



Students' Society of McGill University
Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

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Environment Committee Progress Report

November 25, 2010

I. Five Year Plan for Sustainability:

1. President Portfolio Coordinator: Anna Luz

Composting in SSMU Building

- Pilot vermicomposter currently getting started at Committee member's house, will move the composter into a highly visible place in SSMU building next semester

Waste Management: E-waste & batteries

- Will talk to building porters where recycling is already set up (some buildings seem to already have it. I'm not sure how much it is actually used) and ask who picks it up from them etc.
- Begin project in January 2011

Waste Management: Drink Cups

- The waste audit during waste reduction week showed an enormous amount of waste was made up of disposable coffee/drink cups.
- Aryeh, Anna & Dennis Fortune have begun to communicate with Susan Cambell & Mathieu Laperle
- Will meet with Susan Campbell, Mathieu Laperle (MFDS) and possibly a few other people, to brainstorm ideas.
- Hopefully begin selling "travel mugs" at a discounted price
- Focus on Residences

2. VP Internal Portfolio Coordinator: Caitlin McHose

Sustainable Wine list

- As a part of the Green Events Guide, Phil Brunet (SSMU Green Events Coordinator) and I are planning to contact a few local wineries and see if

they will give deals to event planners in hopes that it will encourage them to buy local/ organic wines for their events. We have already contacted one winery that is interested, but we haven't set up anything concrete.

Green Events Guide

- Meeting planned with Tom, Anna and Phil to present a summarized version of the Green Events Guide in two weeks. It will resemble a check list of things to do to make an event more sustainable. They will be ranked based on priority (for example, a high priority would be to ensure that all plastic cups being used at the event are recyclable) and event planners will have to sign the checklist attesting that they have tried to their best ability to achieve the goals.

Reusable cups for SSMU

- I will also present Tom with a proposal for SSMU to purchase reusable plastic cups that they can use at their events (Homecoming, 4 Floors, etc)

3. VP Clubs & Services Portfolio Coordinator: Lucie Pivnick

- Lighting Survey of Shatner already completed
 - there was an Energy Retrofit submitted April 6, 2010
- More efficient lighting (ongoing project)
 - An application has been submitted by the VP Clubs and Services Anushay, with my support, to the Sustainability Projects Fund to replace the lighting in the cafeteria of the Shatner building with more efficient lighting (T8s)
 - Anushay and those involved in the SPF are currently clarifying some details regarding the submission
 - We are waiting for approval

Next Steps:

- contact SSMU's general manager Pauline to ask her about LED bulbs in exit signs
- contact Pauline to find out if our vending machines have misers built-in/to find out who SSMU's vending machine provide is
- get in touch with John Campbell in the IT department to review the Computer and IT goals

Challenges:

- Anushay explained to me that SSMU is “against” the transition for clubs operating out of Shatner to use online storage services for security reasons
- She also explained to me that some of the other power-saving measures are unrealistic for those in the SSMU office

4. VP University Affairs Portfolio Coordinator: Andrea Morden

Objective 2) During the renegotiation of the lease, include provisions that would allow the SSMU to financially benefit from energy-saving measures in the Shatner Building, without burdening the SSMU with full responsibility for utilities.

Status: Achieved in Fall 2010, external to SSMU Environment

Objective 3) Allow the SSMU to have full control over the heating and cooling in the Shatner Building to achieve optimal temperatures, reduce energy consumption.

Status: Ongoing

- uncertain about the SSMU’s ability to control this because of shared heating and cooling with the Brown Building.
- The end-goal of achieving optimal temperatures to reduce energy consumption could be achieved without trying to garner full control, i.e., through the energy consumption reduction plan written up after the Energy Audit was completed last year through BPR.
- Meet with Pauline Gervais to decide the most efficient way of reducing energy consumption through the heating and cooling of the Shatner Building

Objective 4) Presenting green initiatives to the McGill Administration to achieve increased sustainability on campus.

Status: Ongoing

- interested in focusing on the ability of the campus cafeterias to become more sustainable through the reduction of the use of disposable plates
- Have contacted ERC, IRC to see how they feel about the residence cafeterias’ success at reducing the use of disposable take-out containers

- have contacted the Plate Club to determine the ability of their operation to expand across campus, based on the size of their volunteer base, etc.
- interested in expanding the SSMU bottled-water ban to campus, have contacted TAPThirst McGill and Concordia to see how this can be achieved

5. VP External Portfolio Coordinator: Aryeh Canter

Gorrilla Compost

- Came up with many different ideas on how to make it work
- Greenhouse is too difficult
- Just a drop of point is a logistical nightmare
- Now working on having SSTEIRBBPUSAMC purchase its own industrial size composter

Organic Campus

- Storefront project on hold
- Do not have a great desire to expand so they need no help

Funding

- Have not heard anything specific about funding opportunities

6. VP Finance & Operations: Cameron Butler

- Working with Dennis Fortune (Sustainability Office), on water bottled filling stations project
 - Submitting SPF application next semester
- Consultation with accountant over Christmas Break to examine possibility of paperless accounting within SSMU

II. Internal Environment Committee Volunteers:

1. Communications Coordinator: Dylan Kristofic

1. Update and Refresh SSMU Environment Website

- The redesigned website was launched at the beginning of October, 2010, at the same URL as the old site. The site remains a work in progress, and a second major upgrade is planned to occur during the Christmas holiday season.
- NEXT STEPS: The calendar feature of the website is still under construction, and an improved calendar application is currently being sourced from the WordPress plug-in library. We are also investigating methods to improve the process of updating the site (i.e. providing different green groups their own login information to update their own pages as they wish). Currently all site updates are done through the Communications coordinator.

