

## **Attendance**

Victor D’Alesio, Rebecca Denisi, Richard Garrett, Simona Peppers, Kathy Krawczyk , Scott Showalter, Bill Winner, Tracy Dixon, Jessica Thomas, Rebekah Dunstan, Meghan Lobsinger, Traci Rose Rider, Analis Fulghum, Carla Davis, Liz Bowen, Dick Bernhard, Charles Brown, Barbara Doll, Brian Jones

## **Welcome & Happy Earth Day – Bill Winner**

**Summary Results of Advanced Auditing Class Audit of Annual Sustainability Report** – Scott Showalter, Kathy Krawczyk, Victor D’Alesio, Rebecca Denisi, Richard Garret, Simona Peppers

See presentation

86 students conducted audits in small teams. Students logged around 1000 hours of time for this audit. The presentation is a high level overview. A more detailed report will be submitted to Tracy Dixon.

Sections of audit

### 1. Accuracy and process

Went well

- Some departments have controls and reviews in place for data
- Monthly coordination
- Consistent way to review process
- Using external (other university or industry) standards

Areas for improvement

- Use industry standards across the board
- More checks for accuracy
- Establish criteria
- Record retention (hard copies or backup electronic)

### 2. Content

Went well

- Clear strategies listed
- Documenting accomplishments and publishing
- If activities were off track stated why and looked into it (example of recycled paper rates down because paper use down)

Areas for improvement

- Letter from Chancellor
- Provided summary (include unified goal)
- Show progress over entire span not just one year at time
- Go after STARS rating
- GRI guidelines
- Texas example of metric for each strategy

### 3. Presentation

#### Went well

- Graphic representation
- Easy to read
- Pictures

#### Areas for improvement

- Continuous online update instead of hard copy
- Include hyperlinks
- Communicate updates in Technician and Bulletin
- Look at Michigan State University report as example
- Interactive campus map (Emory example)

#### What learned?

- Apply elements of audit process
- Communication is key. Thank you for phone, in person and email interviews. Inter-group communication was also very important.
- What it takes to exhibit professional skepticism (digging deeper into what information was behind report information)
- How to understand an organization's business and how the report is created
- The time that went into prepare the report. Students put in 1000 hours and figure the report might take more.
- What sustainability is and how to apply it in real life

#### Questions and comments

- Overall comment echoed by many was that the work and presentation are impressive and represent a very professional effort. There is good balance of what is going well and where the report can be improved.
- Did your research show similarities in reporting to other peer institutions?  
There are a lot of similarities. Some universities have different processes for different metrics.
- How did you prioritize recommendations selected for this presentation?  
Read small group highlights, selected pieces that saw across the reports. Tracy will get full report.
- Are other universities doing independent audits of sustainability reports? How do we show this?  
Know of only one other, Ohio University that has done this level of audit. A letter will be provided to attach to the annual report.
- Would like to get this process into a journal publication to get the format to other networks. Scott will be presenting at an upcoming conference for his field.
- How would an external audit be different?  
There are a lot of similarities. An external audit would be more costly. This group tried to mimic external auditors. For example, the teams did not know anyone and came in asking questions.
- Can you explain a bit more about the concept of a continuous update instead of an annual report?  
Continuous reporting is a way to remind people that sustainability is happening on campus and can be a way to increase web traffic.
- Do you recommend we repeat the audit?  
Yes, annual is good. If not annual then biannually.
- How will your experience impact your careers?

The project simulated an actual audit environment. Team members were talking to people they never met before and exhibiting professional skepticism. For each conversation there are notes and likely additional inquiries. The project took the textbook learning and put into practice.

- How did you track progress and notes? Is there a tool we could use across campus?  
Each person tracked time and what they were working on to make sure to stay focused. The detail is in the overall report for specific departments.
- The results of this project are a fitting, memorable project to commemorate 2014 Earth Day.

#### **Earth Month Activities in Review – Carla Davis**

Joel Pawlak, Earth Month chair and the planning commission had goals to do more with students and do more on Centennial. Tomorrow's stress buster does that. The stress buster event was moved from today due to forecasted storms to tomorrow. 30 days 30 ways to be sustainable is ongoing. Metcalf has reduced its energy savings 30% since the start of the energy competitions. 30 events are taking place as part of Earth Month. Web site, [go.ncsu.edu/earthmonth](http://go.ncsu.edu/earthmonth), shows completed events and photos and articles.

Comment that K12 schools found out about 30 Days 30 ways and are asking for presentations. This is one signal the message getting out well beyond campus.

#### **Information Items – Bill Winner**

- Earth Month events: [go.ncsu.edu/earthmonth](http://go.ncsu.edu/earthmonth)
- Matt Abele (student), Scott Showalter (faculty), Keith Smith (staff) and Homecoming (organization) received the 2014 Green Brick Award on April 14 at Farm Feast.
- Energy Management will be accepting the Excellence in Promoting the Utilities Savings Initiative (USI) Principles Award at the State Energy Conference on April 22.
- Dr. Bob Patterson, Caroline Hansley and the Solar Center's Renewable Energy Diploma Series will be accepting City of Raleigh Environmental Awards on April 22.
- Tracy will be setting up time with each chair to review the schedule of reporting year 3 tactics for the Annual Sustainability Report as well as creating year 4 tactics for 2014-15.
- NC State named in the 2014 Princeton Review's Guide to 332 Green Colleges.

#### **Sustainability Tour of Talley Student Center – TJ Willis**