

# OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT (OSE)

---

## STRATEGIC PLAN

**IOWA**

Office of Sustainability  
and the Environment



2022-2024

[WWW.SUSTAINABILITY.UIOWA.EDU](http://WWW.SUSTAINABILITY.UIOWA.EDU)

# OUR MISSION

**CHALLENGE** and **INSPIRE** the greater University of Iowa community in solving the **GRAND ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES** of the 21st century through transdisciplinary education, research, and service.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION



The UI Office of Sustainability and the Environment (OSE), housed within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS), provides a base for coordinating programs across the campus community and brings greater emphasis to the mission of sustainability education and research.

The OSE supports connections among existing academic programs, faculty research, and outreach efforts, as well as coordinates initiatives for a more sustainable community.

These critical objectives guide OSE's decisions in creating, expanding, and sunseting programs and activities. These objectives provide focus to ensure the OSE achieves its 2022-2024 strategic plan goals.



# CRITICAL OBJECTIVES



## Campus 2030 Sustainability Goals

Assist the University in achieving five measurable goals, drafted with campus partners



## Academics

Transform teaching and learning on campus



## Student Professional Development and Experiences

Create and promote student opportunities



## K-12 Outreach and Engagement

Increase and promote engagement opportunities



## External Partners and Funding

Explore new opportunities and pathways



## Living Laboratories

Expand the idea of a "traditional" classroom



## Communications

Elevate the profile of sustainability on campus



## Internal Partnerships

Collaborate to strengthen and expand programs, with partners, including, but not limited to:

- UIHC
- Athletics
- UI Energy Collaborative
- Purchasing
- Center for Advancement
- Campus Planning
- Wellness
- ICRU
- Facilities Management
- Office of Community Engagement

# 2022-2024 GOALS AND PRIORITIES



Below are seven goals that the OSE will work to achieve by 2024.



Each goal has three to four high priority strategies that support the goal.



All OSE programs and activities should align with the high priority strategies and support the OSE goals.



## 1

### Curriculum and Teaching Goal

***Transform the University's teaching and learning culture so that sustainability competency and literacy becomes a universal learning outcome***

#### High Priorities

- Facilitate or support the creation, improvement, or development of 2-3 campus living laboratories
- Increase enrollment in sustainability course offerings, degrees, certificates, and general education requirements across interdisciplinary departments
- Identify and support faculty champions to lead the integration of sustainability into the curriculum with each college

# 2

## **Student Life and Co-Curricular Learning Goal**

*Collaborate with campus partners in creating and promoting student opportunities to develop skills as sustainability leaders*

### High Priorities

- Host lectures and/or speaker series' on campus for critical events, milestones
- Maintain, support, and promote student placement post-degree by hosting sustainability career forums, assisting in sustainability career fairs, and creating networks with employers and post-graduate opportunities.
- Support student engagement efforts through partnerships with Admissions, Advising, Career Center, Division of Student Live, Housing and Dining, Student Orgs, etc.

# 3

## **Research and Discovery Goal**

*Create, advance, and excel in innovative, collaborative, and interdisciplinary sustainability research*

### High Priorities

- Expand multi-disciplinary living laboratory research programs by engaging faculty and student partners in piloting and sharing innovative solutions to real-world challenges
- Expand and engage our network of sustainability scholars and scientists for campus and community engagement
- Leverage campus departments, research centers, and other partners to increase and improve student internship, research, and discovery opportunities

# 4

## **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Goal**

*Develop, strengthen, and support partnerships and programs that engage underrepresented groups on and off campus*

### High Priorities

- Focus on recognizing and amplifying the work and voices of underrepresented groups to broaden and expand the face of the environmental movement to reflect those facing the brunt of environmental issues
- Increase partnerships to develop programs that engage underrepresented groups on and off campus and expand representation in sustainability
- Expand research and mentorship opportunities for students from underrepresented populations and ensure equitable distribution of OSE initiative funds.

