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**Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana
2006, Greening Campus Bookstores
Purchasing**

BACKGROUND

Campus Profile

Ball State University (BSU) is situated on 940 acres in Muncie, Indiana, and serves approximately 19,000 students (45 percent male and 55 percent female). Seven academic colleges offer 120 undergraduate programs, 80 master's programs and 20 doctoral programs in 46 departments and schools. Approximately 750 faculty members, 550 professional staff members, and 1,500 support personnel compose the employee base.

BSU has a long-standing history of sustainability that received recognition for the past three consecutive years by the National Wildlife Federation (NWF). BSU's commitment to sustainability include the following:

- Founder and host of, and international leader in the Greening of Campus Conference Series.
- Signatory to the Talloires Declaration supporting commitment to environmental stewardship and acknowledgment of universities' responsibility to meet the needs of society and to educate future generations.
- Founder of the Council on the Environment (COTE), which serves as a clearing house for the development of sustainability practices and programs campus wide and uses the Center for Energy Research, Education, and Service (CERES) as its Secretariat.
- The first state-supported university in Indiana to pursue the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification on two capital projects.
- Incorporation of biodiesel fuel and hybrid electric vehicles in our university service fleet.
- Active recycling of the solid-waste stream, including day-to-day paper, plastic, and glass; landscape maintenance cuttings; construction debris; expendable furnishings; and hazardous waste.
- Use of recycled content materials and eco-friendly maintenance supplies in day-to-day operations.
- Use of specialized state appropriations to replace the coal-fired central heating plant with a more environmentally friendly, energy-efficient, fluidized bed combustion technology.

- Educational opportunities through student involvement, such as the clustered academic minors in environmentally sustainable practices.
- Courses such as the Introduction to Sustainability and the architecture graduate studio on Design for Sustainability, which was recently recognized by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Committee on the Environment Eco-Literacy Project.
- Campus units such as the Procurement Office, organizations such as Students for a Sustainable Campus, and events such as the Earth Week activities of the Natural Resource that are further examples of BSU's existing efforts.

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GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Goals

The aim of this campus ecology special initiative is to partner with the Barnes and Noble managed BSU campus bookstore to carry, promote, and sell more environmentally and socially preferable products, including recycled paper, thereby approaching a goal of sustainability by promoting practices that reduce paper consumption, conserve natural resources, and help protect endangered forests. The initiative will allow BSU to promote awareness of the differences between products of service that can be cycled back through the product stream rather than consuming products that become part of the ever-growing landfills.

The greening of BSU's bookstore is a priority because it will set an example; influence attitudes; and educate the campus, community, and future generations. BSU is in a unique position to be a voice for this cause and to achieve greater success in the movement toward sustainability. A strong combination of students, faculty members, and staff members who have already demonstrated a commitment to conservation efforts is already in place within the campus community.

Short-Term Goals

A coalition consisting of Ron Sorrell, the BSU bookstore manager; Dena Shelly, the Center for Energy Research, Education, and Service partner and co-coordinator; and Jessica Clement, the NWF Campus Ecology Fellow, will create a plan of action that explores available products offered by the bookstore's vendor and that facilitates making those products available to customers.

The bookstore's manager has already expressed a willingness and ability to purchase products with certifiable recycled content, that have reduced environmental impact, or both. He will also track the sales of the sustainable goods to determine interest in and success of the program.

Long-Term Goals

The project will produce a heightened awareness of and enthusiasm for the purchase of items with recycled content and other characteristics that contribute to a sustainable lifestyle. An additional result will be the expanded consciousness on the part of the store personnel and management, which could have a corporate effect. This effect will, in turn, save resources that provide ecosystem services and will reduce the amount of waste being dumped into landfills.

Accomplishments

Ron Sorrell, Dena Shelly, and Jessica Clement have received approval from BSU to move forward with the project and are currently working on a plan of action that explores available products offered by the bookstore's vendor. Mr. Sorrell is working with corporate-level managers on the display set-up and is ordering higher recycled-content paper products and environmentally responsible products that will be available to customers before the start of the fall semester.

Challenges and Responses

Originally, Mr. Sorrell had permission from his corporate-level manager to design the bookstore's display layout. Recently, however Barnes and Noble informed him that the layout must be designed at the corporate level. That new turn of events has temporarily stalled making the selected products available to customers. We at BSU are optimistic that there is adequate time to fix the problem so we can offer the products for the high-volume sales at the start of the school year.

ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Leaders and Supporters

Leaders and supporters include the following:

- CERES will fund Dena Shelly as an additional student partner so she can assist in the success of this project.
- Members of the Students for a Sustainable Campus will provide marketing support to generate peer group enthusiasm.
- The departmental and collegiate academic and administrative units represented by the COTE membership will distribute to students, faculty members, and the staff members carefully designed informational fliers about this program.
- In addition, the university's Green Initiatives Coordinator will serve as faculty advisor to the project. The coordinator has several years of experience supporting sustainability projects within the BSU community and regularly distributes to students and others emails to which information regarding environmentally preferable purchasing can be added.
- The entire campaign will be monitored by the COTE membership in its monthly meetings.

Funding and Resources

The fellowship is co-sponsored by the Center for a New American Dream, an organization dedicated to creating consumer-conscious purchasing. Other funding is provided by CERES to cover the cost of wages for a student partner.

National Wildlife Federation's Campus Ecology® Program

NWF's support in this cause provides a unique chance to encourage better purchasing habits while using the reputation of NWF, BSU, and Barnes and Noble.

CLOSING COMMENT

As the current NWF Campus Ecology Fellow, I look forward to working toward the success of this project over the course of the next year and to pursuing the opportunity to directly affect the consumption of recycled paper and other environmentally preferable products.