



University Sustainability Coalition Meeting
Virtual Meeting
March 29, 2023
10am – 11am

The University Sustainability Coalition was formed in 2021 with one goal: To increase higher education sustainability efforts in Louisiana.

The idea of forming the University Sustainability Coalition was born from a steering committee of university representatives developing the university affiliate program as part of an EPA Trash Free Waters Grant with UL Lafayette and Keep Louisiana Beautiful. There are no fees associated with being a part of the coalition, just a seat at the table with your peers to communicate, and is open to anyone in higher ed sustainability. By sharing challenges and solutions, members of this coalition can influence others in moving toward a more sustainable future.

Current University Sustainability Coalition members represent the following universities and colleges: Dillard University, Grambling State University, Louisiana State University, Loyola University, McNeese University, Nicholls State University, Northwestern State University, Tulane University, River Parishes Community College, Xavier University, UL Monroe, UL Lafayette, University of New Orleans, Louisiana Tech, Fletcher Technical Community College, and Centenary College.

Attending: 14 Individuals, 7 Universities

Keep Louisiana Beautiful: Cabell Mouton (Facilitator), Patty Ferrell

LSU: Jerrod Penn (Chair), Tammy Millican, Cheyenne Autlin

Tulane University: Jordan Stewart (Co-Chair)

Northwestern: Jennifer Kelly

Nicholls State: Jenny Schexnayder

UL Lafayette: Blair Begnaud, Jonathan Brown

UL Monroe: Andrew Hardee

Tulane University: Barrett Dollar

River Parishes Community College: Esperanza Zenon

Centenary College: Chris Sampite

Meeting Opened: 10:00 am

Introductions were made.

Report:

The University Sustainability Coalition was formed to provide a platform to discuss sustainability challenges and solutions that are common across higher ed institutions. The Coalition meets in person at the annual Keep Louisiana Beautiful State Conference and conducts virtual meetings four to five times throughout the year. The meetings provide an opportunity to network with your peers and to share sustainability challenges and solutions. Student participation is also encouraged to give them a platform to showcase their efforts and an opportunity to network with professionals.

Sustainability should be a common objective across all campus operations and requires engagement of the entire campus community. With that said, the meeting was turned over to Blair Begnaud and Jonathan Brown of University of Louisiana at Lafayette and Jordan Stewart of Tulane University for a presentation on how to enhance engagement with students and faculty in campus sustainability efforts.

Blair and Jonathan began the presentation with what they have developed for best practices at their university that has been in development for the last 10 years. Since each university campus is different, it will take trial and error to determine what works best on your campus. One of the first steps is to define sustainability as there are many misconceptions on how students perceive sustainability. Sustainability is far reaching and can be broken down into eight main topics. It is important to connect these topics with sustainability goals so students can understand the big picture and see how their major may align with one or more of these goals. Any and all sustainability efforts, no matter how small, do have an impact. Empowerment, education, measurement, and reflection are additional aspects of the engagement mindset. Tabling at orientation and other events is a very easy and effective means to build and engage the student population. Building partnerships with local businesses, community non-profits, other campus offices and student organizations is a good way to grow the sustainability community. To be effective, you must stay engaged and stay connected. Social media is a good platform for this but stay up to date on what students are using to communicate as it is always changing. In-person connections are also important so visit classrooms, talk to students, get involved with Student Affairs, set up office time where students and/or faculty can approach you and share goals. Everything is interconnected so do not work in a silo. There are numerous ways to engage and integrate sustainability with students being the key focal point. Setting the right example will encourage others to do the right thing. There will always be roadblocks along the way so it is important to figure out what works best and to work within the guidelines of your university. One of the biggest obstacles is funding and/or resources to support sustainability initiatives. The group then discussed various options for raising money to fund their initiatives. Different case studies were then presented as practical applications for promoting sustainability in the community. Fete De La Terre is UL's biggest engagement event hosting various environmental events during Earth Week. Another case study focused on Students for Sustainability and their goals and initiatives. Students hold the power so determine what initiatives they are willing to support. This can be accomplished by conducting student surveys. Sample surveys are available from STARS.

Jordan Stewart also shared the initiatives of Tulane University. In April, there are multiple events involving both students and partners focused on service, education, and outreach. To address climate change, Tulane holds Climate Action Week which is a university wide event that includes discussions, workshops, and speakers. The keynote speaker will be Kevin O'Brien.

The presentation provided a roadmap of how to engage students and faculty in sustainability initiatives so please share this information with your colleagues. Sustainability is a goal at every level and all actions do have an impact.

For your reference, the presentation may be accessed with the below link:

[Sustainability Engagement](#)

Cabell concluded the meeting by telling the Coalition that the annual KLB State Conference will be held in Baton Rouge on October 10 & 11 so save the dates. This will be an in-person meeting where we will map out the meeting schedule and topics for next year. Please be reminded that Love the Boot Week is April 17 – 23 and you are strongly encouraged to participate and it is not too late to register.

Please note the date and time for our final meeting of the year.

May 10, 10am-11am

University Adopt-a-Meeting: ALL

Meeting Topic and Presenter: Spring Green Activities: Successes and Challenges

Meeting adjourned at 11:00am.