2. Create a central repository (virtual and physical) of environmental resources for Students

- The website currently has a resource library which includes the green events guide, responsible purchasing guide, green fund application, five year plan outline, five year plan 2009/10 report, and a listing of McGill's and SSMU's environmental policies. Resources for off-campus living are currently being acquired from the City of Montreal, and the Plateau's Eco-Quartier. These resources will be put online as soon as they are obtained. We are currently sourcing a location for the physical resources.
- NEXT STEPS: Our goal is to set up a "green update area" somewhere in the SSMU building,

3. Include basic environment information in first year handbooks, and faculty Agenda's

- This project would involve the inclusion of environmental resources (i.e. special waste drop-off, recycling guidelines etc) in these agenda's and handbooks. We may also look into distributing material through the residence network itself, the off-campus office, and Discover McGill.
- STATUS: this project is in its planning stages.

2. Inter-campus Outreach Coordinator: Tanya Taggart-Hodge

Goal: Enhance cooperation and communication between McGill University and other universities across Montreal on environment related projects and initiatives.

Objectives

1. Strengthen relationship with each Montreal University (Concordia, UQAM, Université de Montréal etc.) through concrete joint action with the following deliverables:

- Identify contact representatives for environment/sustainability committees on respective campuses (ongoing)
- Organize a minimum of two joint workshops whose topics will be established through our common priorities for the year (vermicomposting with Concordia)
- Maintain strong communication before, during and following each of these workshops
- Assess usefulness & effectiveness of relationships developed
- Set in place a strategy for follow-up next year

2. Represent SSMU Environment Committee at the CASQ-Asso. The focus of these meetings will be the following:

- Événements écoresponsables sur les campus
- Politique d'achats et investissements écoresponsables
- Bourse d'effort pour les événements écoresponsables
- Report back to SSMU Environment Committee on the outcomes of these discussions and share McGill's projects with the other representatives (one meeting done, few more to go during the next months)

3. Interact with the Sierra Youth Coalition and communicate on relevant campaigns and initiatives we may want to take part in as well as the following deliverables:

- Attend National Conference on Sustainable Campuses (done)
- Attend local Conference on Sustainable Campuses
- Report back to SSMU Environment Committee (ongoing)

4. Serve as an overall liaison representative of SSMU Environment Committee and active member of the Committee through the following projects:

- Member of Living wall + Vermicompost working group (ongoing; research phase)
- Member of SSMU Environment Committee's Green Team

3. Policy Advisor: Robin Reid-Fraser

- compiling SSMU policy relevant to environment/sustainability
- will create a document for easy access/use by other students, specifically other EnviroComm members, but will also create one for general student population
- been in contact with Levon and Ivan, Fair Trade University coordinators, advised them on possible ways to bring Fair Trade into SSMU
- will look at possible ways to take advantage of SSMU council motions to implement change, especially in relation to clubs, services and events

4. Sustainability Ambassadors Coordinator: Jody Wong

Progress :

We've had one general in-person meeting, the attendance was poor. However, those who came had great ideas and useful input. There will be a second general meeting this coming Wednesday Nov. 17th.

My goals for the year are

1. Have a program started where the Sustainability Ambassadors spread the word about sustainability and green-issues, whether it is through class announcements, walking around with shirts with green facts on them etc.
2. Have the Sustainability Ambassadors become green advocates on clubs/teams that they are already a part of.
3. Possibly start a series of short sustainability-related clips on McGill TV.

5. Academic/Faculty Liaison: Christian D'Andrea

Faculty Sector:

Goal: Help all faculties create or develop their environmental groups, give input on initiatives and provide a space for inter faculty cooperation.

- Arranged Faculty Association Round Table on the Environment with faculty representatives.
- Discussed current initiatives, addressed concerns and provided resources (info, contacts etc.).
- Working on developing existing environmental groups through institutionalization of committees and acquisition of funding.

Future: Would like to gain representation from more faculties, whether or not they have existing environmental committees.

Challenges:

- Acquiring representation from many faculties through execs
- Arranging convenient meeting times for members

Academic Sector:

Goal: integrating sustainability into curriculum

- Met with Dennis Fortune to discuss possibilities for incorporating sustainability into curriculum
- Discussed formal and informal methods of incorporation (may use faculty group above for the informal method)
- Planned brainstorming session with Dennis Fortune, Marcy Slapcoff and George McCourt

Future:

- Decide on a goal then create and submit a proposal with Dennis, Marcy and George (possibly begin with Science as I am sitting on the Faculty of Science Committee).
- If proposal fails, brainstorm informal methods and use faculty round table members to contact professors within their faculties