of visiting each faculty unit (BCom, MBA, Executive Programs, etc.) as well as each specialization area, to gain their commitment to activities in the curriculum or in the operation of the business school that would increase awareness of sustainability at the school and demonstrate to students and other stakeholders that sustainability is a business issue.

Dr. Valente also started a sustainability committee with the faculty to address three main areas of our business school. Operations, education and research chairs were recruited and the chairs, in turn, recruited sub-committees. Operations focused on greening the business school, education focused on ways to integrate sustainability into the curriculum, and research began planning a conference.

In 2009, the Sustainability chairs determined that the best way to solidify sustainability in the school of business was to develop an intra-faculty centre. This would help focus sustainability activities and could be supported by a budget from the dean’s office. An application was made to the University of Victoria for the university’s first intra-faculty centre. The application was approved in 2010 and the Centre for Social and Sustainable Innovation (CSSI) was created. This was a busy time at the school as programs were added (first a PhD, then a Master of Global Business), two accreditations achieved (first EQUIS and then, in 2011, AACSB), and the school was named.

About the same time, in 2010, the dean held a year–long exercise to look at the school’s strengths, outside trends in business and business schools, and to build a three year plan for the school. As part of this exercise the faculty (all 40 faculty members and 40-plus staff were included in these discussions) determined that sustainability was more than just a course offering at the school, it was a pillar of the school. It is remarkable that with just two professors dedicated to sustainability in their research and teaching, the entire faculty voted to make the sustainability pillar official.

With the Centre in place in 2010, a year of growth followed and leadership was needed. Again, the dean acted on his vision. He appointed Dr. Monika Winn as a Director and professor Heather Ranson as Associate Director of CSSI. These faculty members were give course relief to allow them to build the CSSI. The first action of the Centre was to build a three year plan. The dean gathered representation from every unit at the Gustavson School of Business for a day of brainstorming and prioritizing. With that data in hand Dr. Winn and the three chairs built a three-year plan for the CSSI.

Included in the plan was a need for a staff member. Initially, like the other units at Gustavson, it was assumed that a secretary was needed. However, it became clear that the CSSI needed a writer as its first staff member. Over the summer of 2011 a professional writer was hired and immediately took over writing the website material and began producing stories about the sustainability-oriented activities happening all over Gustavson. This built awareness inside the faculty (thanks to a bi-weekly email communiqué) and externally though the Gustavson alumni magazine, the CSSI website and the university newspaper, and the Victoria daily newspaper.
Besides writing up the Gustavson sustainability stories, the coordinator also built a baseline of the courses offered in each program at Gustavson, and determined how much, if any sustainability and CSR teaching was happening in each course. By spring of 2012 she determined that 94% of BCom courses, 56% of MBA courses, 29% of MGB courses, and 71% of PhD course work included elements of sustainability and CSR.

At the same time, the coordinator worked with the Operations chair to compile the faculty’s third carbon footprint report. This included a plan to off-set the carbon generated by faculty, staff and students of the business school.

**Challenges and Responses**

**Challenges**

Focus was the biggest challenge in building the CSSI and achieving our present goals. It is easy to want to take on everything (international water day, international air day, bike-to-work-week…etc.) With just two part-time professors and one half-time staff person we have to limit our activities to our three-year plan.

As well, as a small faculty we call on our staff and professors to do a lot. Keeping the sustainability measurement and recording as our primary focus and promoting activities we already have in place was the best way to keep everybody on side.

**Responses**

The key to our success in developing the CSSI and achieving integration of sustainability into the Gustavson curriculum was two driving forces. First, our dean was visionary when he determined that sustainability should be part of the Gustavson curriculum as a mandatory course. He maintained that vision over ten years and challenged everyone to live out the faculty values which resulted in sustainability becoming Gustavson’s fourth pillar.

A second key was that the more we taught about sustainability, the more our students demanded of us and the more outside stakeholders asked of us. For example, Gustavson BCom students take Business and Sustainability (a mandatory course) in their first semester of our two-plus-two program. This inspires many of them to seek additional courses from our exchange partners to further their knowledge in this area. When courses are not available though our exchange partners, Gustavson students are able to take a distance course which culminate in a written report on some aspect of life in their exchange city. In 2010-11 nine of 32 reports were sustainability oriented.

We’ve created a circle that feeds initially on an interest and culminates in a school-wide culture of sustainability.

**Campus Climate Action: Your School’s Carbon Footprint**

For the past three years we have collected data on the Gustavson carbon footprint. We have also initiated operational changes to reduce our footprint in a number of areas.