# 5

## **Community Outreach and Engagement Goal**

*Increase student, faculty, and staff engagement with community sustainability research and education*

### High Priorities

- Connect and leverage campus research in broader Iowa communities through Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities, Latham Science Engagement Fellowship Program, ICRU, others
- Expand use-inspired research initiatives with campus partners such as CHEEC, PPC, CGRER, IISC, IIHR, IFC, LACMERS and others
- Explore opportunities to enhance or create 2+2 sustainability-focused programs with Iowa community colleges
- Create and expand K-12 sustainability outreach and education opportunities in Iowa to build a pipeline to UI sustainability programs

# 6

## Campus and Environment Goal

*Engage, assist, and collaborate with colleges and auxiliary units to make campus operations more sustainable*

### High Priorities

- Support and promote UI's 2030 Sustainability goals and advise colleges and other campus units in embedding sustainability into their operations
- Engage shared governance bodies and UI leadership to advance institutional sustainability programs and initiatives
- Collaborate with campus partners to create a campus wellness plan that prioritizes health, wellness, and sustainability; Increase student access to and use of outdoor spaces to improve the health and wellness of our campus community
- Increase visibility of sustainable practices demonstrated on campus and gain national recognition for sustainable operations

# 7

## Administration and Communication Goal

*Elevate the profile of sustainability across the University community*

### High Priorities

- Increase student access to sustainability research, mentorships, internships, and job opportunities
- Create a strong alumni engagement program and maintain alumni communication networks to connect students, faculty, staff, alumni, recruiters, and community partners involved in sustainability
- Demonstrate the benefits that UI sustainability research and education provide to the state of Iowa
- Create and implement a communications strategy

# CAMPUS 2030 SUSTAINABILITY GOALS

In 2008, President Sally Mason challenged the University community to integrate sustainability into its mission. This challenge was articulated in a set of goals, entitled “Vision 2020 – University of Iowa’s Sustainability Targets,” announced in 2010.

Spurred by calls from students, faculty and staff, a process of internal deliberation was set in motion to develop an updated set of Goals appropriate for 2030 and beyond. The “2030 UI Sustainability Goal Setting” task force met in late 2019 and early 2020 to solicit ideas and feedback on the 2030 Goals from interested parties in their respective stakeholder groups.

First drafts of the Goals were created and presented to campus throughout 2020. Several campus listening posts were held, along with open comment periods on draft versions. In 2021, the pandemic and the retirement of President Harreld slowed forward progress of Goals implementation. In the fall 2021 semester, the task force presented draft Goals to newly sworn in President Barbara Wilson and her team.

In 2022, at the request of President Wilson, the task force worked with campus strategic planning teams to embed sustainability cohesively into 2022–2027 UI Strategic Plan.

Here are the five goals, drafted in concert with campus partners through this process:



## **UI 2030 Climate Goal**

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent

## **UI 2030 Education Goal**

One hundred percent of undergraduate students will complete a sustainability-focused course before graduating

## **UI 2030 Waste Goal**

Become a Zero Waste campus by achieving PLAN Atlas Bronze Zero Waste certification\*

## **UI 2030 Water Goal**


Improve water quality in the Iowa River by creating best practices for stormwater management and water conservation

## **UI 2030 Campus Goal**

Embed sustainability into every college and auxiliary unit's strategic plan and report on progress annually

\*Healthcare facilities will not be included in the zero waste goal, but will meet or exceed top performing healthcare facility diversion rates of at least 40%





**OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY  
STRATEGIC PLAN ADDENDUM  
AND SUPPORTING  
DOCUMENTS**

# STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION, RESPONSIBILITIES, & EXPECTATIONS

The OSE 2022-2024 Strategic Plan is assigned to the OSE team members, noted below, who are responsible for advancing plan values and elements. In the team's various roles, their functions with regard to this Plan are to:

- Provide oversight for implementation of the Strategic Plan
- Work to make certain that efforts across the plan are aligned
- Communicate planning information to campus stakeholders
- Set outcomes
- Communicate and approve strategic planning initiatives and associated budgets
- Conduct and review evaluation of initiatives to determine next steps
- Utilize campus partners to develop and meet specific outcomes
- Utilize proven policies and practices to ensure progress is being made toward the strategic objectives and goals



The OSE will provide project suggestions, updates, and solicit advice of campus partners, including the Sustainability Charter Committee and Advisory Board, as the OSE seeks to ensure University-wide coordination of initiatives. The OSE assists the SCC, AB, and campus partners with ensuring and promoting wide-reaching collaboration across Colleges and departments within the University in pursuit of initiatives to ensure broad communication and alignment of sustainability initiatives.

