This report details the FY2011-12 activities of the University Committee on Sustainability and presents a recommendation to refine the Committee’s structure in the upcoming year. The 20-member Committee is charged with advising the University on all matters related to sustainability. The Committee generally meets every 5 weeks and has five Subcommittees: Environmental Impact, Policies, Academic Integration, Outreach, and Student. This report begins with the overall Committee summary, contains individual reports from each Subcommittee, and then presents the restructuring recommendations.

Summary of Activities

UVA STARS Submission
In February 2012, the University finalized its Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education’s (AASHE) Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS) submission, an international system to assess sustainability initiatives in higher education. UVa earned a Silver rating (53.32 points out of 100) for its documented efforts in the three STARS categories: Education and Research; Operations; and Planning, Administration and Engagement. As of July 31, 2012, 198 colleges and universities throughout the U.S. and Canada have achieved a STARS rating.

Progress on 2011-2012 Work Plan
In August, 2011, the Committee developed and approved a workplan for the 2011-12 term that identified 9 Committee Products. The table below represents the current status on each product.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed Committee Product</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“See Why” Campaign Launch and Evaluation Plan</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validation of the Accuracy of UVA STARS Submittal</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Annual Student Sustainability Project Competition</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth Week 2012 Support</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Footprint Reduction Plans – Phases 2-4 Complete</td>
<td>In Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability Curriculum &amp; Research Guide</td>
<td>In Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Office Certification Program</td>
<td>In Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability Guide for Students</td>
<td>Not Pursuing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement Tools for Individual Actions</td>
<td>Not Pursuing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subcommittee Reports

Academic Integration Subcommittee – Chair: Mark White, Associate Professor, McIntire School of Commerce
The AI Subcommittee focused on a number of initiatives this year to help build a pan-university academic dialogue around sustainability. This effort is constrained by the lack of a mandate around issues of sustainability in academics and research.

At the start of the year, the Subcommittee identified three work products: a sustainability-focused discussion series, sustainability reading list, and a curriculum and research guide for sustainability. Work on the curriculum and research guide coincided with UVa’s STARS submission process and development of a Sustainability Institute concept, each of which sought similar information. Metrics on sustainability in curriculum and research are now available in UVa’s STARS report and general information is available on UVa’s Sustainability website.
The idea for a sustainability reading list developed from discussions of a sustainability summer reading requirement. The Chair solicited recommendations via an email blast for a book title and 2-3 sentence recommendation. The recommendations have been earmarked for distribution in weekly newsletters and as “green” tips.

The sustainability-focused discussion series is envisioned as a monthly event, in the style of a Flash Seminar, to build an academic dialogue and community around general sustainability topics. The series would initially feature UVA professors, but could include invited guests from outside the community for special events, particular Campus Sustainability Day and Earth Week. Although the series has not launched at the time of this report, planning for a fall 2012 series is currently underway.

**Student Subcommittee on the University Committee on Sustainability – Chair: Sheffield Hale, CLAS ‘12**
The student subcommittee was created in March of 2011 to improve communication among students, faculty and the administration on topics relating to sustainability. Serving as consultants, the six student members of the subcommittee, advised by Professor Mark White from the McIntire School of Commerce and Scott Norris from the Office of the VP for Student Affairs, have worked to document existing initiatives and make recommendations for implementation of projects that best represent student sentiment on sustainability.

The Subcommittee’s main effort was compiling a student vision for sustainability. After dozens of student leaders cast their vision, the student subcommittee wove them into a vision story. The primary theme of that story, that sustainability should be a part of every student’s education, was tested in a 1,525 student survey to gauge how many other students shared that vision. 68% shared the vision, 22% were indifferent, and 10% did not share the vision. With these results, the students created and presented a resolution to Student Council along with the student vision story that inspired it. Student Council unanimously endorsed both the resolution and vision in March 2012.

The Subcommittee has since presented to the University Committee on Sustainability and met with Provost John Simon, and plans to meet with all the Deans while engaging a variety of faculty to secure concrete realizations of the students’ vision and resolution.

**Outreach Subcommittee Report – Chair: Ida Lee Wootten, Director of Community Relations**
After gaining input from employees and students on key messages that would encourage individuals to engage in sustainable practices, the Subcommittee launched a “See Why” campaign at the beginning of fall semester.

The campaign included “Flip the Switch” signs that were mounted above light switches in buildings across Grounds, “Try Just One” signs that were placed on paper towel dispensers across Grounds, and “Choose to Reuse” bags given to new employees during orientation.

The bottom of the signs encourages individuals to access the University sustainability web site to “see why” turning off light switches, reducing consumption of paper products, and replacing single-use items are environmentally responsible practices.

The signage was designed to promote awareness that individual actions can make a difference and reflected employees’ suggestions to promote sustainable practices in the workplace. Ideas for the signage were vetted during meetings of Sustainability Partners, a group of employees that meets monthly to discuss and advance sustainability awareness. After gaining endorsement by the President’s Committee on Sustainability, the design and implementation of the signs represented a collaboration among many units across Grounds.