Water – CSSI installed water fountains with spouts to refill water bottles on two floors of our building. This allowed us to eliminate the delivery of approximately 15 19-litre water bottles each month, and demonstrated our commitment to a smaller footprint to all the tenants and students who share our...
building. In addition, the CSSI Operations chair applied to the University to have the faucets and toilets on all four floors of our building replaced with low-flow faucets and toilets. The application was approved and this work is scheduled for summer 2012.

Paper – the faculty created a new SharePoint site for faculty, staff and students to share documents. Professors load course outlines, readings, links to the library and other sites, and students are able to access them in real time. This eliminates the need to distribute paper copies of outlines, and readings.

Energy – in spring 2011 the CSSI operations chair led a committee made up of representatives of all the building tenants when the University installed an energy pulse meter in the building. All tenants can view, in real time, the use of electricity in our building. The operations chair led the committee, over the course of four months, to educate their areas in electricity usage and to reduce usage by 10 per cent.

Commentary and Reflection
People told us it couldn’t be done. With only one, sometimes two, faculty members who taught sustainability as part of the core curriculum, the Gustavson school should not have been able to create a sustainability centre (with a staff person!), whole-hearted buy-in to integrating sustainability into the curriculum, and significant achievements in greening our operations. It was a huge task, in a faculty where consultation is de rigueur and the focus was on achieving accreditation, building new programs and naming the school.

However, we did it. Key to our achievements were the pressure from above (the dean) and below (our students) as well as regular pokes from internal and external stakeholders. With a strong vision comes mandate from the faculty. Then the task was to start telling the stories of professors, students, and staff members. With the faculty mandate came increased expectations for sustainability programming from students and stakeholders. This created a circle that fed itself. Maintaining the cycle requires systems to measure achievement and report on successes. While it is tempting to take on new challenges, it is critical to stay focused on the three year plan.

ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT
Leaders and Supporters
Dr. Ali Dastmalchian, Dean, Gustavson School of Business. Visionary responsible for integrating sustainability into the curriculum, hiring faculty to support integration, and establishing the CSSI.

Dr. Monika Winn, Professor and Director of the CSSI. Dr. Winn was the first sustainability research faculty member at Gustavson, and first CSSI director. She initiated the three-year plan for the Centre.
Dr. Michael Valente, Assistant Professor and Sustainability Committee Education Chair. Dr. Valente initiated the UN Global Compact agreement at Gustavson and built up the sustainability committee to have three chairs: education, operations and research.

Dr. Basma Majerbi, Assistant Professor and Sustainability Committee Operations Chair. Currently the operations chair for CSSI, Dr. Majerbi has been a major force in greening Gustavson through the annual carbon footprint report.

Funding and Resources
The development of integration of sustainability into the Gustavson curriculum was minimal to start. The first two years (2008-2010) had no budget. Faculty and staff volunteered their time. In 2010 the dean provided a one-year budget of $30,000. In 2011, when the three-year plan was in place the dean committed $50,000 per year for three years. The bulk of this budget is taken up in salary costs, but there is room to support conference attendance and some operations activities (like the water fountains in 2012).

Education and Community Outreach
The local community has been hugely supportive of CSSI. It still surprises some groups and individuals on campus that a business school cares about integrating sustainability into their curriculum. However, our local business community members are leaders in sustainability and have been very encouraging. As guest speakers and “friends of CSSI” they provide support through class projects, sharing business plans, and hiring co-op students and interns.

Outreach efforts include: bi-weekly communication with on and off campus “friends of CSSI,” articles for the university newspaper, as well as the Victoria daily newspaper and the Gustavson alumni magazine. In addition, Dr. Winn attended the International Conference for Sustainability Centres in 2012, and Heather Ranson attended the SEAP Conference in Vancouver in 2011. Both conferences were opportunities to share information about our centre. As the CSSI Director, Dr. Winn attends quarterly meetings with other UVic Centre Directors.

National Wildlife Federation’s Campus Ecology Program
We have only just found out about the Campus Ecology program, so it had no bearing on the project. However, we hope this case is the beginning of a strong relationship where we can learn from each other.

We have not used any Ecology Resources yet. However, we are collecting these for use this fall.

CONTACT INFORMATION
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MORE ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL

Campus Sustainability History

University of Victoria does have a sustainability office. The web address is:
http://www.uvic.ca/sustainability/

The sustainability office has responsibility for greening the entire UVic campus. As our students, staff
and faculty make use of classrooms, cafeterias, libraries and other campus facilities, it is important the
CSSI work with the campus sustainability office, and promote their work to our peers and stakeholders.

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