# OSE STRUCTURE

The OSE supports three full-time staff employees along with a number of student interns. These roles include a full-time Program Director, two full-time Program Managers, and upwards of ten student interns.

## Program Director

The OSE Program Director supports initiatives, programs and services related to sustainability and the environment; counsels and provides liaison with appropriate individuals and agencies regarding sustainability programs and services; administers the operational and financial activities of the OSE; directs and evaluates the OSE's sustainability programs and services; and analyzes data for sustainability quality improvement initiatives.

## Program Managers

The OSE Program Managers contribute to campus-wide sustainability-focused education, research and engagement programs, relevant at local, regional, national, and global scales. This role supports the development of faculty and student related education, research, outreach, and internships around sustainability and environmental themes (e.g. environmental justice, energy-water-food, public health, business, engineering, arts and humanities, urbanization and climate change; environmental, economic, and cultural resiliency).

Other duties include leading involvement and engagement in UI sustainability initiatives; coordinating capacity-building activities for faculty and research partners; assessing the impact and effectiveness of sustainability education, research, and engagement at The University of Iowa; as well as supervising student interns to support goals of the OSE.

## Student Interns

The student interns act as ambassadors for the OSE; assisting with campus sustainability projects; meeting with students concerning OSE operations, or interest in programs; maintaining relationships with student organizations and relevant campus and community stakeholders; assisting the Program Managers and Director with relevant tasks; collaborating with OSE staff to create appropriate metrics to measure sustainability efforts on campus; and collecting and compiling relevant data for the University's sustainability goals.

# STAFF ROLES

# CAMPUS SUPPORT

The following departments, committees, and boards directly support, advise, and/or assist the OSE to advance the OSE's mission.

## Facilities Management

The University's Facilities Management (FM) Department created the Office of Sustainability in 2010 and led the University in developing a campus-wide vision for sustainability. After seven years of heavy focus and significant progress towards operational sustainability goals, FM collaborated with the Provost's Office to shift the focus of the Office of Sustainability and put greater emphasis on integrating sustainability into academics and research. FM continues to provide support to the OSE, primarily through collaboration and partnerships.

## Sustainability Charter Committee

The Presidential Sustainability Charter Committee (SCC) was created in order to independently advise the UI President and Administration on the integration of sustainability with existing campus programs in education, research, operations, and community outreach. The Committee assists in engaging the campus in an ongoing dialogue about sustainability and instilling a culture of sustainable long-range planning and forward-thinking design through their respective constituencies.

The SCC also advises and makes recommendations to the President on the development and implementation of campus sustainability action plans. Members include staff, faculty, and students representing various colleges and departments on campus, as well as administrative liaisons. The SCC meets once per month. While the OSE and SCC are not linked administratively and have no formal obligations to each other, the two maintain a close relationship and collaborate on various initiatives. OSE staff and interns often hold seats on the SCC committee.

The OSE Advisory Board (AB) hosts representatives from across campus, including faculty, staff, research center leaders, and academic advisors. This AB reviews OSE progress, discusses issues, identifies long-term strategic plans, short-term goals, and key educational and outreach opportunities for the OSE. The OSE AB meets once per year.

# OSE ADVISORY BOARD

# OSE ANNUAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## Fall Semester

### August

- On lowa programming
- Residence hall programming
- USS mentorship program launch
- Honors Primetime course

### September

- Student skills training
- Climate Challenge launch

### October

- Campus Sustainability Month
- AASHE conference
- Guest Speaker - on campus

### November

- OSE Advisory Committee meeting

### December

- Graduation

## Summer

### June

- New Student Orientation

### July

- BioBlitz
- New Student Orientation

## Spring Semester

### January

- Strategic planning and evaluation

### February

- Bee Campus reporting
- One Sustainable Iowa conference

### March

- Sustainability career forum

### April

- Earth Month
- Board of Regents Sustainability Report
- City Nature Challenge
- Guest Speaker - on campus

