



## **University Sustainability Coalition**

### **Virtual Meeting**

**April 29, 2025**

**10 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

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 education sustainability. By sharing challenges and solutions, members of this coalition can influence others to move toward a more sustainable future.

Current sustainability coalition members represent 17 universities from Centenary College, Dillard University, Fletcher Community College, Grambling State University, LA Tech, Louisiana State University, Loyola University, McNeese University, Nicholls State University, Northwestern State University, River Parishes Community College, Tulane University, Xavier University, UL Monroe, UL Lafayette, and University of New Orleans.

#### **Attending:** 12 Individuals, 6 Universities

Keep Louisiana Beautiful: Cabell Mouton, Patty Ferrell

Loyola University: Mark Tobler, Thomas DeCarlo

Tulane University: Jordan Stewart, Steve Gergen

UL Lafayette: Jonathan R. Brown (Co-Chair), Blair Begnaud

University of New Orleans: Dr. Carol Lunn (Co-Chair)

Fletcher Community College: Christie Landry

Southeastern Louisiana University: Ray Wolsefer, Hannah Labauve

#### **Meeting Opened:** 10:00 a.m.

#### **Introductions were made.**

As part of her introduction, Christie Landry with Fletcher Community College expressed her interest in becoming a University Affiliate. Cabell responded that a new program is in the works for all Community Colleges.

#### **Report:**

The University Sustainability Coalition was formed to provide a platform to discuss sustainability challenges and solutions that are common across higher education institutions.

This is the last virtual meeting of the academic year. In conjunction with the annual Keep Louisiana Beautiful State Conference, the Coalition will meet in person on September 23<sup>rd</sup> in Baton Rouge. Cabell Mouton

reminded the group that Jonathan Brown's tenure as Co-Chair will be coming to an end. If you are interested in serving as Co-Chair or wish to nominate someone to fill this role, please let Cabell know. Cabell then introduced Dr. Carol Lunn, Assistant Vice President for Research & Economic Development at the University of New Orleans. Carol is also currently serving as Co-Chair for the University Sustainability Coalition.

Dr. Lunn began by giving a brief overview of UNO's philosophy of letting the campus serve as a living laboratory to serve students, employees and the local community. Understanding the culture of your organization and building key partnerships is important for success. Sustainability should be approached in a holistic way to actively engage students, faculty and the local community. UNO created a Sustainability Circle of all stakeholders who get together and brainstorm ideas for sustainability projects, set annual goals and prioritize initiatives.

Dr. Lunn then presented the Audubon Mural Project. This project engaged fine art students who painted colorful murals across campus to raise awareness about the threat climate change poses to local bird populations. The project was the first of its kind in Louisiana and required extensive collaboration with various partners. The project was a huge success, and the details can be found in her presentation which is available on the Sustainability page of the KLB website.

In conjunction with the mural project, the University created what they call Privateer Pocket Parks. Native plants were installed next to the murals to create a complete eco-system designed to provide an environment in which the birds can live and thrive. Other features of the Pocket Park include upcycled outdoor furniture, trash bins, rain barrels and a rain garden.

If other universities have an interest in doing a mural project, please reach out to Carol who is willing to help and to provide contact information about those partners who helped make the project a success.

A new project on campus is the installation of Solar Benches/Charging Stations. There is no cost to the university for these solar powered benches which will provide students with access to charge their phones and laptops even during a power outage.

Other campus wide initiatives:

- Bio-swale to reduce campus flooding
- Storm drain markers to encourage no dumping as it all drains to the lake
- 1.8 MWdc solar array to reduce operating costs
- Bird houses painted with murals
- Earl K. Long Library featuring Keep Louisiana Beautiful's Get Down and Clean Up program

In conclusion, Carol encouraged others to take advantage of programs and grants offered by Keep Louisiana Beautiful. Volunteer for something you are passionate about and remember to celebrate your success.

Cabell thanked Carol for her time and commended her efforts with all that is taking place on the UNO campus under her leadership.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.