

AQIP ACTION PROJECT DECLARATION

SURGE Green Challenge

Timeline

Kickoff Date: March 17, 2008

Target Completion Date: June 15, 2009

A. Short Title (10 words or less)

Surge Green Challenge: a commitment to an environmentally friendly campus

B. Describe this Action Project's goal in 100 words or fewer:

The goal of this action project is to promote environmental awareness throughout the campus community and to reduce the environmental impact of College operations through:

- Energy conservation
- Waste reduction and recycling
- Green purchasing
- Educational advocacy
- Advancing campus climate neutrality efforts
- Development of environmental goals and practices for the College Community

C. Identify the single AQIP Category which the Action Project will most affect or impact:

Category 6: Supporting Institutional Operations

D. Describe briefly your institution's reasons for taking on this Action Project now – why the project and its goals are high among your current priorities:

In light of increasing energy costs and concerns over global climate changes, students and employees are very motivated and want very much to reduce the College's environmental impact. There is top down support for these initiatives starting in the President's Office; as evidenced by Dr. Henderson's signing of the American College and University's Climate Commitment as well as the Hamilton County Go Green Challenge. Due to increasing data on the rate of climate change, colleges and universities across the country, have chosen to exercise leadership in their communities to model ways to minimize global warming emissions, and to educate students on ways to integrate sustainable practices into their daily lives. Cincinnati State is choosing to be a leader in these efforts in the tri-state area.

E. List the organizational areas – institutional departments, programs, divisions, or units most affected by or involved in this Action Project include:

The entire college community (from academics to administration to operational areas) will be affected by this Action Project. The areas most impacted will include:

- Facilities (including mechanical operations, grounds, horticulture)
- Purchasing and Administrative Offices
- Cafeteria and Culinary
- Academics
- Day Care Facility
- Satellite campuses

F. Name and describe briefly the key organizational process(es) that you expect this Action Project to change or improve.

- Implementing recycling of plastic, glass and metals (i.e. aluminum)
- Adopting green purchasing practices
- Greatly increase rate of paper and cardboard recycling
- Develop plan to divert food waste and yard waste from waste stream through composting and/or food store partnerships
- Initiate the development of a comprehensive plan to achieve climate neutrality
- Conduct a comprehensive inventory of all greenhouse gas emissions (including emissions from electricity, heating, commuting and air travel)
- Examine the possibility of purchasing or producing at least 15% of the College's electric consumption from renewable resources
- Encourage the use of and provide access to public transportation, carpooling, biking, etc. for all faculty, staff, students and visitors on campus
- Incorporate sustainable concepts in academic curricula

G. Explain the rationale for the length of time planned for this Action Project (from kickoff to target completion).

There is a great deal of momentum for this project due in part to the signings of the American College and University President's Climate Commitment and the Hamilton County Go Green challenge. The need to make efforts immediately is also evidenced by the ongoing requests of students and staff concerning avenues for recycling within the college, as well as a raised consciousness of the need for energy conservation due to increasing energy costs. This project will require on-going monitoring and evaluation of key activities.

H. Describe how you plan to monitor how successfully your efforts on this Action Project are progressing.

- The College will need to conduct an initial baseline assessment of current energy usage and waste streams.
- The College will need to identify staff necessary to monitor and maintain the composting and recycling systems established on campus as a result of these efforts.
- The College will need to secure funding to initiate and implement many of these projects.

- The College will incorporate concepts of sustainability throughout academic curricula where possible.

The increase in awareness of the College's efforts to provide a more sustainable environment as well as the involvement by the College community can be monitored through the ongoing collection of data on recycling rates, energy use (& cost reductions) and waste diversion rates. The publication, posting (college webpage) and distribution of this data will both educate and motivate the college community. The incorporation of this information into the First Year Experience (FYE) courses can be monitored via on-line student testing on these concepts as well. Additionally, 4 subcommittees have been developed to address each of the 4 major goals of this project (1. Green Purchasing, 2. Energy Conservation, 3. Waste Reduction & Recycling, 4. Education/Advocacy). These subcommittees will monitor progress and make necessary adjustments in each of their project areas.

I. Describe the overall "outcome" measures or indicators that will tell you whether this Action Project has been a success or failure in achieving its goals.

Specific and quantifiable goals in each of the four key areas are being developed. Anticipated measures will include:

1. Reduce energy consumption by 20% over the next four years
2. Increase paper and cardboard recycling on campus by 30%
3. Develop and implement a "green" purchasing program on campus (with definable objectives)
4. Incorporation of sustainability concepts into FYE courses.

J. Other information

- Co-chairs: Dr. Ann Gunkel, Tyrone Walton
- Facilitator: Gail Quinlan