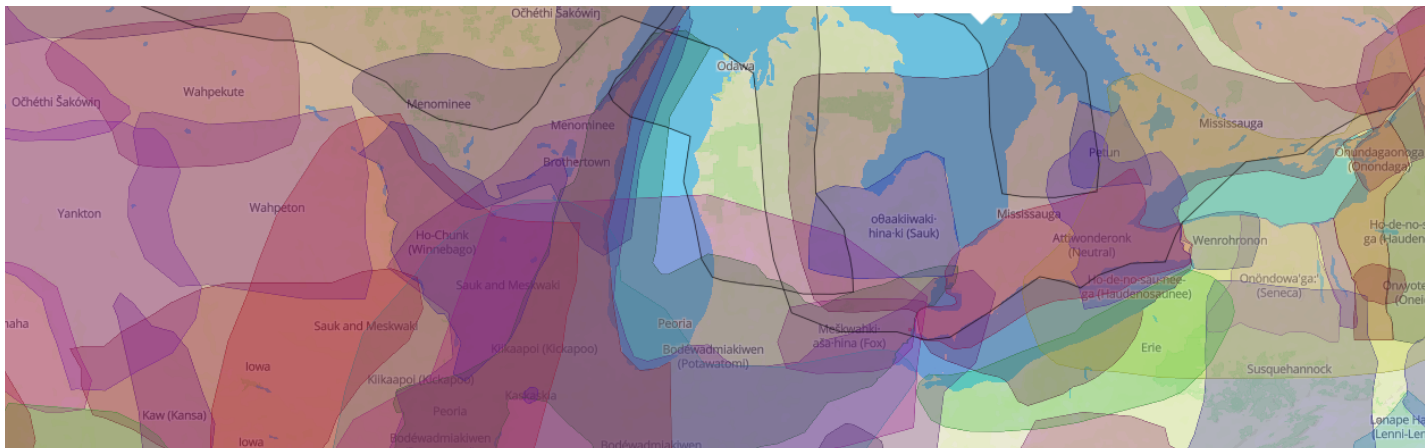
### May

- Graduation
- Review and select ISSSF proposals

## Ongoing

- Campus planning consultation
- Internal and external partner programming
- Student org engagement
- Class presentations and projects
- Ashton Prairie Living Lab management
- 2030 Sustainability Goals implementation
- Communications and marketing
- Student research projects
- Intern onboarding and management

# ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF LAND AND SOVEREIGNTY



The Office of Sustainability and the Environment will continue to recognize and respect Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of this land and the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories.

The University of Iowa is located on the homelands of the Ojibwe/Anishinaabe (Chippewa), Báxoje (Iowa), Kiiikaapoi (Kickapoo), Omãeqnomenēwak (Menominee), Myaamiaki (Miami), Nutachi (Missouri), Umo<sup>ho</sup> (Omaha), Wahzhazhe (Osage), Jiwere (Otoe), Odawaa (Ottawa), Pó<sup>ka</sup> (Ponca), Bodéwadmi/Neshnabé (Potawatomi), Meskwaki/Nemahahaki/Sakiwaki (Sac and Fox), Dakota/Lakota/Nakoda (Sioux), Sahnish/Nuxbaaga/Nuweta (Three Affiliated Tribes) and Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) Nations. The following tribal nations, Umo<sup>ho</sup> (Omaha Tribe of Nebraska and Iowa), Pó<sup>ka</sup> (Ponca Tribe of Nebraska), Meskwaki (Sac and Fox of the Mississippi in Iowa), and Ho-Chunk (Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska) Nations continue to thrive in the State of Iowa and we continue to acknowledge them. As an academic institution, it is our responsibility to acknowledge the sovereignty and the traditional territories of these tribal nations, and the treaties that were used to remove these tribal nations, and the histories of dispossession that have allowed for the growth of this institution since 1847. Consistent with the University's commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, understanding the historical and current experiences of Native peoples will help inform the work we do; collectively as a university to engage in building relationships through academic scholarship, collaborative partnerships, community service, enrollment and retention efforts acknowledging our past, our present and future Native Nations.