



University of Colorado  
Colorado Springs

# Office of Sustainability

## Department Program Review and Strategic Plan 2017 - 2021

### Division of Administration and Finance

As a partner in learning and through the stewardship of resources, the Administration and Finance division provides innovative programs and services to support the student-centered mission of the University.

Office of  
**Sustainability**  
www.uccs.edu/sustain

#### Mission

The UCCS Office of Sustainability will **demonstrate excellence** in **providing knowledge, solutions, and leadership** toward further **sustainability progress for the university** and support corresponding **efforts in the Pikes Peak Region**.

#### Vision

The UCCS Office of Sustainability supports the UCCS Sustainability vision and mission to establish the university as a **recognized leader in sustainability and climate action in campus operations, campus culture, curriculum and co-curricular education, student recruitment and retention and success, and in the greater community**.



#### CORE VALUES

- Trust and respect for every individual.
- Teamwork and leadership.
- Alignment with the goals of the institution.
- Partnership with faculty, staff, and students.
- Contribution to the academic excellence of the university.
- Stewardship of the built and natural environment.
- Proactively serve all stakeholders.



#### Strengths

- Significant **experience**
- Strong relationships** and **successful collaborations**
- Knowledgeable, skilled, and passionate**
- Historical **cost avoidance** and savings
- UCCS leadership** in sustainability, locally and nationally
- Sustainability Demonstration House
- Students are positively impacted through **employment, volunteering, independent studies, internships, and class assignments**
- Contribute to **learning, experiential education, and retention**

#### Opportunities

- Institutionalize** partnerships
- Transition to more **consulting** and **educational role**
- Sustainability Demonstration House
- Educational and consulting efforts to **improve diversion**
- Hire an **energy engineer**
- Energy and water projects that will provide further **cost avoidance**
- General Education** requirements result in **new projects**
- Communicating** successful **student experiences** and recruiting new students
- Bachelor of **Innovation** program
- Dedicated IT** support

#### Weaknesses

- Improve and be accountable for areas that we **do not have under our control**
- Too many** operations and **service activities**
- role of **“everything sustainability”**
- Too many events**
- Effectively **communicate**
- Heavy **reliance on students**
- Lack of skills** for some **projects or programs** we are asked to direct
- Technology needs** have **outpaced** our **staffing** growth
- Collaboration** with **Residence Life**
- Lack of dedicated funds** to make continued **investments** in energy and water **retrofit projects**

#### Threats

- Different perceptions** on campus of how the **OS should focus its efforts**
- Number of students seeking **assistance** with sustainability **academic projects**
- Levels of overload among staff on campus are significant and sustainability is often seen as an add-on
- Lack of a formal committee**
- Many people on campus still do not understand **sustainability as a deeper concept than recycling** or the ways in which it relates to their departments or work
- Change in university leadership** - unknown direction with regard to sustainability
- Green Action Fund Fee is up for a vote in 2018**
- The campus **Sustainability Committee is a faculty committee** of the Faculty Assembly, which **limits its influence** on **operational areas** of the university

#### ASSESSMENT TIMELINE

- Complete a self-study
- Campus review completed by the Division Assessment Committee
- External review

#### STRATEGIC GOALS



Transition waste and recycling contract management and collection responsibilities to Facilities Services. OS will provide tracking and education service and will keep cardboard and small electronics recycling for the near future.



Determine if energy management will continue to be a function of the OS or if office will support professional engineer within Facilities Services in this role



Determine, based on technology needs assessment, collaborations, and leadership goals, what OS will continue to pursue with regard to dashboards, metering, apps, weather stations, etc.



Achieve clarification of the role of the office to directly support academic mission



Clarity in goals of Campus Sustainability Committee and understanding of what responsibilities they will take on to support campus goals and STARS



Explore official designation of committee or advisory board for sustainability



Participate in new UCCS Sustainability Strategic Plan



#### PROCESS

- Verbal **input** from team members
- 3** full-time staff members
- 5** student employees

- Shared in four two-hour meetings
- Reviewed all of the provided assessment categories in an **honest** and **open** dialogue

- Each** staff member **rated** our progress
- Provided detailed comments

- The group determined **important themes**, performed **SWOT** analysis, and **developed action steps**.
- Engaged an **external reviewer**

#### CONCLUSION

As a result, our team better understands how our office functions and we learned key takeaways from each of the eight categories to improve our operations.

- We need more communication to our campus & community.
- We need more communication within our office & division.
- We need to celebrate our successes.
- We need to strengthen our partnerships.
- We need to continue to engage our students in all things.