To gauge the effectiveness of the “Try Just One” signs, purchasing of paper toweling was tracked in five buildings across Grounds. By the end of fall semester, usage of paper toweling was down significantly in three of the five buildings. By the end of spring semester, usage continued to be down significantly in one building while up slightly in the other participating buildings.
Sustainability Partners also endorsed the idea of producing a training program that promotes awareness of environmentally responsible actions UVA is taking, as well as those individuals can embrace. Developed and refined following employees’ feedback over several months, the training defines sustainability, highlights UVA programs, and offers actions individuals can adopt. Following endorsement by the University Sustainability Committee, UVA’s Human Resources will include the training in their online library for users to access at their convenience. Human Resources will also work with UVA sustainability leaders to schedule in-person training sessions.

Employees and student leaders worked together to present Earth Week 2012, a lively collection of presentations, exhibits, classes, food and music April 16-22. About 40 UVA and regional organizations participated in the week, helping to stage more than 20 events. Highlights included an Eco-Fair, a recycled art-making project, a local food show, and an “E-cycle drive” at the John Paul Jones Arena to collect electronics.

Subcommittee members are working with sustainability leaders this summer to develop an enhanced sustainability pledge, which will be showcased on a new institutional web site this fall. The pledge and training module will also be offered as part of a “Sustainability Toolkit” on the web.

**Environmental Impact Subcommittee – Co-Chairs: Don Sundgren, Chief Facilities Office and Cheryl Gomez, Director of Energy and Utilities**

In the past year the Subcommittee undertook a significant effort to develop working groups to assist the Subcommittee and the Committee on Sustainability in meeting its responsibilities to the Board of Visitors from the June 2011 Sustainability Resolution, and to provide an active forum to foster learning, research, feedback, and awareness of UVA’s environmental impacts.

The EIS created working groups in areas mirroring the BOV Sustainability Resolution: energy (carbon), nitrogen, waste, water, stormwater, noise pollution, light pollution, and open space. With the help of the Student Subcommittee, 72 students responded with interest to participate in one or more working groups. Each working group was co-chaired by a nominated student and UVA staff/faculty member. The working groups were initiated in December 2011 and a joint kickoff meeting was held in January. For the spring semester, each working group pursued the following charge:

1) Identify partners and interested parties and with them determine past and current work efforts for each working group.

2) Recommend environmental goals for each working group.

3) Develop actions to reduce environmental impacts and define a structure to measure progress.

In a related effort, the EIS also convened the Strategic Fuel Plan Group (SFPG) to develop a strategic plan for future fuel use in the Main Heating Plant of the University and explore the question: what would it take to greatly reduce or eliminate use of fossil fuels? During the spring, the SFPG guided a test burn of wood chips at the Main Heating Plant. Approximately 200 tons of wood chips were successfully co-fired with coal to test all aspects of the fuel for potential use at the Main Heating Plant. Four engineering students conducted independent-study research on the test and developed reports to document their findings. A white paper that evaluates the financial, operational, and environmental aspects of the test burn is expected to be complete by the end of September, 2012.

**Policies Subcommittee – Co-Chairs: Richard Brownlee, Dale S Coenen Professor of Free Enterprise and Wynne Stuart, Associate Provost for Academic Support and Classroom Management**

As designed, the AASHE’s Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS) tool is a self-reporting submission system that, in some cases, permits significant interpretation by users on measurement criteria. To promote accuracy in reporting, STARS depends on three measures of accountability: a transparent process, individual contact names, and an affirmative letter from the leader of the institution.
During the process of compiling UVA’s STARS submission, the Policies Subcommittee reviewed and vetted UVA responses, particularly focusing on credits where multiple interpretations of the credit requirements were possible. The Subcommittee particularly focused on ensuring interpretations were conservative and consistent among credits. This review also enabled the Committee to recommend that President Sullivan affirm the accuracy of UVA’s STARS submission. The President signed the STARS submission on February 15, 2012.

Restructuring Recommendations
This reorganization has several motives:
- To better integrate University-wide sustainability actions
- To align the Committee’s organization with the national model provided by STARS, and benefit from inherent metrics and prioritization provided by STARS.
- To position the Committee to respond appropriately to the rapidly evolving field of sustainability in education and research
- To clarify the responsibilities of each subcommittee

Committee Membership
Human Resources has been a significant partner in implementing several new initiatives in the past year. Given the important sustainability role of HR, it is recommended that a representative of the Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer be added as a voting member of the Committee.

Subcommittee Reorganization
The Committee’s five subcommittees are being combined into three new subcommittees. The three: Education and Research; Operations; and Planning, Administration and Engagement mirror the three major categories of the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating Tool (STARS). By aligning the Subcommittees with this structure, the working areas of each Subcommittee can be more clearly defined, STARS metrics for measuring progress can be adapted, and future initiatives can target gaps in UVA’s performance in the STARS system.